

Easton Church of England Academy

Beaufort Street, Easton, Bristol BS5 0SQ

Inspection dates

12–13 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes in reading and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 are too low.
- Teaching is not bringing about pupils' outcomes that are good enough. In reading, writing and mathematics, outcomes are too uneven across classes and subjects to be good.
- The quality of teaching varies across classes. Teachers' expectations are not uniformly high so some pupils continue to underachieve.
- The school's strategy to improve pupils' understanding of what they read is not yet effective. This limits the progress that some pupils make.
- Middle-attaining and the most able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in some classes. Consequently, pupils' progress in reading and mathematics is too slow.
- Teachers do not use their assessments of what pupils can already do to plan work that is closely matched to their needs. In too many classes, pupils' work is too easy for them or lower-attaining pupils are moved through difficult work too quickly. This slows pupils' progress overall.
- Some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are too dependent on adult support. This hinders the progress that they make.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher leads the school very effectively. His determination and drive for improvement do not falter. Alongside his ambitious leadership team, he is systematically bringing about sustained improvement.
- Inadequate teaching has been eliminated. Any remaining weaknesses in teaching are being dealt with quickly and robustly.
- The teaching of phonics has improved considerably. Outcomes are now closer to the national average.
- Parents are very positive. They recognise the tangible improvements. They say the school has 'built a bridge of trust with parents'.
- Leaders quickly addressed the need to bring the curriculum on offer 'up to speed'. It is now motivating for pupils and covers all subjects.
- Pupils are polite and courteous. They take pride in their school and are keen to learn.
- Teaching in the early years is good. As a result, children make consistently good and often rapid progress from their starting points.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders, including governors and the trust, should insist that teaching eradicates pupils' underachievement so that pupils' outcomes are consistently good by ensuring that:
 - teachers' expectations are consistently high
 - the middle-attaining and the most able pupils are sufficiently challenged in their reading and mathematics
 - teachers' assessments are used to address pupils' gaps in learning and to shape learning so that the lower-attaining pupils catch up quickly
 - leaders hold teachers to account across their year teams for providing consistency of provision so that pupils' outcomes are good.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to accelerate pupils' progress, by making sure that:
 - teachers have consistently high expectations and enable pupils across the school to understand what they read and have good comprehension skills
 - pupils have enough exposure to reasoning and solving problems in mathematics
 - teaching provides sufficient time for pupils to practise, consolidate and deepen their understanding, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities
 - teaching builds on what pupils can do, know and understand so that they make good progress from their starting points, and more pupils meet or exceed the standards that are expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher's leadership since the school has opened is impressive. He does not accept low standards or mediocre teaching as good enough. He is committed in nurturing his team of teachers and leaders to continually improve their skills and accelerate pupils' progress further. As a result, he has been successful in changing the whole-school culture where everyone strives to do their best. Raising pupils' aspirations and pupils' achievement is central. As a result, pupils' outcomes are improving quickly towards the standards expected nationally.
- Senior leaders hold staff to account robustly for the progress pupils make. Leaders' determination to strive for teaching that is good has necessitated considerable staff changes. As a result of leaders' actions, inadequate teaching has been eradicated and teaching across the school is increasingly effective. However, inconsistencies in teaching across some classes and subjects remain. So, some pupils continue to underachieve.
- The governors and headteacher have been successful in establishing a strengthened leadership structure. English and mathematics subject teams have brought about greater consistency in teaching. The increased focus on moderation is ensuring increasingly accurate assessment across classes. Core subject teams have also improved teachers' subject knowledge and raised expectations of what pupils can achieve. However, too few pupils reach the standards that are expected for their age across the school in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders know there is more to do.
- Senior leaders undertake detailed year group reviews. These take full account of teaching across the year group, pupils' progress and pupils' workbooks. This provides senior leaders with an accurate picture of pupils' performance over time. Leaders are accurate in their evaluations of teaching. They communicate strengths and aspects that require work with clarity, leaving teachers in no doubt of their actions for improvement.
- Year group leaders, from the majority of year groups, check up on teachers' development points with the rigour required to secure rapid improvement. Increased checks this year have significantly improved teachers' expectations and pupils' performance. As a result, a larger proportion of pupils who have previously underachieved are catching up towards the standards expected for their age. However, year group reviews have not yet been successful in ensuring that all teaching is closely matched to pupils' needs and so inconsistencies in teaching across a few year groups remain. In such cases, pupils' progress slows.
- When the school opened, leaders swiftly put into place a curriculum that met national curriculum requirements and dealt with endemic weaknesses in provision. Now it covers the full range of subjects. Wide-ranging visits to support curriculum topics motivate and interest pupils, for example to the Haynes Car Museum in key stage 1. As a result, pupils have purposeful opportunities to write and use and apply curriculum skills more readily. Some curriculum work is being developed further because some activities planned do not stretch and challenge pupils effectively, for example in science. There are strong curriculum links made to community activities and health and

