

Inspection of a good school: Earls Barton Primary School

Broad Street, Earls Barton, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN6 0ND

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Outcome

Earls Barton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Earls Barton Primary School is at the centre of its community. Pupils enjoy attending this friendly school. Staff and pupils treat each other with respect and kindness. Pupils trust the adults. This helps pupils to feel safe.

The school has high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are keen to learn. They strive to follow school rules, such as being ready, respectful and safe. They are proud to earn the 'Bartonian Award' for demonstrating school values such as self-belief.

Pupils benefit from many experiences, such as going on residential, trips to interesting landmarks and asking questions of visiting experts. They appreciate opportunities to develop their interests in sport and music. They care about the world around them and fundraise for charities. Pupils in key stage 2 relish different responsibilities, such as being a science ambassador.

The vast majority of parents and carers are highly positive about the school. They appreciate that the school keeps them well informed. Many commented that their children are thriving because the school 'goes the extra mile'. There is a real ethos of care for everyone in this inclusive school.

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

The school is ambitious for every pupil to have a good education. Pupils learn from an interesting curriculum that covers a broad range of subjects. The school has identified the most important knowledge that pupils need to know in all subjects. This is broken down into smaller steps that pupils learn in a logical order. Improvements to the curriculum help pupils know and remember more over time. Leaders are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subjects. Staff are willing to get better and do their best for the children. However, in some subjects, the school has not had time to check that the curriculum is being taught as it is intended. The school has not provided guidance on how to improve the teaching of

the curriculum in a few subjects.

The school ensures that reading is always a priority. Right from the start, children in the Reception classes begin to learn to read. Phonics is taught well so that children become fluent and confident readers. Support is in place to ensure that pupils soon catch up if they fall behind. The school ensures that, in all classes, pupils experience a wide range of texts, including poetry books, stories and non-fiction titles. Texts often link to topics from other subjects. Staff share their love of books and read with pupils every day. Pupils can talk about the stories they have listened to and their favourite authors. Pupils are developing a love for reading.

In mathematics, the school provides an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum. Staff have good subject knowledge. This enables them to spot pupils' errors or misconceptions quickly. Staff regularly check that pupils are remembering the intended learning. These checks quickly identify any mathematical knowledge that pupils need to revisit. Staff use resources well to help pupils demonstrate their knowledge to solve problems. Most pupils are progressing well through the mathematics curriculum.

The school places high importance on building pupils' language and improving their vocabulary. The school ensures that pupils learn demanding vocabulary across all subjects. As a result, pupils' confidence to explain what they learn and think increases as they move through the school.

The school has improved the identification of the barriers for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and their gaps in knowledge. The school provides sensitive support for pupils with SEND. However, checks on the precision of extra help do not yet take place to ensure that these pupils do as well as they can academically.

Children in the early years make a strong start to their schooling. The school ensures that children are safe and happy. Children settle in well and quickly learn appropriate routines. Staff help children to build on important learning through interesting and purposeful activities, both in the classroom and outside. The school makes sure that children are prepared well for Year 1 and beyond.

There is a positive vibe around the school and a calm atmosphere. The school goes the extra mile to secure pupils' personal development. The pastoral support offered to pupils is a strength of the school. Staff know pupils well. Throughout the curriculum, opportunities are identified to promote pupils' wider development and well-being. They learn to respect and appreciate difference, including different cultures, beliefs and family structures. Equality is strong. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. They have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships education. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Staff are proud to work at Earls Barton Primary School. They appreciate the consideration the school gives to managing their workload and well-being. Governors contribute valuable expertise to the school team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the school has not ensured that there have been consistent opportunities to check how well the curriculum is being implemented. As a result, the school is not yet providing clear guidance on how to improve the teaching of the curriculum in some subjects. The school should ensure that the implementation of the curriculum in all subjects is supported effectively.
- Some pupils with SEND do not always receive the precise adaptations and support they need to access learning consistently well in all subjects. This does not help them to make as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that pupils who need additional support receive precise support to enable them to optimise their academic achievement.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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

Unique reference number	121902
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10298434
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	450
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ruth Palmer
Headteacher	Marie Lally
Website	www.earlsbartonprimary.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	13 and 14 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2021 and the deputy headteacher was appointed in September 2022. A number of other new leaders have been appointed over the past two years.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, and a range of other staff.
- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body. She spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector 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.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered leaders' curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also met with other subject leaders and looked at curriculum documentation and samples of pupils' work for some other subjects.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school. She considered responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. The inspector met with groups of staff and pupils and considered responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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