

# Inspection of Ely St John's Community Primary School

St John's Road, Ely, Cambridgeshire CB6 3BW

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Inspection dates:	12 and 13 November 2024
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy being part of this lively, nurturing school, where staff welcome them warmly each day. The school provides a wide range of enrichment activities linked to the curriculum so that pupils gain valuable life experiences. This is a school with a strong sense of community. Pupils' well-being is at the heart of everything. For example, pupils have plentiful opportunities to learn outdoors when they take part in 'nature breaks'.

Pupils' behaviour in classrooms, corridors and during social times shows respect for one another. This is because pupils are taught to behave in line with the 'EJ' way and this starts quickly from the beginning of the early years. Pupils are polite, well mannered and show resilience when asked to do challenging activities. Pupils love to come to school, are eager to learn and attendance overall is above the national average.

Parents and carers value the work of the school highly. Typical comments include, 'We feel confident sending our children to school, knowing they will be well looked after and happy' and 'The school is supportive, responsive and approachable.' The school has high expectations for pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs/and or disabilities (SEND).

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

The school has designed and put in place a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. This curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. The school has considered how to sequence learning. In most subjects, there is a clear focus on the knowledge and skills that should be taught, with a strong emphasis on learning and developing key vocabulary. In subjects such as reading, mathematics and science, pupils progress well through the curriculum and achieve in line with national expectations. However, in a few subjects, the essential knowledge that should be taught has only recently been mapped out. Staff are not always fully clear about the key information that pupils should know and remember. In addition, leaders do not always get into classrooms enough to gauge how well the curriculum is working.

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum. Children are taught to read as soon as they join Reception and quickly make progress. Children experience a wide range of books in all classes and this starts quickly in Reception classes, where activities are often based around stories and continues throughout the school, where children have many opportunities to develop their reading on a daily basis.

In most subjects, staff check carefully what pupils know and can do. However, in some subjects, staff do not check effectively what pupils have learned and remembered. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their learning.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with SEND quickly and with precision. Parents of pupils with SEND appreciate the communication from staff and the support their children receive. Staff are provided with accurate information regarding the special needs of children in their class. They make adaptations where required.

Children in the early years are quick to settle into school. This is helped by the school's clear process for transition. Activities such as reading and mathematics are often taught initially by the teacher and followed up with stimulating support activities. Outdoor learning is purposeful and enjoyable.

Pupils behave well in lessons and stay focused on their learning. They show kindness and consideration to one another. The school promotes pupils' wider development well. There is a well-planned and age-appropriate provision. The school enriches the curriculum through a well-thought-out programme that includes outdoor learning, educational trips and charity fundraising. The school orchestra is an example of a club that performs at a high level. Pupils in the 'nature club' said they enjoyed growing potatoes, harvesting them, and then cooking them on an open fire.

The school is led with passion and determination by leaders at all levels. Governors hold a strong and accurate understanding of the school. Staff appreciate that their workload and well-being are well considered by leaders and are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a few subjects, the knowledge that pupils should learn has only recently been identified and communicated to staff. This means that on occasion teachers find it difficult to check that pupils know and remember what they should. The school should ensure that staff are clear about the knowledge that pupils should be taught, the order it should be delivered and how they will help pupils remember it.
- In some subjects, the school's oversight of how the curriculum is delivered and its impact on pupils' learning is not secure. As a result, there is some variability in how well pupils learn and remember key knowledge over time. The school should ensure that subject leaders are given more opportunities to have oversight of how well pupils learn in all subjects so that the school can ensure that the curriculum is being delivered consistently well.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110773
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10345115
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	364
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Matthew Leach
<b>Headteacher</b>	John Henson
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.elystjohns.cambs.sch.uk">www.elystjohns.cambs.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	29 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is an above-average-size primary school.
- The school makes use of one alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, subject leaders and teachers.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the governing body, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also held a meeting with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of other documentation, including governor meeting minutes and leaders' evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils to gather their views on school life.
- To gather parents' views, inspectors took account of the responses from Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. Inspectors also met with parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors met formally with staff to gather their views.

Duncan Ramsey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Lucy Roberts

Ofsted Inspector

Oriana Dalton

Ofsted Inspector

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