

Inspection of a good school: Penny Acres Primary School

The Common, Holmesfield, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 7WP

Inspection date:

4 July 2023

Outcome

Penny Acres Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils express great pride in their school. They said, 'We are very lucky to attend Penny Acres; we are well educated, included and kept safe.'

Teachers have high expectations. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show each other great care and respect. Their positive attitudes contribute significantly to their learning. Older pupils are excellent role models to younger children.

Pupils experience a high-quality personal, health and social education curriculum. They receive effective guidance. They know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils understand what bullying is. They know the different ways in which individuals may be bullied, including when online. They do not believe that bullying is an issue at the school. They express great trust in their teachers to resolve any problems or concerns.

Pupils learn the importance of community. They get involved in many activities, including the recent Well Dressing event. This helps them to appreciate the importance of local heritage. They understand the value of seeing beyond themselves and working together. Pupils describe their school and community as a large family.

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

Leaders have planned a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, the curriculum is sequenced well and builds pupils' knowledge over time. However, there is inconsistency. The curriculum in some foundation subjects is less developed than in others.

The curriculum helps pupils to develop knowledge of ambitious language. They can confidently use technical and subject-specific language. Pupils are extremely articulate.

Senior leaders have recognised the importance of effective subject leadership. They have invested in the professional development of staff. Staff appreciate this investment. It is having a positive impact. Subject leadership is strong in some subjects, particularly in mathematics, art and modern foreign languages. However, it is not as strong in other subjects.

Teachers deliver their lessons with great skill and enthusiasm. They explain complex concepts clearly. They ask questions that demand a comprehensive response. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding. This helps pupils to remember what they have learned. Pupils speak with confidence about their learning, for example when explaining multiplication factors in mathematics.

The phonics curriculum is well structured. Pupils learn to read as soon as they enter the early years provision. They access carefully selected books that match the sounds that they are learning. They read regularly at home and in school. Most pupils are fluent readers. Leaders provide many activities and events to encourage pupils' love of reading. Pupils are excited by books. They are thrilled by the reading rewards they receive. They said that they 'just love reading!'

The provision for pupils with SEND is strong. Needs are quickly identified. Pupils with SEND receive the help that they need. Lessons are appropriately adapted. Pupils with SEND achieve well.

Leaders ensure that all pupils benefit from wider opportunities. Pupils enjoy sports and the running club. They play board games. Every pupil learns to play the recorder. All pupils learn a brass instrument. They enjoy trips and events that are carefully planned to enrich their learning, such as the visits to various places of worship. Pupils understand the importance of equality and diversity. They said that, in their school, 'even if you have a difference, you do not get treated any differently'.

Parents value the school. One parent spoke for many when they said, 'Penny Acres is a wonderful school. It provides a nurturing environment and is filled with highly skilled, caring staff. I am thankful every day that I chose this school for my children.'

The headteacher places great importance in the welfare and care of staff. This is appreciated. Staff retention is high. Teachers said that they look forward to the school day. They are extremely proud to work at Penny Acres.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

This is a small school where pupils and their families are known extremely well. All staff keep a watchful eye. Pupils know that there are many staff who they can speak to should they have worries or need help. They said that they felt 'included, loved and protected'.

Safeguarding records are appropriately kept. Leaders work closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils and their families receive expert help if they need it. Staff are well trained.

The single central record of staff meets statutory requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Where subject leadership is strong, the curriculum is expertly planned, implemented and monitored. This ensures the appropriate impact for pupils. However, in some subjects, the oversight is not as expert as is needed. This can lead to curriculum inconsistencies. Leaders should continue the work to develop subject leadership. They should ensure that all subject leaders have the expertise required so that all elements of the curriculum are consistently and securely planned and implemented.

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 January 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	112565
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10286988
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	57
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Dorward
Executive Headteacher	David Ratcliffe
Website	www.pennyacres.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Penny Acres Primary School is federated with Wigley Primary School. The two schools share an executive headteacher and a local governing body.
- 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 school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher to discuss leaders' evaluation of the quality of education. She met with the chair and members of the governing body. She spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at the curriculum plans, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also reviewed curriculum planning in music and modern foreign languages. They spoke with the curriculum leaders with oversight of these subjects.

- Inspectors heard pupils read. They visited the early years provision.
- Inspectors observed pupils during lunchtime and playtime. They spoke to groups of pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss the actions taken to keep children safe. She reviewed a range of documents, including the school's single central record of staff. She looked at information about the actions taken to protect the most vulnerable pupils. She reviewed information about pupils' attendance.
- The views of members of staff, pupils and parents were considered. Additionally, inspectors spoke with members of staff.

Inspection team

Jayne Ashman, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Adair

Ofsted Inspector

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