

Inspection of a good school: Phoenix Community Primary School

Belmont Road, Kennington, Ashford, Kent TN24 9LS

Inspection dates:

28 and 29 June 2022

Outcome

Phoenix Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

There is a strong commitment to include everyone in this caring and friendly community school. Pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy their learning. They say that teachers make lessons fun and interesting and 'help you learn lots of things you didn't know before.' Pupils know that teachers expect them to work hard and they do their best.

Staff know pupils well. Pupils are well cared for. They behave well and feel safe. From the early years, children learn how to follow the school's rules and be kind to each other. Assemblies celebrate pupils who demonstrate the school's motto of, 'Respect yourself. Respect each other. Respect your own and each other's property'. If any bullying happens, staff deal with it quickly and fairly. Pupils who are worried about anything are confident to go to adults for help and know that they will be listened to.

Pupils as well as parents and carers appreciate the wide range of clubs available, which pupils regularly attend. These include drama, craft, engineering, cooking, art and a range of sporting activities. Pupils' achievements outside of school are also valued and celebrated.

Parents are supportive of the school. As one parent said, 'This school is so welcoming, friendly, supportive and will always try to help the children, putting them first.'

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

Over the past year, the COVID-19 pandemic and building works have presented leaders and governors with significant challenges. Despite this, leaders have made sure that the focus on pupils' learning has been maintained.

Leaders have designed an ambitious, broad curriculum that motivates and inspires pupils. Leaders are uncompromising in their work to make sure that pupils are getting the best possible learning, social and cultural experiences. There has been, and continues to be,

effective work to ensure that pupils catch up with any gaps in their learning as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Subject leaders have good knowledge of their subjects and colleagues benefit from their extensive skills and expertise. Teachers ask probing questions to check pupils' understanding and to make them think carefully. In mathematics tasks, pupils have to give reasons for their answers to questions, which they do with increasing skill.

Pupils achieve well. They conduct themselves well in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning. They listen well to their teachers and each other. They work very well together on different activities. For example, working in small groups to sequence the events of the Titanic disaster. Leaders have already identified, however, that the knowledge and skills pupils need to know by the end of a year or key stage, are not as clearly defined in all subjects as in some. Pupils do not always remember well enough what they have learned.

Staff have equally ambitious expectations for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are quick to identify pupils with SEND and provide effective support. Suitable adjustments are made for pupils to learn the same curriculum as others and experience success. Bespoke plans are put in place for pupils that require them, including external support where needed.

Leaders prioritise reading. Phonics is taught well. Staff make sure that the books younger pupils read closely match the sounds they know. Pupils use their phonics knowledge well to help them read and write. Those who need extra help to learn to read receive effective support from well-trained adults. Children are encouraged to develop a love of reading right from the start in Reception. They love looking at books and listening to stories. They also learn about numbers through story books. Older pupils develop an appreciation of different types of books as they are introduced to a wide range of high-quality and often challenging texts. They read widely and enjoy the 'million words' challenge and the online reading programme. They develop as confident and fluent readers, which supports their learning in all subjects.

Pupils' wider development is a strength. Leaders actively promote fundamental British values in assemblies and class discussions. Pupils in Year 6 thoroughly enjoyed the recent residential visit. They said that as well as being great fun, they 'learned independence and resilience'.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They work extremely well together as a strong team. They appreciate the guidance they receive from senior leaders, subject leaders and governors to help manage their work and consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' well-being and safety are priorities for everyone. Leaders responsible for safeguarding, staff and governors are fully trained and understand their responsibilities. Staff know the pupils well and are alert to any causes for concern. They quickly identify

pupils who may need help and protection. Rapid support is provided in school and leaders work with specialist services if needed to secure vital help for vulnerable pupils and their families. Leaders and teachers make sure that pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. The appropriate checks are carried out on adults who work in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The most important knowledge and skills pupils need to know by the end of a year or key stage are not as clearly defined in all subjects, as in some. Pupils do not always remember well enough what they have learned. Leaders need to ensure that pupils build their knowledge and skills towards agreed end points and remember what they have been taught so that they consistently meet leaders' high expectations.

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 December 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	133961
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10207094
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	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Winston Michael
Headteacher	Chris Johnson
Website	www.phoenix-primary.kent.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	13 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in November 2018. He was previously the deputy headteacher at the school.
- Since July 2021, major rebuilding work has been taking place. This has meant that all classes have been relocated into temporary mobile classrooms on the playground. This has reduced the capacity for all play areas and space for interventions and 'breakout' areas.
- The school is in a collaboration with nine other primary schools as part of the CARE foundation trust.
- 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 leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.

- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinators, other leaders, staff and governors. She also held a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- The inspector also looked at other subject documents and observed some pupils reading to staff. Pupils were observed at break and lunchtimes. The inspector spoke informally to groups of pupils.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at the single central record of recruitment checks, and safeguarding records, and talked informally to pupils and staff.
- The inspector considered the views expressed by parents, pupils and staff in response to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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