

Inspection of a good school: Penwortham Middleforth Church of England Primary School

Hill Road South, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire PR1 9YE

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 April 2023

Outcome

Penwortham Middleforth Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including children in the early years, come through the school gates with real enthusiasm in the morning. They are eager and ready to start their day at school. They feel part of a welcoming and happy community. Warm relationships between pupils and staff are evident across the school.

Parents and carers appreciate the care and support that staff provide to their children. Parents typically said that staff go out of their way to ensure that their children are happy, safe and that they achieve well.

Pupils respond well to the high expectations that leaders have for their learning. This means that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well in many subjects across the curriculum.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils treat each other and staff with respect. Pupils behave well and lessons are rarely disturbed. This allows pupils to work without interruption. On the rare occasions that bullying occur, leaders deal with it quickly and effectively.

Leaders have provided many opportunities for pupils to take part in enrichment opportunities, such as netball, singing and nurture club. Pupils also benefit from various outdoor learning experiences. During the inspection, pupils were excited to have swimming lessons in an impressive pool set up on the playground. Pupils readily assume positions of responsibility, for example, as buddies for younger children or as members of the school parliament.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum from the early years to the end of key stage 2. In most subjects, leaders have identified the knowledge they want pupils to remember in each subject. However, in a few remaining foundation subjects, the refining of this work is in its early stages. In these subjects, pupils are not able to make strong enough links to prior learning. That said, staff design and use assessment strategies that give them a detailed insight into the knowledge that pupils know and remember. This includes regularly checking that pupils remember what they have learned. They identify and address pupils' misconceptions quickly. Pupils, including those with SEND, achieve well.

Leaders have established a vibrant culture of reading. Pupils thoroughly enjoy reading. Some are voracious readers. Pupils talk enthusiastically about books that they have read in class and at home. They are able to recall storylines and talk about characters with empathy.

Staff are trained to teach phonics effectively across the school. Children in the early years are immersed in an environment that is rich in vocabulary through structured play activities, songs, rhymes and stories. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they start Nursery in preparation for joining the Reception class. Pupils in the Reception class and key stage 1, receive daily phonics sessions. Pupils, including those with SEND, are given reading books that match the sounds that they have learned. This helps them to practise their phonics. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind with their reading knowledge receive timely support to catch up.

Leaders have ensured that there are effective systems in place to swiftly identify the additional needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. They are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers competently adapt their lessons and activities to ensure that pupils with SEND receive effective support to help them learn.

In the early years, staff help children to settle quickly into routines. The curriculum prepares children well for the demands of key stage 1. Staff have a relentless focus on developing pupils' communication and language skills, as well as building their early understanding of letters, numbers and shapes through play.

In lessons, and around school, pupils behave exceptionally well and are fully engaged in their learning. Learning is rarely disturbed by low-level disruption. Leaders have worked hard on a new approach to ensuring that staff and pupils share a common language when talking about behaviour and emotions. Pupils are learning to identify their own emotions, which supports them to be able to manage their own behaviour effectively. This has been supported by the introduction of a sensory room, Oscar the therapy dog and a dedicated nurture space.

Leaders have put in place a well-considered offer to support pupils' personal development. Pupils learn about different religions and beliefs. Pupils take diversity

seriously. The pupils who spoke with the inspector said that everyone deserves to be treated equally. Pupils develop a strong sense of community through their visits to the local church and a residential care home. Pupils relish their roles of responsibility and are proud to represent the school.

Staff morale is high. Staff are proud to work at the school. They value the time and support that leaders give them, so that they can effectively carry out their roles. Leaders, including the governing body, have a clear vision of improvement for the school. Governors both support and challenge the work of leaders to ensure that pupils are happy, safe and achieve well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders promote a strong culture of safeguarding. They prioritise pupils' safety. Leaders ensure that all school staff receive regular training. All staff know how to keep pupils safe. They pass on their concerns about pupils and keep detailed records. Leaders respond swiftly to concerns and take action promptly. They work effectively with external agencies to secure the help that vulnerable pupils and their families need.

Pupils learn about how to keep themselves healthy and safe. They are taught about how to keep themselves safe online. They know that they should talk to a trusted adult if they are concerned or worried about something at school or at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of foundation subjects, leaders are still refining their curriculum design. As a result, some pupils struggle to make links back to their prior learning. Leaders should continue to refine new curriculums, ensuring that explicit links to prior learning are embedded.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 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.

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	119382
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10283646
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	203
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nina Tomlinson
Headteacher	Nicola Pilkington
Website	http://www.middleforth.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection took place in February 2014.
- The school has a governor led (section 27) nursery for pupils from the age of three.
- Leaders make use of registered alternative provision for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection that the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and took this into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff. She also spoke with members of the governing body, including the vice chair of governors.
- The inspector looked at a range of leaders' documentation, including self-evaluation and safeguarding documents. She spoke with leaders about the school's safeguarding procedures.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and physical education. She talked with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at examples of

children's and pupils' work, held discussions with teachers and talked with children and pupils. She also observed some pupils reading to trusted staff.

- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and as they moved around the school. She also observed pupils playing at breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- The inspector spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. She also met with parents before school to find out their views of the school.
- The inspector considered responses to the staff surveys.

Inspection team

Rebecca Sharples, lead inspector

His 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 2023