

Inspection of a good school: Potters Gate CofE Primary School

Potters Gate, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7BB

Inspection dates:

9 and 10 November 2021

Outcome

Potters Gate CofE Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming and friendly school where Christian values are promoted in all aspects of school life. Pupils feel happy, safe and valued at Potters Gate because staff listen to them and care for them well. Pupils understand that everyone is different, but that everyone is included. One pupil maturely told the lead inspector, 'This is a very inclusive school.'

Staff have high expectations of pupils' learning. Pupils are eager to make the most of every lesson. Pupils said that they very rarely experience bullying, but occasionally they fall out. They said that, when this happens, staff are good at sorting these problems out quickly. Pupils enjoy assemblies about the school values of justice, trust, fellowship and resilience. They like the different clubs they attend such as 'tech' and breakfast club.

Pupils are fully invested in the school and the many opportunities on offer to them. The different councils, such as the faith and eco councils, give pupils leadership opportunities and a chance to make a difference to the school and local community. For example, pupils learn about climate change and how their behaviour can have a positive impact on the environment. Pupils are encouraged to become 'world caretakers'.

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

Leaders are highly ambitious for all staff and pupils at Potters Gate. They have given careful thought to the curriculum and how well it prepares pupils for the future. Leaders have identified the knowledge and skills pupils should learn in each year group. They have carefully planned each subject so that learning builds from Reception Year to Year 6. This means that pupils get better at each subject and become more knowledgeable as they move through the school. As a result, they develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of a range of topics, themes and concepts.

Leaders support staff well and consider staff workload carefully. They have developed simple assessment processes to check what pupils know and remember across the school.

This helps leaders to collect useful information so that they can make sensible changes to what pupils learn and when. Leaders in English, mathematics, physical education and religious education use this information well. However, in most other subjects, leaders do not use this information well enough to ensure that pupils make as much progress as they could.

Staff ensure that reading is a high priority. They are trained well and are confident in the teaching of phonics. Children start to learn to read as soon as they enter Reception. They move through a well-planned sequence of lessons, which means that they learn to read fluently and confidently. Interesting but suitable books give pupils the opportunity to practise the sounds they learn. As a result, they enjoy reading and experience a feeling of success. Staff waste no time in identifying pupils who are falling behind. Swift help from staff means that these pupils catch up and keep up.

Leaders have developed an engaging mathematics curriculum. Pupils get off to a good start in the early years and what they learn helps them to tackle more complex mathematics in key stage 1. Leaders have ensured that teachers are confident in teaching mathematics. This means that teachers present new learning clearly and ask questions to check pupils' understanding and challenge pupils' thinking. A focus on teaching mathematical vocabulary leads to pupils being able to explain complex concepts very well.

Good staff-pupil relationships help staff to identify pupils who have additional needs and therefore need more support. Staff receive regular training. For example, staff were recently trained in dyslexia-friendly strategies. Regular meetings take place so that the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and other staff can discuss how best to support individual pupils. Consequently, teaching is adapted and interventions put in place so that the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are met.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Clear rules mean that the large majority of pupils are in no doubt about what is expected of them. As a result, pupils behave well and are kind and considerate to each other in lessons. They listen well to each other's points of view and engage politely and respectfully with staff.

Personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils learn about important themes and issues through a well-planned and well-thought-out personal, social and health education programme. Pupils engage with the local community in many ways. For example, the school's taiko drummers represent the school at bonfire night, the local food festival and talent competition.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular training. As a result, they are aware of the risks they need to be alert to. Staff get to know pupils and their families well. This means that they quickly identify pupils they have concerns about. These concerns are passed on to the school's leaders, who take swift action. Leaders work closely with external agencies so that families receive

the support they need. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's assessment processes are not fully embedded across all subjects. This means that some subject leaders do not use assessment information well enough to build a clear picture of the progress pupils are making in their subjects. Leaders need to further refine the assessment processes in some of the foundation subjects so that they have a clearer understanding of how they can help pupils know and remember more in their subjects.

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 as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Potters Gate CofE Primary School, to be good in May 2016.

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	145278
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10203164
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	500
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Diana Gwilliams
Headteacher	Jayne Venables
Website	www.potters-gate.surrey.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Potters Gate CofE Primary School is part of a multi-academy trust called The Good Shepherd Trust.
- The executive headteacher and executive deputy headteacher also lead St Andrew's Infant School, which is another school within The Good Shepherd Trust.
- The school is a Church of England school.
- The last section 48 inspection took place in October 2016.
- The school offers before- and after-school clubs.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. He discussed the curriculum with leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and heard pupils read.
- The inspector looked at curriculum planning in a range of other subjects.
- The inspector met with trust leaders, school leaders, staff, pupils and those with responsibility for governance, including the chair of the board of trustees and the chair of the local committee.
- The inspector visited the early years provision.
- The inspector observed the start and end of the school day and breaktime.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's self-evaluation and school development plan, and records of monitoring visits carried out by the trust.
- The inspector met with the SENCo to discuss the provision for pupils with SEND.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey. He took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and comments made by those who responded. He spoke to parents at the end of the school day, during the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector looked at the school's website and policies, the trust's safeguarding audit, met with designated safeguarding leads and spoke with pupils and staff. He scrutinised records of the safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with trustees and a local committee member. He scrutinised a selection of child protection records.

Inspection team

Shaun Jarvis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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