

Inspection of a good school: Pensford Primary School

Pensford Hill, Pensford, Bristol, Somerset BS39 4AA

Inspection date: 7 June 2023

Outcome

Pensford Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pensford Primary School provides pupils with an education that extends beyond the classroom. Leaders have designed an education that builds upon pupils' life experiences and broadens their horizons. As such, pupils enjoy learning and achieve well.

A range of trips, including residential and visits to local places of interest such as The Roman Baths, enhance learning. Many pupils enjoy sports and celebrate success in local and national competitions. For example, the Year 5 and 6 team were recently ranked fifth in the country in a national football league. These opportunities help to make pupils more confident and resilient.

Pupils are proud of their school. They care for it well, keeping the environment clean and tidy. Pupils are polite and sensible and feel 'trusted to get along'. Most consider bullying not to be an issue. When it happens, they are confident that adults will sort it out.

Parents praise the school's 'positive atmosphere and community spirit'. They say staff are approachable and that the school's inclusive environment prepares children well for their next stage of education.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils at Pensford. This includes pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They have designed a broad curriculum where pupils benefit from curriculum choices that make the most of the school's local area. For example, the River Chew, running alongside the school, is a focal point for developing pupils' geography knowledge.

Leaders have identified the important knowledge that they want pupils to learn in each subject. They organise learning so that pupils develop their knowledge well over time. Leaders appreciate what it means to be great readers, scientists or historians, and want pupils to develop deeper understanding across all subjects. They make regular checks to

see how well pupils learn the curriculum. This precise monitoring gives them an accurate view of the quality of education.

In some subjects, leaders have identified the small steps of knowledge and new vocabulary pupils will learn. They have organised this so teachers design learning that deepens pupils' understanding over time. However, this is not the case across all subjects. Where this has not yet been done, pupils find it more difficult to remember what they have learned before and do not deepen their knowledge as much as they could.

Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their thinking. This helps pupils to understand their learning and to extend their vocabulary. Staff in the early years show children how to use resources to help them with new learning. For example, adults show children how to print shapes to make a repeated pattern. This helps children to become more independent and further develops their knowledge. However, across the school, new learning is sometimes not explained quite as clearly. When this happens, pupils do not always know what is expected of them, or how to use resources effectively to support new knowledge.

The reading curriculum supports pupils to read confidently and accurately. Pupils practise and apply their phonic knowledge. They develop their comprehension well. Teachers quickly identify pupils who may need additional help. They provide effective support so that pupils can catch up and become fluent readers. Pupils in key stage 2 read and understand books that are interesting and ambitious. As a result, by the end of Year 6, pupils achieve well. Exciting opportunities, such as becoming reading ambassadors, encourage pupils to get involved in reading.

There are warm, positive relationships between pupils and staff. Adults have high expectations of behaviour. Most pupils listen well in lessons and are attentive to their learning.

Pupils learn about diversity. They learn about different types of race, religion and family compositions. They are committed to equality. Visitors to the school, such as those from a local homeless charity, help pupils reflect on things to be thankful for.

Leaders and governors help staff to manage their workload. They create a culture where staff can raise any concerns. Staff work collaboratively with leaders and feel valued as part of a strong team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel, and are, safe at Pensford. Staff have appropriate safeguarding training. They know pupils and their families very well. As a result, staff identify any concerns as soon as they arise.

Leaders make appropriate referrals to safeguarding partners and challenge decisions if more should be done to keep pupils safe. Governors monitor safeguarding robustly. They make sure that leaders undertake the required checks when recruiting staff.

The curriculum helps pupils to learn about keeping themselves safe. Pupils explore the implications of risky behaviours such as dares. They learn about keeping safe while online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, leaders have not identified the small steps of knowledge that pupils will learn over a series of lessons, or in what order. As a result, pupils sometimes find it difficult to remember what they have learned before. Therefore, they do not deepen their understanding as much as they could. Leaders need to ensure that they identify and sequence important knowledge in all subjects.
- Learning is not presented as clearly as it could be. When this happens, pupils do not know exactly what is expected of them. Leaders need to ensure that the approaches to explaining learning to pupils are effective across the school.

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 predecessor school, Pensford Primary School, to be good in March 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	146978
Local authority	Bath and North East Somerset Council
Inspection number	10268493
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	99
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Nye
Headteacher	Warrick Barton
Website	www.pensfordschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Pensford Primary School converted to become an academy school in June 2019. When its predecessor school, Pensford Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- This is a smaller-than-average primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school joined The Partnership Trust in 2019. The trust is made up of 17 schools in the Bath and Mendip areas.
- 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, a group of staff, representatives from the multi-academy trust and members of the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector considered documentation around safeguarding, including the safeguarding checks made on staff. Inspectors talked to leaders, trustees, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to see how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, responses to the staff survey and responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Steph Matthews, lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Tonwen Empson

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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