

Inspection of a good school: Pitsford Primary School

Moulton Road, Pitsford, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN6 9AU

Inspection date:

3 November 2021

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pitsford Primary School is a friendly and caring place at the heart of the community. Pupils love coming to school and say that this is because staff care for them. Pupils are polite and demonstrate good manners, for example by opening doors for their friends, members of staff and visitors. One pupil explained that the school helped her to be a better person.

Leaders expect pupils to behave well, and they do. Pupils show great respect for their friends. Records show that bullying does not happen very often at all. Pupils say that if bullying was to happen, they could speak to staff, and the bullying would stop. Parents agree.

Pupils have lots of opportunities to learn outside of the classroom. They enjoy making mud pies, writing school songs and flying gliders that they built at a local aerodrome. Pupils have the chance to learn to sail and be part of the school choir. They like listening to stories together. However, some of them do not learn to read as quickly as they could. Pupils remember visitors coming to school to teach them about different religions. Parents welcome this wide range of experiences that their children receive.

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

Leaders know that promoting a love of reading for their pupils is important. They have made sure that pupils listen to good-quality stories every day. Teachers read with expression, and pupils enjoy joining in events such as 'bed-time story sessions'. The library is a focal point, and the school community have worked hard to make sure that there is a wide choice of books for pupils to read.

Teachers are keen to teach reading well, and leaders want to make sure that pupils get off to a good start. Staff have changed the way that younger pupils are taught to read.

However, not all staff have had the training that they need to do this well. Plans are not in place so that teachers know the order they should teach new sounds. Pupils do not always say sounds correctly. Some teachers do not always correct this, which means that pupils cannot blend the sounds fluently to read the books that they are given.

In some subjects, leaders have identified what they want pupils to know. For example, in mathematics, teachers know what should be taught and when. Teachers check what pupils understand. They use this to plan precisely what pupils need to learn next. Teachers make sure that pupils get plenty of chances to practise a new concept when they do not understand something as well as they should. Most pupils use what they have learned before to help them to solve problems and understand new concepts.

In other subjects, the curriculum is at an earlier stage of development. In history, topics have been identified. However, leaders have not yet established precisely what knowledge is really important for pupils to grasp. Pupils say that they like learning about historical events and people. They know they have learned about the Romans, but they cannot always remember key information or concepts. Leaders have not checked that pupils have the chance to recall and remember important knowledge.

Leaders want pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve just as well as their peers. They provide training for teachers so they can support pupils with SEND appropriately. Teachers know what extra support these pupils need to help them to remember what they are learning. They make sure that pupils with SEND can learn in smaller steps and have the chance to practise new learning more often.

Children in early years settle into the routines of school life quickly. They explore and understand mathematics in practical ways. They learn songs and rhymes together. Children play cooperatively and travel around the classroom and school calmly and sensibly.

Staff are proud to work at Pitsford Primary School. They feel that leaders are mindful of staff workload and well-being. Staff say that leaders have tried to help them through times when this increased due to the pandemic. They appreciate that leaders ask them how they can help, and they are confident that leaders will act on concerns they raise.

Parents speak highly of the school. They express gratitude for the support they have received during the COVID-19 pandemic and when pupils continued their learning at home. They feel that the school is 'amazing' and that everyone is welcome there.

In discussion with the headteacher, we agreed that the teaching of phonics and early reading, and the development of the wider curriculum, may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pitsford Primary School has a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff have been given training. They can explain what to do and who to speak to if they have a safeguarding concern. Leaders carefully check that all staff are following these systems.

Leaders check that pupils feel safe. They make sure that pupils know what to do to stay safe outside of school and when using the internet. Leaders seek help from the local authority when they need advice.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not made sure that all staff know how to teach phonics well. They have not clearly identified what sounds pupils will learn and by when. Not all staff model the sounds that letters make accurately. Pupils do not get off to a swift start learning to read. Not all pupils make the progress that they could to become fluent early readers. Leaders should make sure that there is a clear plan in place which identifies what sounds pupils will learn and by when. They should make sure that all staff have the training that they need to teach phonics consistently well.
- Work on curriculum plans is not yet complete. Leaders have not yet identified the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn and by when. Pupils do not recall the important knowledge that they need in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that they identify and sequence the important knowledge that pupils need to know in all subjects, from early years to Year 6. They should check to make sure that pupils have the chance to revise and recall it.

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 school to be good in July 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	121850
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10199940
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	67
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	Not applicable
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Mr Alan Denton
Headteacher	Ms Julia Hyde
Website	www.pitsfordprimary.org
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new headteacher has been appointed.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator, subject leaders, a group of staff, the chair of the governing body and two other governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into the following subjects: early reading, history and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at

curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum planning and samples of pupils' written work in a range of subjects.
- A wide range of documents was scrutinised, including those relating to safeguarding and behaviour. A meeting was held with the designated safeguarding lead.
- The inspectors reviewed the 14 responses that were submitted by parents to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Martin Fitzwilliam, lead inspector Ofsted Inspector

Michael Wilson 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 2021