well-being. For example, every year group cook for their peers, staff and the local community as part of their food technology programme.

- Parents are explicit about their strong support for the school and the effective leadership of the headteacher and his team. Almost every parent who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, said they would recommend the school. They say the school has gone from strength to strength and is now built on mutual trust with the community.
- The school has managed support from the Bristol teaching alliance and from the trust with good effect to improve various aspects of its work, such as improving the teaching of mathematics and strengthening the school's tracking system of pupils' performance.
- Leaders have implemented a school-wide system to measure current pupils' performance and pupils' progress from their prior attainment points. This enables leaders and teachers to pinpoint where pupils' residual underachievement remains and to tackle this quickly. In addition, increased standardised testing of pupils' performance in mathematics is providing teachers with additional information so that pupils' learning gaps can be addressed. However, leaders have not ensured that all teachers are using this information precisely to ensure that work builds on what pupils already know, can do and understand.
- Leaders manage additional funding for the large proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding well. As a result, the welfare and personal development of pupils is good and targeted intervention support within lessons is helping disadvantaged pupils catch up. Many disadvantaged pupils do better than others in the school, but their achievement is still too low. Leaders' initiatives to increase pupils' vocabulary and language acquisition are proving effective. However, leaders know there is more to do to develop disadvantaged pupils' understanding of what they read.
- The additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is managed increasingly effectively. Leaders ensure that funding is spent effectively and plans are adhered to so that pupils receive timely support and intervention. However, the leader of special educational needs and/or disabilities does not yet monitor the progress of these pupils robustly enough in lessons. As a result, this group of pupils does not make good progress overall. Leaders have ensured that there is a smooth transition for pupils from the resource base, which closes in a few weeks, to their next placements or integration into mainstream classes.
- Since the school has opened, leaders' actions have ensured that pupils' behaviour has improved considerably. They have been successful in creating an inclusive and purposeful learning community where pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school.
- Leaders use the sports premium effectively. Deploying sports coaches as teaching assistant support enables pupils and coaches to build good relationships and the 'calm school code' to be consistently applied. Pupils are particularly positive about the coaching they receive at lunchtimes.
- The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Fundamental British values are promoted through the school curriculum and school assemblies.

