

Inspection of a good school: Priory Infant School

Cannon Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 9XT

Inspection dates:

20 and 21 June 2023

Outcome

Priory Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to this friendly school where everyone is made to feel welcome and included. Pupils are kind playmates during breaktimes and lunchtimes. They are encouraged to be active and keep fit, having opportunities to take part in many inter-school sporting tournaments.

The school environment is calm and purposeful. Pupils know the golden rules of being safe, kind and ready to learn. Leaders have high aspirations that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), will achieve their full potential. Pupils give their full attention to learning, listening attentively to their teachers and becoming absorbed in, for example, problem-solving in mathematics or creating work in the style of contemporary artists in art and design. They love to sit with a book in one of the many reading areas around the school.

Leaders are keen that pupils should develop an interest in their locality by learning about significant local events and people. They research how building styles have changed by visiting Ramsgate Library which was rebuilt after a fire. Pupils' history topic about the Second World War is brought to life through their visit to Ramsgate tunnels, where they consider what life was like for children back then.

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

New leaders' plans for improvement were slowed due to staffing changes and the impact of the pandemic. However, since September 2022, the pace of change has accelerated. Leaders have worked tirelessly to enhance the positive and nurturing approach to managing pupils' behaviour. They have further developed the teaching of reading and mathematics and refined the curriculum in other subjects. Pupils' attainment has improved.

Reading is taught consistently well. Leaders have high ambitions that every pupil will enjoy being absorbed in a book. Children develop secure foundations for language in the Reception classes. Staff use songs, traditional tales and poetry at every opportunity,

discussing stories, authors and illustrators to ignite children's curiosity about books. Staff are well trained to teach phonics, so pupils concentrate carefully in sessions and attain well. Teachers pick up on misconceptions quickly, correcting pupils and providing expert additional practice to ensure they keep up. Leaders' sustained focus on reading is helping pupils make strong progress and attain well.

Leaders have focused staff development on the important things. All staff are trained in a wide variety of strategies, enabling the growing number of pupils with complex SEND to learn well. Leaders have acted innovatively by developing a bespoke nurture room where pupils are taught to recognise and manage their emotions, learning to socialise and build friendships. Leaders manage the school day, the environment and resources so that all pupils succeed. A culture of high behaviour expectations pervades the school. Staff are well trained to understand and address pupils' needs. The environment in school is calm, as pupils focus on their learning and play cooperatively together in the playground.

Leaders have developed all curriculum areas so that pupils' learning builds coherently over time. All are ambitious for pupils with complex SEND to attain well. Teachers break learning down into smaller steps so that pupils with SEND develop self-confidence and learn the same curriculum as their peers.

Some subjects, including mathematics, have been refined so that teachers know precisely what pupils must understand and remember and exactly what must be taught when. They present information clearly, using activities enabling frequent retrieval of key knowledge which becomes embedded in pupils' long-term memories. For example, in art, pupils in Year 2 can remember details about the artist Van Gogh when he lived in the local town and painted with 'gloomy colours'. They compare this with his use of vibrant colour in the south of France. In other curriculum areas, leaders know what must be done to identify the key knowledge and skills more precisely so that pupils remember key learning and attain more highly.

There are many opportunities for pupils to develop their wider interests. There is a range of extra-curricular clubs such as dodgeball, athletics and music. Leaders plan experiences beyond the local area, such as the trip to Wingham Wildlife Park which makes learning about animals in science interesting. Pupils encounter many different faiths and beliefs in assemblies and through visiting places of worship such as the local church. Elected school councillors take responsibility for the school environment by deciding on playground improvements and organising events to raise money for charity.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are trained to recognise the signs that pupils might be at risk. They know how to report concerns, understanding that their observations form part of a bigger picture. When they receive concerns, leaders act swiftly, working effectively with outside agencies. External support, such as home visits to absent pupils whom leaders assess to be at risk, is not always forthcoming. In these cases, leaders are persistent in their challenge to secure help.

Pupils are taught how to use the internet safely. They know that rest, exercise, healthy eating and dental care are important to maintain their health and readiness for learning.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders are in the process of identifying the key knowledge that must be taught. In these curriculum areas, teachers do not know exactly what they must teach and regularly revisit so that it is embedded securely in pupils' long-term memories. Leaders should continue to refine the curriculum so that teachers know precisely what pupils must understand and remember.

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 February 2014.

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	118416
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10269124
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	155
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Roger Silk
Headteacher	Tracey Sandy
Website	www.priory.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 February 2018 under section 8 of the Education Act

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up post in April 2020 and the deputy headteacher in September 2022.
- There is a new chair of governors since the previous inspection.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator. They also met with a

representative from the local authority.

- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and discussions with leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance records and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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