

Inspection of Pelham Primary School

Southey Road, Wimbledon, London SW19 1NU

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 March 2022

Outcome

Pelham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They typically learn well, including in early reading. Several parents and carers said that their children cannot wait to get to school after the weekend. Leaders strive to keep pupils safe in school. Pupils trust the adults around them to look after them. They value the care that staff provide.

Adults have high expectations of all pupils, including for their behaviour. Staff model positive language and behaviours when interacting with pupils. Across the school, pupils try their best to show kindness and behave well. They are courteous towards adults and other pupils. On the odd occasion when bullying behaviour occurs, staff deal with it effectively.

Leaders provide pupils with many enrichment activities. These are designed to support learning and encourage pupils to develop their interests and talents. For example, Year 3 pupils stay overnight on HMS Belfast to learn about life in a warship. Year 6 pupils enrich their modern foreign language experience with a week in France. Leaders ensure that every pupil learns at least one musical instrument over an extended period. This enables them to perform at a high standard.

Parents value leaders' open-door policy. They appreciate that leaders are at the school gate every morning to welcome them and their children.

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

Leaders have put in place an ambitious and well-thought-through curriculum. Where possible, the curriculum includes subject content that reflects the school's diverse community. For example, during diversity week, pupils learned about a range of cultural, religious, physical and gender differences.

Typically, teachers have the necessary expertise to teach the planned curriculum effectively. In mathematics, for example, teachers use what pupils already know to help them make sense of and gain new knowledge. They break down concepts into small, manageable steps. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), learn well. In the early years, children are also supported to

develop their knowledge in a range of subjects. For example, they develop an understanding of changes that happen in the springtime. This knowledge of changes prepares them well for their study of weather and seasons in Years 1 and 2.

In the main, teachers use assessment information well. They adjust their lessons based on what pupils already know and can do. For example, in geography, teachers have recently revisited some subject content. This was because they had identified gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that occurred during the pandemic. As a result, pupils can remember more about what they have learned.

In a few subjects, however, pupils are not able to build up and gain new knowledge as securely. This is because, on occasion, teachers do not make sure that pupils have mastered the fundamental pieces of knowledge that they need to understand before moving on to more complex ideas.

Pupils try hard to do their best in lessons. They contribute to discussions and they work well with other pupils. Disruption to learning is rare. Children in the early years are curious about the world around them. They often ask questions about their learning and take part enthusiastically in discussions with adults and with their peers. These positive attitudes help pupils to learn well and gain new knowledge.

Leaders and governors are united in their ambition for all pupils to learn how to read with fluency. Adults typically teach the school's phonics programme well. Children start learning to read from the time they join the Nursery. They practise the sounds they have been taught regularly in order to firm up their knowledge. Pupils read books well matched to the sounds they are learning, at school and at home. Pupils who have fallen behind in their reading receive help to catch up. Occasionally, this support is not targeted sharply on filling specific gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. This is because, at times, adults tend to overly focus on comprehension rather than strengthening pupils' reading fluency.

Leaders and staff work well together to ensure that they understand and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Even before children start school, leaders work with early years settings to identify those who might need extra support. Leaders also work with parents to ensure that they find out these children's needs as soon as possible. Leaders and teachers make adaptations to meet pupils' individual needs. This helps pupils with SEND acquire new knowledge successfully.

Pupils enjoy the many experiences on offer outside the classroom. They practise the principles of democracy as they elect their school council representatives. They then visit the Houses of Parliament and witness democracy in action. Recently, a robotics project with a local secondary school and the school's links with Transport for London provided pupils with an insight into the world of work.

Leaders support staff by making sure their workload is manageable. For example, staff value the 'low-key weeks' where no after-school meetings are planned, enabling them to finish work earlier than usual.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their pupils and families well. They are quick to identify and refer concerns to the safeguarding team. Governors commission safeguarding audits to check that arrangements remain effective and robust.

Leaders work well with external agencies to support pupils who are at risk. They pursue prompt and effective action to secure the best outcomes for these pupils and their families.

Pupils learn about risk and how to keep themselves safe, such as when using the internet. They attend workshops on different risks, for instance the dangers of gang involvement. Staff also teach pupils how to maintain their health and well-being, and how to form healthy relationships.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, teachers sometimes do not make sure that pupils have mastered key subject knowledge and concepts. This means that pupils do not have the building blocks to support them in gaining deeper knowledge and understanding in those subjects. Leaders and teachers should make sure that, in all subjects, pupils' prior learning is secure, and provides them with firm foundations on which to deepen their knowledge and understanding of more difficult concepts.
- Occasionally, additional early reading support is not pinpointed to specific gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge. This reduces the impact of leaders' typically successful work to ensure that all pupils quickly learn to read with fluency. Leaders should address this by ensuring that early reading catch-up concentrates fully on ensuring that pupils master the sounds that they do not know securely.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 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	102642
Local authority	Merton
Inspection number	10212489
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mrs Katy Neep
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Greer
Website	www.pelham.merton.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2020.
- Leaders do not make use of 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 leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team. The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, geography, and mathematics. For each deep dive, he spoke with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and looked at samples of pupils' work. Other subjects were also considered as part of this inspection.

- In inspecting safeguarding, the inspector carried out a scrutiny of the school's single central record of pre-employment checks and other records related to child protection.
- The inspector considered the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys. This included discussions on behaviour, safeguarding and pupils' wider development.

Inspection team

Edison David, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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