

# Punnetts Town Community Primary School

Battle Road, Punnetts Town, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 9DE

## Inspection dates

25–26 June 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher is unwavering in her determination to provide the best possible school experience for every pupil within a caring community.
- Leaders have taken effective action to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good and improving rapidly. Staff appreciate the effective professional development that they receive.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Together with a highly dedicated staff team, they are committed to improving the school further.
- Pupils behave well and take great pride in their school. They enjoy learning and are excited about the wide range of activities on offer.
- Pupils are safe and cared for well. Punnetts Town is a nurturing school where all pupils are made to feel welcome.
- The leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is strong. Pupils with SEND and those who are vulnerable are supported to a high standard. Their emotional well-being needs are cared for particularly well. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progress.
- Children in the early years are happy and confident. Children make good progress from their starting points and are ready to achieve well when they start Year 1.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils enjoy an exciting curriculum. Pupils have a breadth of knowledge on a wide range of topics. However, opportunities to improve specific skills, in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, are not always sequenced effectively to build on pupils' skills and knowledge.
- The work of some middle leaders is underdeveloped. Some are new to their roles and have not had time to lead improvements in the quality of teaching in their subjects.
- The most able pupils are not yet achieving well enough. Sometimes teaching lacks challenge for these pupils.

## Full report

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

- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership and governance by ensuring that:
  - leaders further develop the wider curriculum so that pupils progress well in subjects other than English, mathematics and science
  - middle leaders take action to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the subjects they are responsible for leading.
- Raise levels of attainment, particularly in writing, by ensuring that teaching provides sufficient challenge especially for the most able pupils, including those in the early years.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The executive headteacher has set out a clear and compelling vision for the school. Since the previous inspection she has steered the school through a turbulent period, displaying considerable resilience and strength of purpose. Staff and governors trust in her leadership.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have taken effective steps to secure improvement across many aspects of the school's work.
- The executive headteacher has ensured that all staff receive high-quality training. Staff value the support they receive from within the federation and through working with teachers in other schools. Consequently, they feel well supported in their roles.
- The inclusion manager knows the pupils with SEND very well and makes careful checks on their progress. She uses this information to make sure that pupils get timely support. As a result, their needs are well met and they make strong progress from their starting points.
- Leaders' work in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Through a variety of rich opportunities, pupils learn about different cultures and religions. Consequently, pupils are respectful, tolerant, supportive and kind to each other. They are prepared well for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is broad, balanced and well planned. The curriculum makes sure that pupils enjoy and learn from a wide range of experiences, including going on many trips to enrich their learning, such as the recent key stage 1 visit to a local sea-life centre.
- Pupils are inspired by the cross-curricular projects they complete, which are creative and purposeful. Consequently, pupils are able to make links across different subjects and apply their knowledge, skills and understanding well to new activities. Leaders are rightly developing the curriculum further. They are aware that in some curriculum areas the progress pupils make in developing and applying subject-specific skills is variable.
- Leaders use pupil premium funding to good effect. Additional funding provides both extra support in class and additional opportunities to develop pupils' social and emotional well-being. As a result, disadvantaged pupils progress well.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning. It also provides greater opportunities for pupils to be active during breaktime. Pupils understand how to keep themselves fit and healthy.
- Middle leaders identify weaknesses in teaching and learning and take effective action to secure improvement. They check that teaching and the curriculum are having a positive impact on outcomes for pupils. Some subject leaders are new to their role. Training has been provided to support them to develop their leadership skills but they have not yet had time to raise standards.
- The majority of parents and carers feel that the school is well led and managed. Parents speak very positively about all aspects of the school's work, particularly the

progress their children make and the support provided for pupils with SEND. They feel that their children are taught well and are prepared well for secondary school. One parent commented: 'My daughter loves her school. They look after her in such a caring way and she is excelling in all aspects of her learning.'

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the school well. They understand and fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They are working hard with local authority officers to address the current financial difficulties faced by the school.
- Recent changes in membership of the governing body have strengthened governance. Governors visit the school regularly and challenge leaders. As a result, governors are holding leaders to account.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Procedures in place for the protection of pupils are understood well by staff. Training ensures that staff have a good understanding of how to spot signs of potential abuse and neglect. Staff are vigilant. A culture of safeguarding permeates the school. Leaders take timely and appropriate action to follow up any concerns.
- Leaders ensure that all the appropriate recruitment checks are carried out for staff. All records relating to safeguarding are meticulously maintained. Senior leaders and governors regularly check that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Teachers have high expectations for pupils' progress and conduct, which are clearly understood by pupils. Teachers establish a productive working atmosphere and strong relationships in classrooms. Pupils work well with each other to discuss and improve their work. For example, pupils in key stage 1 engaged in animated discussion about which paperclips to use to measure their shoe.
- Teachers plan well to meet the needs of pupils in mixed-age classes. Highly skilled teaching assistants and individual-needs assistants are deployed effectively to support pupils, particularly those who need additional help. Consequently, pupils make good progress, although sometimes adults do not correct pupils' misunderstandings.
- In most lessons and year groups, pupils make strong progress because work is well matched to their needs. Teachers set challenging tasks that pupils succeed in completing. Occasionally, teachers do not take enough account of what pupils already know and can do and so tasks are not challenging enough. When this happens, pupils do not work as hard as they can and so make less progress.
- Skilful questioning by adults encourages pupils to think independently and helps pupils to develop their reasoning and analytical skills. Feedback is used to move learning on. However, some pupils commented that they do not always know how to improve their work.

- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils quickly learn the rules for spelling, which they use to decode words and develop the early skills of reading and writing. Pupils enjoy reading and have regular opportunities to practise. Older pupils select texts independently and carefully to support the development of their reading skills.
- Recent changes to the mathematics curriculum have improved the quality of teaching in this subject across the school. Pupils use a range of resources to help them to learn and remember mathematical concepts. However, some pupils do not present their work in mathematics clearly enough, which can lead to errors in their calculations.
- Pupils talk with enthusiasm about the topics they learn and enjoy the different subjects they study. Teachers' careful planning enables pupils to make important links between subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were able to apply their historical knowledge to their study of modern languages.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils love their school. They talk about it with pride. They are confident, polite and happy. They form trusting relationships with adults and with each other. Consequently, they feel safe.
- Pupils' emotional health and well-being are supported strongly by staff. Pupils speak positively about the support they receive to help them cope with any anxieties they may have. As a result, they develop greater confidence to learn.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare. They say that sometimes a few children are annoying, but that this is swiftly dealt with by adults. However, some parents expressed concerns about behaviour and how bullying is dealt with by leaders.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to develop their skills and interests beyond the classroom. After-school clubs are well attended and include activities such as Irish dancing, rounders and football.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and they conduct themselves well throughout the day. They listen attentively in lessons and respond well to adults and to each other.
- Leaders have taken effective action to improve behaviour. Pupils say that the 'pink slips' help them to understand what they have done wrong and to improve their behaviour as a result. Incidents of poor behaviour are closely logged and analysed by leaders to enable staff and governors to monitor patterns and take effective action as necessary.
- Over time, pupils' attendance has been in line with the national average for primary schools. Leaders have taken effective action to improve attendance. As a result, the number of pupils persistently absent from school has reduced.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Published outcomes in 2018 were broadly in line with the national average for primary schools, although the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels was lower than that seen nationally.
- Effective systems are in place to support the teaching of reading. Pupils have access to a wide range of books that interest them. They understand how reading helps them to improve their writing. Pupils who find reading challenging welcome the additional support they receive. As a result, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 achieve well in reading.
- The teaching of phonics in key stage 1 is strong. Pupils are able to apply their knowledge of sounds and letters to support their reading and writing. Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Swift action is taken to support pupils who do not meet the expected standard in phonics to help them to catch up.
- Leaders have taken effective action to address the weaknesses in writing identified at the previous inspection. Pupils are given a wealth of opportunities to write for different purposes across the curriculum. Consequently, they value their writing more and their presentation has improved.
- Pupils, especially those in key stage 2, make strong progress in writing over time. The older pupils edit their work confidently and improve the quality of their writing. However, too few pupils achieve at the higher levels in writing.
- Changes to the teaching of mathematics are having a positive impact. Pupils, especially those in key stage 1, are making strong progress. As a result, more pupils are reaching the expected and higher standards. Nevertheless, pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in other subjects.
- Effective systems are in place to support pupils with SEND. These pupils are well supported by individual-needs assistants. This support enables them to access the curriculum and achieve well alongside their peers.

## Early years provision

Good

- Children in the early years behave well and are cooperative. This is because strong, positive relationships exist between adults and children.
- Children are safe and well looked after. Adults receive appropriate safeguarding training. They know the children well. This results in children who are confident and excited to come to school.
- Children access a wide range of activities independently, both in the classroom and outside. This enables them to develop their skills across all areas of learning. Activities are thoughtfully planned to enable children to apply what they have previously learned to new situations. For example, children enjoyed counting the number of krill they could find in the water tray. They were able to record accurately the quantity they found using numbers beyond 20.
- The teaching of early reading and writing skills is effective. Children use their knowledge of phonics to support their reading and writing. They are able to apply their skills to write for a variety of purposes, for example making labels for their models.

- The majority of children engage in purposeful activity and persevere to achieve the outcome they desire. For example, children excitedly dug for worms in order to make a bug house. However, learning is not always supported effectively by adults. Consequently, some children lack engagement and learning is not moved on.
- The class teacher's expert knowledge of the early years curriculum enables her to make accurate assessments of the children's learning and track their progress. As a result, they make good progress from their starting points. Nevertheless, the most able children are not always challenged sufficiently.
- Close links with the pre-school setting and a strong partnership with parents ensure that children experience a smooth transition into school. The transition into key stage 1 is also effectively managed, enabling children to build upon the knowledge, skills and understanding developed during the early years.

## School details

Unique reference number	114414
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10088066

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	95
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Monica Pell
Headteacher	Inez Morse
Telephone number	01435 830 361
Website	<a href="http://www.punnettstown.e-sussex.sch.uk">www.punnettstown.e-sussex.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@punnettstown.e-sussex.sch.uk">office@punnettstown.e-sussex.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	20–24 November 2014

## Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection a new executive headteacher has been appointed and a new chair of governors is in post. A formal federation exists between Punnetts Town and two local schools.
- The school is much smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in mixed-age classes.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage, with a very small minority from a range of other minority ethnic backgrounds. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND support is in line with the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of pupils supported by an education, health and care plan is above the national average for primary schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well below the national average for primary schools.



## Information about this inspection

- The lead inspector observed teaching and learning in most year groups alongside the executive headteacher.
- The lead inspector met with pupils, heard a selection of pupils read and observed pupils at breaktimes.
- The lead inspector met with the executive headteacher, the inclusion manager, the early years leader, the designated safeguarding lead, leaders with subject responsibilities and the school business manager.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke to a representative from the local authority.
- A range of pupils' books from all year groups and a range of subjects were looked at.
- Several documents were considered. The lead inspector also considered information about pupils' progress, the use of additional funding, behaviour, attendance and safety.
- The lead inspector took account of 35 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke to parents before school. There were no responses to Ofsted's online pupils' questionnaire. The lead inspector considered the comments made in 28 free-text responses and reviewed the 13 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.

## Inspection team

Linda Taylor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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