

Inspection of a good school: Pennyman Primary Academy

Fulbeck Road, Ormesby, Middlesbrough, Cleveland TS3 0QS

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 February 2023

Outcome

Pennyman Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pennyman Primary Academy is a highly inclusive school. Leaders at every level have an unwavering commitment to serving the community. There is a specialist provision unit within the school for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils are fully integrated into every aspect of school life. Adults and pupils feel proud to be part of the 'Pennyman family'. Pupils are happy coming to school and say that it is a safe place to be. Staff have high expectations for all pupils, including those with SEND. Pupils rise to this challenge well.

Pupils behave extremely well. In lessons, they are engaged and attentive. There is a calm and purposeful atmosphere in the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and respectful. Pupils say that there is no bullying. They are confident that adults would deal with any bullying should it happen.

Pupils appreciate the range of wider opportunities available. Extra-curricular clubs, including choir and sports, help to develop pupils' talents and interests. Pupils are proud to take on leadership roles as well-being ambassadors and as members of the junior leadership team. Pupils take these roles seriously and understand their responsibility to make a positive contribution to society.

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

Leaders are ambitious for every pupil to achieve well and be successful. They have designed a curriculum that is broad and ambitious. Leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This knowledge builds in a sequence from the Nursery Year to Year 6. The curriculum for early years is broad and ambitious and, as a result, children learn well. This curriculum prepares children well for their learning in key stage 1. For example, there are many opportunities for children in early years to learn early mathematical concepts. Children in early years have access to a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. These activities are exciting and support the children's progress in all areas of learning.

Leaders prioritise reading. Books and reading are enjoyed and celebrated. Adults read aloud to pupils every day. Leaders have reintroduced a phonics programme that is taught by teachers who are experts in the teaching of reading. Pupils read books that are well matched to their ability. Teachers make frequent checks that pupils are making progress with reading. When pupils fall behind, they are quickly supported to keep up.

Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They pay attention in lessons and produce work that reflects pride in learning. However, in key stage 2, many pupils' handwriting is underdeveloped. These pupils are not forming their letters correctly and their work is untidy. Leaders are aware of this issue and have plans to address it.

Teachers use strategies to help pupils to remember their learning. They revisit key information and vocabulary at the beginning of lessons. They also check that pupils are remembering their learning. The use of technology supports these strategies. Pupils have an electronic tablet each and these are used very effectively in the support of their learning. Teachers share digital content and activities that can be completed and returned by pupils.

Leaders have the same high ambitions for all pupils. Those with SEND are supported extremely well. They access the same curriculum as their peers, and teachers make appropriate adaptations to meet their needs. Pupils with SEND are fully integrated into the life of the school. Adults know these pupils and their needs extremely well. Leaders have made arrangements for therapy dogs to make weekly visits to school to support pupils' confidence and communication skills.

Leaders have recently reviewed and streamlined the behaviour policy. It is applied consistently throughout school, with some adaptations made for the early years. Pupils understand the policy well and appreciate earning 'penny points' for good behaviour. They are committed to the school's values of being 'ready, respectful and safe'.

Through the personal, social and health education curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Oral hygiene is a priority in early years. Pupils learn about fundamental British values such as democracy and individual liberty. They are tolerant and respectful of differences between people. However, despite learning about different religions, pupils' knowledge of other faiths is limited.

The governance of the school is strong. Trustees share the strong commitment to serving the pupils, families and community. They are supportive but unafraid to challenge leaders in relation to the performance of the school. Staff are insistent that they are well looked after and cared for by leaders at all levels.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a culture of vigilance. Staff receive appropriate training and know exactly what to do if they have a concern about a child. Safeguarding records are

detailed and robust. Staff understand the additional safeguarding concerns associated with vulnerable pupils, such as those with SEND. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when using technology. They also know to raise any worries with trusted adults. Leaders involve external agencies when needed if they have concerns about pupils' safety or welfare.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's approach to teaching handwriting is not yet having the intended impact. As a result, pupils' handwriting is under-developed and many pupils do not form their letters accurately. Leaders should ensure that the teaching of handwriting is prioritised to enable pupils to improve their handwriting.
- The curriculum does not develop pupils' understanding of other faiths and cultures well enough. As a result, pupils' knowledge of different faiths and cultures is limited. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum better develops pupils' understanding of the range of other faiths and cultures that exist in British society.

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 an ungraded inspection and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good/outstanding in June 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.

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	138560
Local authority	Middlesbrough
Inspection number	10240398
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	424
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jason Brine
Headteacher	Louise Stogdale
Website	pennyman.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average primary school.
- The school contains a specialist unit for 55 pupils with physical and medical needs.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2023 and was previously Head of Academy from January 2021.
- The school has nursery provision.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The inspector also met with an officer of the trust and representatives of the governance of the trust.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed planning and documentation from a range of other subjects with leaders.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The inspector spoke with parents during the inspection. He considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View online questionnaire. The responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- During the inspection, a range of safeguarding information was scrutinised, including the school's policies and records. The inspector spoke to pupils and observed relationships between pupils and adults.

Inspection team

Dughall McCormick, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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