

Inspection of Ecton Brook Primary School

Ecton Brook Road, Ecton Brook, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN3 5DY

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteachers of this school are Debbie Archer and Neil Woods. This school is part of Northampton Primary Academy Trust (NPAT), which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Julia Kedwards, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by James Marscheider.

What is it like to attend this school?

Ecton Brook Primary School is a caring and aspirational school. Although it is split over two sites, the school maintains one strong heartbeat. Relationships are at the core of all the school's work. Pupils are happy and feel safe and cared for. They know there are highly skilled adults they can talk to should they have any worries or concerns.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They consistently treat their peers and adults with courtesy and respect. Pupils are eager to do their very best. They live up to the school's high expectations of them. As a result, pupils show mature attitudes to their learning and achieve well. Published outcomes for the school are above the national average.

Pupils are incredibly proud of their school. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities such as being a digital leader, school councillor or reading ambassador. The school council's work has had a highly positive impact on how pupils interact and resolve their own disagreements during unstructured times.

Pupils access an extensive range of aspirational opportunities and experiences. These include attending a wide selection of clubs or working closely with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the National Gallery. Pupils enjoy performing at various musical events, including their local carnival.

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

Children get off to a secure start in the Reception Year. Staff have high expectations of children. They have established clear routines in place that children follow. Indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced and organised. Children enjoy exploring and taking risks. Children are well prepared for key stage 1.

The school has developed a strong reading culture. It prioritises pupils learning to read as quickly as possible. Teachers are experts at teaching phonics. Extra support is available for some pupils to help them to keep up. As a result, pupils achieve well. Teachers choose the books they read to pupils carefully. The school ensures that pupils engage with a range of genres. Books expose pupils to cultures and life experiences that may differ from their own.

The mathematics curriculum is ambitious and well sequenced. Staff model new concepts clearly. They introduce pupils to new vocabulary and encourage its use in discussion. Pupils embed their mathematical fluency while also grappling collaboratively with their peers to problem-solve and reason. Pupils enjoy their lessons and confidently talk about their learning.

The wider curriculum is ambitious. The knowledge and skills that the school wants pupils to learn and remember are clearly identified. There is a focus on the development of vocabulary and oracy. However, in the Reception Year, the impact that spoken interactions have on learning is variable. When children are learning through play, some staff skilfully model new language and ask questions. This supports children to develop their early

language and communication skills. When this support and interaction does not happen, children do not achieve as well as they could.

Lessons include opportunities for pupils to revisit prior learning. Pupils develop a firm understanding of recent curriculum content. However, their ability to recall knowledge over the long term is more variable. Their depth of knowledge in some of the wider curriculum subjects is not fully secure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) achieve well. Staff use a range of scaffolding and adaptive teaching methods. These are highly effective. The school's enhanced provision, 'the acorn room', provides pupils with the most complex needs with carefully tailored lessons. These meet their individual needs well.

The school's wider personal development offer is exceptional. Opportunities for pupils to develop their talents and interests are of high quality. There is clear consideration of disadvantaged pupils, and many take up this offer. The wider curriculum is adapted to include content important to the local area's context. This includes pupils learning about knife crime and cyber-bullying. Pupils demonstrate an age-appropriate understanding of different types of family and relationship. They know the importance of tolerance and respect. Pupils shared with inspectors, 'You shouldn't treat others differently if they are different to you. It's important to respect difference so people don't feel left out.'

The school is exceptionally well led and managed. Staff access a wealth of research-informed training opportunities. They value the chance to network with other professionals across the trust. Leaders' work to support other schools in the trust and beyond is far reaching. They are experts and share good practice widely. Staff are incredibly happy at this school. They feel well supported with their workload and well-being. Those responsible for governance fulfil their statutory duties. They offer the school an effective balance of challenge and support and communicate effectively with the trust's board.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approaches to help pupils recall and retain knowledge are not consistently effective. Pupils do not remember their prior learning in some subjects. The school should ensure that pupils are supported to retain their long-term knowledge effectively.
- Spoken interactions between staff and children in the early years do not always support children's learning. As a result, some children do not achieve as well as they could when independently learning through play. The school should ensure that staff have

the knowledge and skills to impact on learning when interacting with children learning through play.

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	138953
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10347551
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	554
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	James Marscheider
CEO of the trust	Julia Kedwards
Headteachers	Debbie Archer and Neil Woods
Website	www.ectonbrook.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Northampton Primary Academy Trust (NPAT).
- The school uses one registered 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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, early years and SEND.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust, including the CEO.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments, as well as the results of Ofsted's survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Luella Dhoore, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Angela Kirk	Ofsted Inspector
Chrissie Barrington	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025