

Inspection of Pamphill Church of England First School

Pamphill Green, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 4EE

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 September 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

The headteacher of this school is Michael Wheeler. This school is part of Initio Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Liz West, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by John Kingston.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pamphill is an inclusive and welcoming school. Pupils embrace the values of 'love' and 'courage'. The caring relationships between members of the school community mean that pupils feel safe and happy.

Parents describe Pamphill as a school that encourages their children to 'reach for the stars'. The school has high aspirations for pupils. It has worked hard to develop a curriculum to help pupils achieve well, and they do.

Most pupils behave well. The school is working on commonly understood expectations of behaviour at all times of the school day. Children in the early years get off to a strong start. The school provides an inviting and nurturing environment for them to learn in and enjoy.

The school uses its unique location to provide an array of memorable experiences that go beyond the classroom. Pupils work with the National Trust to plant trees, and the school holds an annual strawberry fair. When learning about the Iron Age, pupils visit Badbury Rings. As a result, pupils develop a rich understanding of their local area. Pupils appreciate the many clubs on offer, including art and gardening.

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

The partnership between the school and the trust has been central to this school's continued development. They have worked together to secure an ambitious curriculum that stems from the early years. The curriculum is well planned. Teachers know the precise knowledge that pupils need to learn. This has been carefully sequenced and builds on pupils' prior knowledge. There is a seamless transition between curriculum thinking for early years and the rest of the school. This prepares pupils well for their next stage of learning at Pamphill.

The school ensures that teachers have the subject knowledge they need to teach the curriculum well. The trust has provided training for staff to help pupils revisit prior learning and embed new knowledge. In most cases, teachers check what pupils know and remember. For example, in geography, quizzes help teachers identify gaps in pupils' locational knowledge. These gaps are then addressed. However, on occasion, there are lower expectations for how pupils should behave. Because of this, opportunities to check for understanding and address gaps can be missed. As a result, some pupils are unable to recall their prior learning.

The school is ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff think carefully about how to help these pupils to learn alongside their peers. Parents speak highly of the support that pupils with SEND receive.

The school is determined for pupils to learn to read quickly and to love reading. Pupils proudly show off their 'I love reading' badges for being recognised as star readers. The school hosts workshops for parents and encourages members of the

school community to write their own book reviews. Phonics teaching begins as soon as children start school. All staff are trained to teach phonics. The school quickly identifies if pupils have fallen behind and it provides the support they need. In most cases, books are well matched to the sounds that pupils have learned. On occasion, books for those at the early stages of learning to read are pitched too high. As a result, these pupils do not develop the fluency and confidence the school intends.

The school has planned an effective curriculum that surpasses the academic. Staff plan opportunities to teach pupils about different cultures and religions. This helps pupils learn about how others live. For example, pupils could tell inspectors about Hindu wedding celebrations. Pupils are aware of risk and how to stay safe, including sun safety and being safe online. They recognise themselves as being unique and respect difference.

Most pupils behave well and have positive attitudes towards learning. Pupils know the school rules and expectations. These expectations are not yet realised in all areas of the school, including during some lessons. As a result, some learning time is lost. The school is taking steps to address this. However, it is early days.

The trust knows the school well. It checks that the school keeps a sharp eye on its priorities. Staff appreciate the training provided by the school and the trust. They are proud to work here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For a minority of pupils at the early stages of learning to read, the books they read are not precisely matched to the sounds they have learned. This means these pupils do not develop fluency and confidence in reading as well as they could. The trust must ensure that the books all pupils read are well matched to the sounds that pupils have learned.
- On occasion, expectations for how pupils should behave are not consistently high enough across the school. This leads to a few pupils showing some low-level disruptive behaviours. This has an impact on learning time for pupils. The trust should continue to train all staff so that the expectations for behaviour are applied consistently across the school.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	147893
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10288249
Type of school	First
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	5 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	73
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	John Kingston
CEO of trust	Liz West
Headteacher	Michael Wheeler
Website	www.pamphillfirstschool.org
Date of previous inspection	10 November 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There has been a change in headteacher since the previous inspection. The headteacher joined the school in September 2021.
- The school is part of the Initio Learning Trust.
- The school is designated as having a religious character. The school is in the Diocese of Salisbury. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in January 2023, the school was judged to be good.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school provides a before- and an after-school club for pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, school staff, parents, pupils and representatives from the trust, including the chair of the trust and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtime and breaktimes. In addition, the inspectors met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also looked at responses to the pupil survey and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kelly Olive

His Majesty's Inspector

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