

Elmbridge Junior School

Elmbridge Road, Gloucester, GL2 0PE

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Improvements in teaching have led to above-average standards in English. Standards have risen in mathematics, but not quite so fast as in English.
- Teaching is typically at least good and sometimes better. Teachers always want pupils to do their best and make sure lessons are interesting so that pupils learn well.
- All pupils enjoy school and take part in lessons with enthusiasm.
- Pupils' behaviour is almost always exemplary and pupils want to succeed and achieve well.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school, and that bullying is rare and that any incidents are dealt with effectively. Pupils have a clear understanding of moral, social and cultural issues and the school's distinctive approach to personal, social and health education supports this area.
- Attendance is high.
- The headteacher's good leadership has been significant in making sure that the school has improved the quality of teaching and its effectiveness since the last inspection.
- The headteacher is well supported by his senior leadership team and the governing body and has successfully gained the respect of parents and carers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers in charge of subjects are not yet fully involved in checking progress information.
- Teachers' marking does not consistently give enough information to pupils about how well they achieve, or what they need to do to improve their work further.
- At times, pupils do not have enough chance to find things out for themselves and rely too much on adult help.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 24 lessons taught by 13 teachers, of which four were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, inspectors made several short visits to lessons and observed a number of small groups of pupils being taught by teaching assistants. One inspector visited an assembly.
- Inspectors heard pupils read from both Year 4 and Year 6 and also held meetings with two groups of pupils. They also used lunch and break times to talk to pupils around the school.
- Inspectors spoke to the Chair of the Governing Body, members of the school management team and a representative of the local authority. These meetings included discussions about the analysis of data, documented information and records provided by the school, including records of the monitoring of the quality of teaching, tracking pupils' progress as well as documents relating to safeguarding children.
- Inspectors met with some parents and carers at the start and end of the school day.
- Inspectors took account of the responses of 52 parents and carers to the online Parent View questionnaire during the inspection and of the 25 questionnaires completed by school staff.

Inspection team

Sarah Jones , Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Jonathan Moore	Additional inspector
Neil Gillespie	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Elmbridge Junior School is a larger-than-average-sized school and most pupils transfer from the nearby infant school.
- The largest proportion of pupils attending the school are White British.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is slightly above average and the proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, additional government funding for specific groups including those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a number of recent awards including Healthy Schools Plus, Healthy Living and Learning and Sports Activemark.
- A privately managed 'before-and-after' school club is located on the school site, which is inspected separately.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all subject leaders have the opportunity and confidence to analyse and make good use of pupils' progress information.
- Accelerate pupils' progress further by making sure that they:
 - know how well they are making progress and how they can improve their work
 - find out more things for themselves and are not too reliant on adult support.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils make good progress from average starting points. Progress is improving and is fastest in English because this is where the school has focused its efforts. Progress is good because teaching is good and pupils enjoy learning and meeting new, challenging work.
- Learning in lessons is usually good, but occasionally pupils do not work by themselves well enough and because there are occasions when teachers provide too much support.
- Pupils develop good literacy skills because writing, reading and speaking activities are included in most subjects.
- Pupils' writing is good, and work displayed in classrooms and corridors is of good quality. Pupils use a wide vocabulary, accurate grammar, and words that connect separate ideas together to make complex sentences.
- Pupils read well. They link sounds to letters effectively and like the fact that this helps them read difficult words. They use their reading skills well when doing research.
- Pupils have good mathematical skills. They carry out mental calculations well and show their working for mathematical problems accurately in their books.
- The more-able pupils generally make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants usually make sure work is demanding and at the right level for them.
- Lower-attaining pupils and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs make good and improving progress. Sensitive, well-organised support from teachers usually enables these pupils to gain confidence in their own ability and promotes their learning well.
- Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding make progress at broadly the same rate as other pupils. Pupil premium money is spent on a range of interventions including one-to-one tuition, additional teaching assistant support and a community family worker. The success of this support means that there is no attainment gap, as the average point scores for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals are similar to the other pupils.
- The small number of pupils at the early stages of learning English and those from minority ethnic groups make good progress because of effective support from teachers and teaching assistants both in class and smaller intervention groups.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching over time is generally good, with some outstanding teaching observed in English and mathematics.
- Teamwork throughout the school is excellent. Teachers keep support staff very well informed. Teachers are keen to learn from one another and the headteacher and senior leadership team are highly effective role models who have helped teachers improve their teaching to become good or better.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and expertise, which they use effectively to offer a wide range of interesting and demanding activities that develop pupils' skills well in literacy and numeracy.
- What pupils learn is supported by a wide range of visits and visitors, good-quality resources and strong links between different subjects through topics. For example, in a Year 4 topic on the Romans, there was evidence of creativity and good questioning when pupils created a mood board of their own mosaic designs in an art lesson.
- In the majority of lessons, teachers use what they know about pupils' progress well to ensure that work is set at the right level. For example, in an English lesson, the teacher motivated pupils to use their imaginations when writing to a well-known entrepreneur nominating someone to take part in a space flight.
- At times, pupils are directed too strongly, so do not learn to work by themselves. In these instances, they seek further support from the teacher before trying to do the work