Governance

- Since the school has opened, governors have strengthened their work. The local governing board has an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, and it checks the impact of leaders' actions to address the areas of development outlined in the school's action plan with rigour.
- Regular governor visits to the school ensure that they are well informed of key initiatives, for example meetings to review improvements in writing across the school.
- The trust has provided regular external support and regular learning reviews. It has also brokered additional support to review safeguarding practices and record-keeping. However, the trust has not insisted that actions are followed up immediately, nor checked that all actions have been implemented by the school.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders ensure that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at this school. All staff training is up to date and in line with current legislation. The impact of staff training is borne out in the daily work of staff. They refer concerns to those with responsibility for safeguarding and do not hesitate to escalate and follow up referrals when the need arises. Robust systems are in place to minimise pupils' risk of harm. For example, the school provides pupil and parent workshops about female genital mutilation, along with close analysis and referral of extended holiday requests to the local authority.
- Staff vetting checks are completed to confirm the suitability of staff to work with children. Leaders have responded quickly to the external safeguarding audit. However, some aspects of record-keeping are not as proficient as they could be. External checks by the trust have not taken place in a timely way. The local governing board undertakes regular visits to check the culture of safeguarding in the school. However, they do not routinely check leaders' records relating to challenging behaviour and pupils' restraint.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They know what to do if they have any concerns and say that adults sort out any issues quickly. Statutory safeguarding requirements are met.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Leaders responsible for improving teaching have been successful in addressing the widespread weaknesses in teaching that were prevalent when the school opened. However, the quality of teaching remains too inconsistent across some classes, year groups and subjects to be good overall. As such, teachers' expectations are not uniformly high. Consequently, teaching in specific year groups and classes is not yet bringing about outcomes that are good enough. This inconsistent teaching results in some pupils underachieving and too few pupils working at the standards expected for their age.
- Teachers do not consistently use their knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do to plan work that is matched to pupils' needs. Sometimes, pupils are moved through topics too quickly without sufficient consolidation or practice. This is particularly the

case in mathematics. At times, work planned for lower-attaining pupils is too difficult. As a result, pupils do not secure their understanding of the concepts taught and this impacts on the progress they make.

- Teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for the middle-attaining and most-able pupils. Teachers' questioning does not probe and deepen pupils' understanding. The most able pupils do not get sufficient exposure to challenging work. As such, pupils told inspectors that their work is sometimes too easy. Typically, pupils sit quietly and wait until they receive more challenging work but they do not apply themselves to the tasks on offer. Teachers do not pick this up quickly enough. As a result, pupils' learning time is not fully maximised and this restricts their progress.
- Teachers' checks on learning in some classes do not deal with misconceptions quickly enough. As a result of previously weak teaching, pupils have gaps in their learning. Where teaching is consistently good, teaching is accelerating pupils' learning and understanding so pupils' underachievement is effectively tackled. However, in other classes where teaching is routinely weaker, pupils' progress remains too slow and inequalities in provision remain.
- The teaching of phonics is now good. Teachers use detailed ongoing assessments of pupils' understanding so that their teaching builds skilfully on what pupils already know. As a result, in the early years and Year 1, pupils are making good progress in their phonics skills. Consequently, outcomes in the phonics screening check continue to rise towards the national average. For those pupils who did not reach the expected standard this year, inspection evidence confirms that their progress is strongly good. However, some pupils do not spell with the accuracy required for their age when writing independently.
- The school's strategy to widen pupils' vocabulary is taking hold well. The high focus on developing speaking skills is also helping pupils to develop their writing. However, the teaching of reading is not yet sufficiently focused on developing pupils' comprehension skills and developing the understanding of what they read in a variety of contexts. Leaders already have plans in place to develop staff subject knowledge in this aspect but it is too early to see its impact.
- The teaching of mathematics is inconsistent across the school because teachers do not use the information they have to plan the right work in some classes. This means that pupils can be tackling complex tasks when they have limited understanding of number. Conversely, in other classes and year groups, some pupils are making rapid progress in mathematics and are proficient in reasoning and problem-solving. This is evidenced in the rapid improvement seen in internal test scores and assessments this term in some classes.
- There are school-wide expectations in place for teachers to provide pupils with advice about how to improve their work. In some classes, this is habitually used to help pupils progress. However, in a few classes, teachers do not insist that pupils respond to their advice, and this slows pupils' progress over time.
- Teaching assistants provide a range of effective support. However, on occasions, teaching assistants' support can limit pupils' independence, or teachers do not have full oversight of what the teaching assistant is doing and this slows pupils' progress.

