

Inspection of a good school: Pentland Primary School

Pentland Avenue, Billingham TS23 2RG

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2021

Outcome

Pentland Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Pentland Primary School. They have a thirst for learning and eagerly talk about their new knowledge and skills. They enjoy recalling learning from previous years. Pupils are happy to share their experiences of school and how they 'would not change this school for anything,' and that, 'everything about this school is amazing'. Pupils feel that they have such a great experience at Pentland because 'our teachers are brilliant at what they do'.

Leaders are passionate about securing the most ambitious outcomes for all their pupils, and this results in a caring ethos that permeates the school. Pupils embrace and respond positively to adults' high expectations for work and behaviour. New members of staff say that they were made welcome from the moment they walked through the door. Both pupils and staff explained that this school is a family.

Pentland Primary School holds its core values of being hardworking, confident, resilient, independent and kind at the heart of all it strives to achieve. Adults and children talked about the importance of their Pentland family values and these attributes were evident throughout the inspection.

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

Senior leaders have prioritised reading. All staff have received comprehensive training in the school's chosen phonics programme. As a result, early reading is delivered consistently to children in early years, and to pupils in key stage 1 and those who might struggle in Year 3 to Year 6. Teaching includes a daily phonics session for all pupils, with additional support when required. Leaders' actions are making a positive difference. Very few pupils remain behind the expected pace of the phonics programme.

The mathematics curriculum is coherently sequenced. Long-term plans logically set out the key knowledge and skills that pupils should learn. These build to clear end-points. An additional daily arithmetic session allows pupils to further secure their understanding of

mathematical reasoning and fluency. Pupils are actively involved in their learning. They can talk about how their teachers help them to remember new learning.

The wider curriculum is well planned in almost all subjects, with progression evident from Year 1 to Year 6. Staff have a clear understanding of how pupils learn. History lesson visits showed how teachers use learning recaps to check what pupils already know. They make sure that pupils have a solid understanding of key concepts before delivering new learning. Pupils were able to talk about what they had learned in previous years and could remember their work on Pompeii and Mount Vesuvius in detail. Pupils have a more limited understanding of the distinctiveness of different faiths. Pupils can talk with interest and excitement about the religious stories they have listened to. For example, pupils could talk about the impact that fasting may have on the performance of a Muslim athlete; however, they could not recall why fasting is important within the Islamic faith.

The wider development of pupils is important to leaders. Pupils feel safe when they are at school. They also know the importance of staying safe online and outside school. Incidents that happen either in school or within the wider community are responded to promptly. Leaders work with pupils and parents and carers to build a shared understanding of right and wrong.

Many children start at this school with below-age attainment in communication and language. Developing this is a priority in the early years setting. The new early years framework has been carefully considered when designing the curriculum for children in Nursery and Reception classes. This curriculum has been introduced this academic year. Early years staff are working with support partners across the trust to ensure that their curriculum offer remains strong as they incorporate the new framework.

As the early years curriculum is adapted in line with the new framework, leaders intend to align their curriculum offer so that this is well sequenced from pre-school to Year 6. This will ensure that staff understand how knowledge and skills are developed in each subject from children's starting point at two years old through to Pentland's ambitious end-points that prepare all pupils for Year 7.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access learning in a calm and purposeful manner. SEND procedures are well thought through from the earliest stages to more complex processes that support pupils with multiple needs. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) supports staff to make appropriate adaptations to the learning environment for pupils with SEND. In all lessons visited, pupils with SEND were able to access the curriculum. The school also has an enhanced mainstream school (EMS). This offers pupils with significant needs a safe place to continue their education journey.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding in this school. Staff have

secure knowledge of what to look for and how to respond. They know that 'safeguarding is everybody's responsibility'. All staff are alert to concerns and report worries quickly. These are followed up promptly by leaders who communicate well with families and external agencies. Leaders show a real tenacity in following concerns raised through to resolutions. They are strong advocates for the needs of their pupils and are unafraid to offer professional challenge if they feel that the needs of their pupils and families are not being met.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subjects in the wider curriculum do not build knowledge from children's starting points in early years. This means that learning is not as well sequenced as it could be. Leaders need to further develop the wider curriculum, so that all subjects are clearly planned and sequenced from early years to Year 6. This will support pupils to know more, remember more and be able to do more.
- Teachers do not make it clear enough to pupils that they are learning religious education (RE). Pupils can remember historical stories about famous religious figures, but cannot relate these to the religion these figures represent. Leaders need to ensure that their RE curriculum is delivered so that pupils are clear about when they are learning RE.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since the school converted to academy status in July 2017.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

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

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.

School details

Unique reference number	144542
Local authority	Stockton-on-Tees
Inspection number	10200604
Type of school	Primary school
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	303
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Angelina Bentley
Headteacher	Mrs Dawn Dacombe
Website	https://pentlandprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of the 1 Excellence Multi Academy Trust.
- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is high.
- The school has a specialised unit that attracts additional funding to address the needs of 23 pupils with SEND within the local authority area of Stockton-on-Tees.
- The school is opening Nursery provision for two-year-olds in November 2021.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, the SENCo, curriculum leaders and a range of staff and pupils. She spoke with members of the

governing body, a representative of the local authority and the chief executive officer of the 1 Excellence Multi Academy Trust.

- The lead inspector looked closely at the quality of education in early reading, mathematics and history. This involved speaking with leaders, pupils and staff, visiting lessons, listening to pupils read and reviewing samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school, the lead inspector spoke to many members of staff and pupils. The inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the school's policies and procedures. During these meetings, records were scrutinised, including those relating to the safer recruitment of staff. Case files were sampled to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. The lead inspector also spoke with a range of pupils and staff to evaluate the school's safeguarding culture.
- The views of a wide range of staff were considered from conversations and 17 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. The 23 responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including written responses, were taken into account.

Inspection team

Zoe Lightfoot, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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