

Inspection of Priorswood Primary School

Wedlands, Taunton, Somerset TA2 7AD

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Priorswood Primary are proud to be members of their school. They enjoy coming to school, feel safe and attend well. They are keen to talk about what the school offers them. Pupils study a broad range of subjects, including learning in the forest school area. These outdoor lessons build pupils' resilience, independence and teamwork skills. Leaders provide a range of opportunities for pupils to enrich their learning and extend their interests and talents.

Pupils show positive attitudes to their learning. They support and encourage each other beyond the classroom environment. Pupils conduct themselves well around the school. They know what adults expect of them. Pupils show a high level of respect for their peers and staff. Staff model strong relationships and clear expectations. Pupils see them as effective role models. As a result, the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They say that it rarely happens. Pupils are confident that concerns would be acted on quickly if they occurred. The majority of parents and carers who shared their views recognise the dedication and care provided by staff, and the impact this has on their child.

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

The school has improved significantly in recent years. Staffing is now stable. As a result, there is greater consistency across the curriculum, including expectations of the pupils. Staff value the changes that leaders are making to support their workload. Staff feel they are part of a strong team.

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils. Children in early years start well. Adults skilfully develop children's language and extend their learning. Staff build curiosity and encourage children to think critically and problem-solve. Leaders' focus on language and vocabulary development continues from early years into key stages 1 and 2. Staff know the important effect this has on pupils' ability to learn successfully. Pupils use their expanding vocabulary and language skills with increasing accuracy.

Staff know pupils well. They have a secure understanding of the needs of pupils with SEND. Accurate identification ensures that these pupils are able to access the same curriculum as their peers. However, leadership of SEND has gone through significant change. Consequently, there is not a clear and structured overview of the provision that pupils with SEND have. Pupils do not always receive the most accurately targeted support. As a result, they do not always achieve the best possible outcomes.

Leaders have strengthened the core subjects of reading and mathematics. There is a systematic approach to the way the curriculum is delivered. This deepens pupils'

knowledge and supports them to retain what they have learned. As a result, the varying needs of pupils in the single-year group and mixed-age classes are well met.

Reading is a whole-school priority. Pupils read regularly and they say that they enjoy listening to adults read to them. Children develop phonics knowledge well. Teachers identify misconceptions quickly. When pupils fall behind, teachers help them to catch up. Pupils have access to a diverse range of high-quality texts. These include texts that support them to expand their vocabulary and subject knowledge.

Subject leaders appreciate the support they get from the trust. This includes access to resources and subject-specific training. Staff say this has had a positive impact on their workload. It has also strengthened the content of the curriculum for pupils. Despite this, the curriculum for subjects in the wider curriculum is not as secure as it is for core subjects. Leaders have not clearly identified what is important for pupils to learn. As a result, there is too much variability in the content pupils are taught. This makes it hard for them to remember their learning over time.

Pupils remember their learning in some aspects of their personal development well. They know how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Older pupils understand how to stay safe while online. Pupils know they should treat everyone fairly and with respect. This underpins all the school does. Leaders make this a clear priority. However, leaders, including those responsible for governance, have not ensured that this is as secure in pupils' understanding of other areas of their personal development. Pupils' knowledge of fundamental British values and equality is not as well embedded. They are not as well prepared as they could be to challenge potential disrespectful attitudes and views with confidence when they leave the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff receive relevant training and regular safeguarding updates. Leaders take account of local risks and make sure that this information is passed on to staff. As a result, staff understand their roles and responsibilities well. Pupils and families get the help that they need. Leaders work well with external agencies to support their work and develop pupils' awareness of how to keep themselves safe.

Leaders carry out the necessary checks on staff to ensure that they are safe to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum does not identify the essential knowledge pupils must know and remember. As a result, pupils do not always link what they have learned before to their new learning. Leaders need to ensure that

the specific knowledge they want pupils to learn is identified so that pupils know and remember more over time.

- As a result of significant instability in the leadership of SEND, there is not a clear and coherent overview of the provision that all pupils with SEND receive and the impact it has. As a result, pupils with SEND do not always get the most precise and targeted support they require to learn as successfully as possible. Leaders must ensure that they have secure systems in place to give them the most accurate information about how well pupils with SEND learn the intended curriculum.
- Leaders, including those responsible for governance, have not fully considered how the curriculum supports pupils to have a deep enough understanding of the fundamental British values and protected characteristics. Consequently, pupils are not as prepared as they could be in order to be active participants of life in modern Britain. Those responsible for governance need to ensure that they challenge leaders so that the provision for personal development enables pupils to develop a deeper understanding of protected characteristics.

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.

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	146747
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10256575
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Tess Gale
Headteacher	Carly Ellis
Website	www.priorswoodprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Priorswood Primary School is part of The Redstart Learning Partnership. The school joined the multi-academy trust in September 2018. When its predecessor school, Priorswood Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall, requiring significant improvement.
- The school has gone through a period of significant staffing changes.
- The school has provision for two-, three- and four-year-old children.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- There is before- and after-school provision on the school site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors held meetings with the head of school, the associate head for accelerated learning, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, staff, the chair of the teaching and learning committee, the chair of the trust and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- An inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors analysed school documentation, including leaders' evaluations and plans for improvement. The inspector scrutinised a range of policies and procedures, including those that relate to the curriculum, SEND, safeguarding and behaviour.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text responses, and by speaking to parents during the inspection.

Inspection team

Leanne Thirlby, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kate Masters

Ofsted Inspector

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