Conversely, inspectors saw many examples of teaching assistants providing appropriate support so that pupils could consolidate and deepen their understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils say they enjoy school and feel safe in every area of the school. They say that any issues are sorted out quickly and there are many adults who help them.
- The school's breakfast club is well attended. Supervision is adequate. Pupils speak positively about the care and support they receive. They behave well and show respect for one another. Pupils benefit from a healthy breakfast so they are ready to learn.
- Lunchtimes are supervised well. Pupils have plenty of games and equipment to play with. Year 6 playground buddies take their leadership responsibilities very seriously. They support younger pupils well and lead playground games effectively, taking pride in their work.
- Care and support for pupils who arrive at times other than the usual times of admission are good. Early assessments are made for pupils new to the school and social and emotional support provided. This ensures that these pupils settle and build relationships quickly with their peers and staff alike.
- The welfare requirements for pupils who attend the resource base for speech and language and communication are met effectively. Personalised assessments for these pupils ensures that their individualised learning needs are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils demonstrate good manners and show respect for one another. They are very proud of their school. Incidents of poor behaviour have decreased considerably due to the consistent approach now in place. Pupils also say that behaviour has improved across the last two years and 'it is good now'. Inspectors agree.
- Typically, pupils are intrinsically motivated to learn. They present their work well. However, a minority of pupils, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, can be overdependent on adults to support them to tackle challenges and this slows their progress. When teachers do not plan work that is closely matched to their needs, some pupils sit politely and wait for the next piece of work, so they do not consistently apply their learning skills to deepen their understanding.
- For the small number of pupils who find managing their own feelings and emotions difficult, there are consistent systems in place to support these pupils. As a result, incidents of poor behaviour continue to lessen. When pupils demonstrate challenging behaviour, this is well managed.

- Pupils' exclusions have reduced rapidly as a result of better support and improvement to the provision on offer.
- Pupils' attendance is checked robustly to safeguard pupils and check their wellbeing. As a result of leaders' actions, attendance is broadly in line with national averages and continues to improve steadily. Leaders' systems ensure that lateness is considerably reduced.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Since the school has opened, pupils' outcomes have been below the national average. While the current progress that many pupils make is better now than in previous years, teaching is not consistently eliminating pupils' underachievement. As a result, too few pupils are working at the standards expected for their age.
- The most able pupils across the school, including those who are disadvantaged, are not sufficiently challenged and this restricts pupils' progress. Consequently, they do not reach the high standard of work of which they are capable.
- Published outcomes in 2016 show that at the end of key stage 2, pupils' outcomes in writing were in line with national averages. Outcomes were weaker in reading and mathematics. In reading, pupils do not yet demonstrate the skills to show a good enough understanding of what they read. In recent weeks, pupils are experiencing greater exposure to work that requires them to reason and solve problems in mathematics. However, this work is very recent and it is too early to see the impact of this in pupils' outcomes. As a result, too few reach the standards in mathematics that are expected for their age.
- The proportion of pupils who reach the required standard in the phonics screening check has increased rapidly since the school has opened. As a result, pupils make good progress in this aspect in Year 1 and the difference between school outcomes and the national average is diminishing quickly.
- The vast majority of children enter the early years with skills and knowledge considerably lower than typical for their age. Many of these pupils are also new to the country and have very limited language acquisition of English. Children make consistently good and often rapid progress in the early years. The proportion of children who meet the good level of development, the expected standard at the end of the early years, is lower than the national average and improving steadily.
- At the end of key stage 1, pupils' outcomes continue to rise and the difference between school outcomes and the national average is diminishing quickly. However, too few pupils reach the standards expected for their age.
- Disadvantaged pupils regularly make better progress than other pupils in the school. However, overall, pupils' outcomes are not high enough. Disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as other pupils nationally. Leaders recognise that there is more to be done.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make positive and small steps of progress against specific targets set. However, due to inconsistent teaching,

their progress is variable within whole-class lessons because their work is not sufficiently matched to their needs.

