

Inspection of Penketh Primary School

Coniston Avenue, Penketh, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 2QY

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

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

Ofsted has not previously inspected Penketh Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are proud to demonstrate the school values of kindness, respect, responsibility and resilience in all that they do. Pupils are kind and considerate towards others.

All staff take good care of pupils. Staff take the time to listen to any worries or concerns that pupils may have. Leaders deal with any incidents of unkindness or bullying quickly and well. Consequently, pupils are happy and safe at school.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, the school is calm and pupils, including children in the early years, get on with their learning. Pupils achieve well.

Leaders promote pupils' personal development well. Pupils benefit from a range of after-school activities, such as football, choir and rugby. Older pupils are proud to have responsibilities, such as being members of the school council.

Pupils enjoy visits to the local museum as well as residential trips. This helps them to develop their confidence and to build friendships.

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

Leaders have ensured that all pupils, including those with SEND, study an ambitious curriculum. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the curriculum content and the order in which this is to be taught across key stages 1 and 2. However, their thinking about the curriculum in the early years is at an earlier stage of development. Leaders have not mapped out the essential vocabulary and knowledge to be taught in the Reception Year in order for children to be as well prepared as possible for their learning in Year 1.

In most year groups, teachers deliver the curriculum effectively. Teachers are clear about what they want pupils to learn and remember, and they use appropriate resources and activities to support learning. However, some aspects of the curriculum are not taught as well as leaders intend. For example, in some subjects, teachers are not choosing the most appropriate methods, activities or resources for pupils to learn new content. This slows pupils' learning.

In most subjects, teachers use assessment strategies effectively to check pupils' understanding. This helps them to identify gaps in pupils' learning and to spot any misconceptions. Pupils receive the support that they need to overcome gaps in their learning.

Leaders have created a positive reading culture. Staff are well trained to teach the phonics programme. Reading is a priority as soon as children enter the Reception Year. There is a focus on early language development, speaking and listening, and communication. Well-organised and inviting reading areas encourage children in the early years to enjoy looking at books. Staff ensure that books are well matched to the sounds that all pupils are learning. If pupils do not keep up, they receive timely support to catch up quickly. Pupils are confident readers by the time they leave key stage 1. Older pupils read often and enjoy reading books that are of interest to them.

Leaders ensure that staff identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Staff provide effective support, in class and through additional one-to one or small-group work. Consequently, pupils with SEND access the same curriculum content as their classmates. They learn effectively well.

Most pupils behave well at school. They have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. Pupils enjoy coming to school each day. Children in the early years follow the routines of the day well and settle into school quickly.

Pupils' personal development is well considered by leaders. Pupils are respectful of the differences between themselves and others, and celebrate the cultural diversity within their school community. Pupils have a developing understanding of fundamental British values and what these values mean in everyday life.

Leaders, governors and members of the trust work together to ensure that pupils achieve well. Governors receive the necessary training and support from the trust to carry out their roles effectively. In turn, they provide appropriate challenge to leaders.

Staff value the support that leaders provide to help them manage their well-being and workload effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is a high priority. Staff know pupils and their families very well. They are swift to identify any pupils who may be at risk of harm. Leaders respond to these concerns in a timely manner and work closely with external agencies to offer families the support that they need.

The curriculum supports pupils to keep themselves safe in a range of ways, including when working or playing online. As a result, pupils know what to do and who to talk with if they do not feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders have not identified the vocabulary and knowledge that children in the Reception Year need to know and remember. This hinders children from making the best possible start when they enter Year 1. Leaders should ensure that their curriculum thinking begins in the early years so that children are fully prepared to access the key stage 1 curriculum.
- In some subjects, and in some year groups, teachers are not selecting the most effective strategies or activities to support pupils' learning. This slows down pupils' progress through the curriculum. Leaders should make sure that teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to deliver the curriculum effectively.

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	143072
Local authority	Warrington
Inspection number	10255991
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	213
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Forrest
Headteacher	Rebecca Kayll
Website	www.penkethprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Penketh Primary School converted to become an academy school in August 2016. When the predecessor school, Penketh Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in 2009, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of the Warrington Primary Academy Trust.
- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.

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 that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken this into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher and other senior leaders.

- The lead inspector met with representatives of the local governing board and chief executive officer from the Warrington Primary Trust.
- The inspectors met with the leaders responsible for SEND and early years.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers and teaching assistants, spoke to some pupils about their learning, listened to pupils' read and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspectors looked at the single central record of staff suitability checks. They met with the leaders responsible for safeguarding and sampled case studies and documentation.
- The inspectors met with a group of pupils and spoke to pupils during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors spoke with some parents and carers as they dropped their children off at school. They also reviewed the responses to Ofsted parent view, including the free-text comments.
- There were no responses to the Ofsted pupil survey.
- The inspectors held meetings with members of staff and considered the responses to Ofsted's staff surveys.

Inspection team

Kelly Butler, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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