

Inspection of a good school: Princefield First School

Saxon Road, Penkridge, Stafford, Staffordshire ST19 5EP

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 July 2022

Outcome

Princefield First School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Princefield are happy to attend. This is because they are well cared for by staff. There are highly positive relationships between staff and pupils that start in Nursery. This helps to develop confident children in early years who are eager to learn. Pupils continue to have a positive attitude to learning as they go through the school. They work hard in lessons and enjoy their learning. Pupils learn a lot from experiences such as the recreation of the Great Fire of London.

Pupils say that most people are kind, and they feel safe. Pupils play well together on the playground. Some of the older pupils say that bullying sometimes happens. They know whom to talk to in school if it does. Staff take action to make it stop.

Pupils are proud of the roles they have in school such as being a 'bookworm' or being on the school council. They have enjoyed visitors to school that have supported their learning, for example the Stone Age man. However, they have missed the opportunities to go out on visits. Parents have also missed the face-to-face community events which have been limited since the pandemic.

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

Leaders, including the trust and governors, are ambitious for all children to succeed. There is a broad and balanced curriculum. It aims to give pupils the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of their education. Leaders are still refining this curriculum in some subjects. This is to ensure that it includes the key concepts and most important knowledge. Memorable experiences are a key feature of the curriculum, and pupils know and remember their learning from these.

Quality texts are also an important feature of the curriculum. This starts in early years and encourages a love of reading and books. Pupils spoken to were enthusiastic about books and authors. Leaders in the early years also understand the importance of learning to read as soon as possible. Phonics teaching starts as soon as the children start school. A

new phonics programme has been introduced and most staff follow this. Staff identify gaps in pupils' knowledge through a range of assessment strategies. They provide additional support to pupils who are not keeping up with the programme. For many pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), this is helping them to read confidently and fluently. However, for a small number of pupils, the support they receive is not helping them to keep up.

Children in the Nursery make a solid start to securing their understanding of numbers. They explore number in a variety of ways. This helps prepare them for the learning that is to come. In the Reception Year, this is built on well and children continue to develop a deep understanding of number. Throughout key stage 1, this continues to develop. The use of physical materials helps pupils to secure their understanding of a wide range of mathematical concepts. In key stage 2, pupils demonstrate a good working knowledge of a range of mathematics. However, they do not always use the correct vocabulary to explain what they know.

Staff use a range of assessment strategies across the curriculum. Quizzes and flashback fours check on previous learning. Staff then use the information from these to inform their teaching. When necessary, they revisit learning to secure pupils' long-term knowledge and understanding.

Leaders engage with a range of agencies to try and identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. They provide a range of support to make sure that pupils have access to an ambitious and appropriate curriculum. This works effectively in some areas of the curriculum, particularly in mathematics. However, the support in phonics for a small number of pupils is not as effective.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to develop themselves personally, as well as academically. Through personal, social and health education, they learn about keeping themselves safe. They also learn about respecting differences and the signing club supports this work. Experiences in school also help to develop pupils' character. The older pupils recently took part in a two-day 'mission, thrive and survive' experience. This involved a range of outdoor adventure activities, including bushcraft and meditation.

Pupils behave well around the school, on the playground and in lessons. They show respect to adults and each other. They follow the school rules of 'be ready, be respectful, be safe'.

The trust and the governing body understand their roles and responsibilities and carry this out effectively. They make sure that leaders identify appropriate priorities and hold leaders to account for the quality of education provided. Staff who spoke with inspectors said that leaders are considerate of their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make the appropriate checks on all staff who work on the school site. Leaders

provide training to all staff to make sure they can recognise signs of concern. Staff know how to report concerns. Leaders respond appropriately to any issues raised in a timely manner. They work with other agencies to ensure that pupils are safe and that families get support when they need it.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe online. They also learn about other ways of staying safe through the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For a small minority of pupils, the support they receive to learn to read is not as effective as it could be. As a result, they are not catching up quickly to where they need to be. Leaders should ensure that effective support is given to the pupils who need it most.
- The curriculum in some foundation subjects has not yet been fully implemented. As a result, there is a risk that pupils will not learn the important concepts in those subjects. Leaders should ensure that the work on refining the curriculum continues so that pupils know and remember what is most important.

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, Princefield First School, to be good in September 2013.

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	145379
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10241460
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	219
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mark Roberts
Headteacher	Helen Barron
Website	www.princefield.staffs.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school does not use 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 met with the headteacher, who is the designated safeguarding lead. Pupils' case files were reviewed. The single central record of the checks on staff's suitability to work with children was scrutinised.
- The inspector met formally with groups of pupils and spoke with pupils in their lessons and around school. The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times.
- The inspector reviewed documents on the school's website, as well as published information about the school's performance.

- The inspector had discussions with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the early years leaders, the chair of the trust, the chief executive officer and the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with staff to discuss their workload and the support they receive to carry out their roles.
- The inspector spoke to pupils about how safe they feel in school and how they learn to keep themselves safe.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with the subject leader or champion, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and free-text comments. She considered responses to the staff surveys.

Inspection team

Helen Forrest, lead inspector

Her Majesty's 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 2022