Early years provision

Good

- Leadership of the early years is good. The early years leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and aspects that require further work in the setting. A very large proportion of children enter Nursery and Reception with knowledge and skills much lower than is typical for their age. Leaders have prioritised the development of pupils' language development and physical development. This work is very effective in preparing children well for Year 1.
- The early years leader sets high expectations for the teaching team and is robust in the way she holds teachers and adults to account for progress children make. As a result, children make good progress with most making rapid progress from their low starting points. This is particularly the case in their writing development.
- In Reception, assessment is precise and accurate. Adults plan work that is built firmly on what children can do, know and understand. As a result, children respond keenly to activities and demonstrate good learning attitudes.
- The teaching of spoken language skills is particularly strong in the settings. Adults routinely model and support children in their rehearsal of sentence building. This helps them make rapid progress in their speaking skills and enables them to write sentences increasingly well.
- Additional funding through the pupil premium is used effectively to support children's speech and language development, and early reading. As a result, these children make good and often rapid progress.
- There is good consistency in the quality of teaching across the Reception classes. Work on offer stems from motivating themes and topics. Adult-led activities are successful in teaching all aspects of the curriculum. When children are working independently, there are plenty of opportunities to consolidate prior learning inside and outside.
- In Nursery, children are supported well. Children are settled and have good-quality relationships with their peers and adults alike. Adults use precise assessments of what children can do to plan work. As a result, children make good progress from their different starting points.
- Parents spoken to on inspection were very pleased with the education their children receive. They value the effective transition into Reception and the regular feedback they have.
- The teaching of phonics is systematic and regular. Precise assessments by the early years leader mean that any learning gaps are filled and children are catching up quickly to reach the standards expected for their age.
- Safeguarding is effective. There are no breaches to statutory welfare requirements.

School details

Unique reference number	141110
Local authority	Bristol
Inspection number	10033107

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	504
Appropriate authority	The academies trust
Chair	Andrew Hogg
Headteacher	Peter Overton
Telephone number	0117 377 3070
Website	www.easton-ce.academy
Email address	school@eastonce.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school opened in September 2014. Its predecessor school was graded inadequate at its last full inspection. The school is part of the Diocese of Bristol Academies Trust (DBAT). This is a growing trust with 10 schools in the south-west of England. There is a board of directors and each school in the trust has a local governing board.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- This is a larger-than-average primary school. Most pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who arrive at points other than the usual transition points is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is well above the national average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- There is a breakfast club which is managed by the school.
- There is a special educational needs resource base for language and communication. These pupils have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans and travel to the school from across Bristol. This resource base is due to close at the end of this academic year. Many pupils have already transitioned to other settings.
- There is a headteacher and two deputy headteachers. The leadership structure also includes an assistant headteacher, core subject teams and a year leader for each year group.
- There is a Nursery on site. These children attend part time.
- Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning across the school. Some learning was observed jointly with the headteacher or other senior staff.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' books to establish the quality of their current work and their progress over time. They listened to pupils read and reviewed reading assessment information for some pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents to ascertain the school's evaluation of its performance. Records relating to behaviour and safety, attendance and safeguarding were also reviewed.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteachers and middle leaders. Meetings also took place with a representative of the trust and with six governors.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during their learning and at lunchtimes and breaktimes.
- Inspectors talked with pupils to seek their views of the school and discuss how they feel about their learning and development.
- An inspector visited the school's before-school provision.
- Inspectors considered 10 responses to Parent View. Inspectors also considered comments provided in parents' text messages and spoke to parents during the inspection. An inspector considered staff's and pupils' views during the inspection and reviewed the electronic surveys.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Mike Brady	Her Majesty's Inspector
Non Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Jan Isaac	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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