independently.

- Teachers regularly check the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and adjust their work so that they make good progress. For example, providing clear instructions, careful questioning and a range of practical activities in an observed mathematics lesson on recognising multiples of four led to these pupils gaining confidence and making good progress.
- Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning by supporting pupils in lessons and in small groups that are withdrawn from classes for particular help.
- There is evidence of good marking but the next steps in learning are not always clearly stated so that pupils know how to improve their work.
- Relationships are warm, friendly and supportive. Teachers encourage pupils to work with each other and to discuss their ideas. This helps pupils learn to tolerate and accept each other's opinions and promotes their moral, social and cultural development effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The school is a very harmonious community; pupils are very polite and courteous. One child said: 'It's a lovely environment to be in.'
- The attitudes to learning of almost all pupils in lessons are outstanding. Pupils have good social skills and can collaborate well to enhance each other's learning. They respond extremely well when the teaching is lively and engaging, and usually try their best even when it is not.
- Pupils spoken to said they they enjoy school, that teachers helped them learn well and that lessons were interesting.
- Teachers set a good example of how to respect each other and this contributes to good relationships between pupils, respect for others and celebrating each other's achievement and success.
- Attendance is above average and improving. Pupils move around the school with purpose and are punctual so that lessons start briskly and promptly.
- Pupils' behaviour at playtime is exemplary with peer mentors 'Helping Hands' there to support and help resolve any disputes.
- Pupils say they feel exceptionally safe, and this is supported by their parents' and carers' views. Their knowledge of internet safety is excellent. Pupils have a good understanding of the different kinds of bullying and say any bullying is unusual. They feel confident that if anything did worry them, teachers would sort it out quickly.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides clear direction for the school's improvement. All staff, especially those in leadership positions, reflect his ambition and determination for success. The school accurately identifies what it needs to do to improve further, and in particular, how pupils' progress should improve.
- Leaders make rigorous checks of teaching and learning and set robust targets for teachers. Combined with high-quality training, these things have ensured good improvement in teaching since the last inspection. Teachers know what is expected of them and help one another achieve it by sharing ideas and resources.
- Leaders and the governing body know how well the school is doing by checking its work thoroughly and making sure that teachers are meeting their targets for improvement.
- The headteacher and assistant headteacher have developed good systems to check pupils' progress. However, subject leaders do not spend enough time analysing this information and using it in their work to raise standards.
- Staff work effectively to ensure there is no discrimination and that all pupils have equality of education.

- The school works well with the local authority and has received good support to raise standards in mathematics.
- The way subjects and topics are taught provides a wide range of activities in response to pupils' needs and interests. The development of pupils' literacy and numeracy, and the effective use of computers, is promoted well. Good behaviour, tolerance and understanding of other people's values and beliefs infuse learning and promote pupils' moral, social and cultural development well.
- Parents and carers are pleased with the school. They say that the school is well led and managed, and that 'staff are very approachable and very strong on pastoral care'. Parents and carers support school activities. For example, 85 parents and carers attended an anti-bullying workshop in November 2012.
- The school demonstrates the capacity to continue improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body provides a high level of challenge to the senior staff and is not afraid to ask searching questions about the effectiveness of the school, the community it serves and the needs of the pupils, in relation to similar schools. It has a good understanding of the school including setting targets for teachers, the use of 'Teachers' Standards' and how they affect salary progression. The governors keep a careful eye on the school's finances, including the use of the pupil premium, and check the impact it has on pupils' progress thoroughly. The governing body ensures safeguarding procedures are robust. It checks that all requirements are fully met, and that the processes for appointing staff are secure. Governors also make sure they keep up to date with their own training to improve their effectiveness in holding leaders to account.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors. A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.

School details

Unique reference number	115487
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	403265
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Gough
Headteacher	Glen Tharia
Date of previous school inspection	2 July 2008
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