

Inspection of a good school: Pot Kiln Primary School

Butt Road, Great Cornard, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0DS

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 April 2022

Outcome

Pot Kiln Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pot Kiln Primary School is a friendly school. Pupils are kind to each other and respect staff. They listen to their teachers and have positive attitudes to their learning. Many pupils enjoy learning and say staff make their lessons 'fun'.

The school's consistent approach to behaviour means many pupils have good behaviour and are 'ready, respectful and safe'. The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education programme is integral to this. It teaches pupils about topics such as how to manage friendships or how to get help if they are worried. Consequently, pupils and children in the early years manage their behaviour and emotions well.

Pupils say that if there are disagreements or arguments, adults sort out the issue so it does not happen again. Many pupils say they have not been bullied. Those that have, trust staff to deal with it appropriately.

There is a growing range of clubs available to pupils. Pupils enjoy keeping fit and active through the varied activities available to them on the playground. Older pupils are 'Reading Champions' and enjoy supporting younger pupils to read different books.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school experienced turbulence in staffing and leadership. Leaders quickly got to grips with the areas of the school that were not good enough. Leaders' rapid improvement plans tackled the areas of the school that needed attention effectively. Staff, governors and the local authority work together well to ensure the school remains good.

Curriculum leaders recently refined subject plans. Many plans identify what pupils should know, and arrange learning in a logical way from early years to Year 6. By the end of Year 6, pupils access a range of different subjects which match the national curriculum. Teachers use the detailed plans, with their good subject knowledge, to pick helpful

activities that support pupils' learning. In mathematics, for example, adults support children in early years to learn their number facts. Pupils then grow in confidence with mathematical knowledge and processes. By the time they are in older year groups, pupils can then apply their mathematical knowledge to a variety of 'real-life' scenarios.

A small number of subjects have only recently been improved and reintroduced to pupils. In these few subjects, older pupils are yet to benefit from these more recent improvements. These pupils have weaker knowledge than their younger peers. Leaders are continuing to develop the planning and delivery of these subjects, and to address the gaps in older pupils' knowledge.

Subject areas that are well planned have assessment closely matched to the key knowledge pupils learn. Teachers use in-class checks to see what pupils have learned. Lessons are adapted to address gaps in pupils' knowledge or give pupils more practice with knowledge they find tricky. Consequently, pupils fare well in the curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils are well supported to access the same curriculum as everyone else. Pupils achieve well.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. Learning to read starts as soon as children join the school. Well-trained staff support children to learn their reading sounds so that by Year 1 pupils become more confident with their reading. Adults use a range of books and strategies to help pupils, of all ages, who find reading hard to catch up. There is a growing love of reading. Pupils enjoy the class books read to them by their teachers. Shared books and stories are becoming part of school life.

Leaders have rethought the school's approach to dealing with tricky behaviour. Staff ensure that pupils access a range of emotional and pastoral support so that behaviour does not become an issue. Pupils, through PSHE, are taught specifically about how they are different from each other, and learn strategies like 'mindfulness'. Clear and consistent expectations mean that learning is not disrupted often. Pupils are well supported with their behaviour.

While the recent changes to the school resulted in an increase in workload, leaders are mindful of how this impacts on staff's well-being. Assessment, for example, is now more relevant and purposeful than it was. Leaders and governors work closely with the local authority to ensure they are concentrating on the right things to make the school better for everyone.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Across the school, there is a strong safeguarding culture. Staff know how to spot if a child is at risk of harm or neglect. All concerns are reported to safeguarding leaders. Staff know the risks to pupils in the local community.

The process to report a concern is clear. Leaders keep detailed records of concerns. Records show prompt and appropriate actions in response to concerns. Leaders work with a range of external support to give pupils and families the help they need.

Opportunities to teach pupils about how to keep safe are clearly mapped through the curriculum. As a result, pupils know how to keep safe in the community and online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of subjects are in the process of being, or have recently been, refined. In these subjects, pupils' knowledge is much weaker than in the rest of the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure all subjects have clearly identified, well-sequenced knowledge, with closely linked assessment so all pupils achieve consistently well across the school.

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 November 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	124536
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10200288
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louise Arnold
Headteacher	Laura Jestico
Website	www.potkiln.net/
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher joined the school in January 2021.
- The school has a nursery provision.
- The school uses registered 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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and music. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with curriculum leaders, looked at curriculum plans and scrutinised a range of pupils' work from science, physical education, history, religious education and PSHE.

- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. He looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. He spoke to pupils, staff and governors about safeguarding.
- The inspector held a telephone call with the local authority's designated safeguarding officer.
- The inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered the 20 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 20 free-text responses. The inspector also considered the 12 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire and other, paper-based surveys to ascertain staff's and pupils' views.

Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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