

Inspection of Pilgrim Pathways School

Block 19, Ida Darwin, Fulbourn, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB21 5EE

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils easily settle into their new surroundings. Dedicated staff make this possible by doing all they can to make pupils feel at home. Pupils' educational journey begins with warm relationships and encouragement from staff. Staff model politeness and respect. Pupils feel safe and well cared for.

The school has the highest ambitions for pupils to do well. When pupils join, staff quickly get to know their needs. Pupils learn that even when faced with significant challenges, adults will always help them on their personal and educational journeys. Pupils thrive here. They learn new knowledge in quiet and calm classrooms. Every pupil experiences a bespoke education. For some pupils, this means starting afresh or catching up. For others, this means continuing with their studies, supported by subject experts.

A large range of extra-curricular activities await pupils who join the school. There are many opportunities to socialise, for example through art therapy, fitness and sports sessions. Staff also support pupils to develop new and existing talents. No matter how unique the interest, staff will go out of their way to find resources and organisations to help pupils learn even more.

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

Since the last inspection, leaders have improved many aspects of the curriculum. Now, all subjects are taught to the same high standard. The curriculum specifies, in detail and in a logical order, the knowledge pupils need to learn. Staff are subject experts who help pupils to understand and apply new knowledge. Step-by-step approaches to teaching early reading help all pupils to experience early success. Teachers adapt lessons so that pupils who need to catch up can do so with ease.

The curriculum not only enables pupils to be successful but also makes them happy. The curriculum is interesting and gives pupils new perspectives about the world. For example, in history, older pupils learn about the ancient Silk Road trade route. Pupils have plenty of opportunities to read and discuss literature. Staff encourage pupils to read a wide range of literature. Staff have high expectations. They are dedicated and care greatly. This means that pupils develop more positive attitudes to learning. For many pupils, this helps them to find renewed energy for the completion of exams.

The school's approach to behaviour emphasises positivity. For example, regular rewards for effort, progress and steady attendance help pupils to stay focused. Staff are patient. Their instructions are polite, clear and easy to follow. If pupils find something challenging, then staff provide assurance and additional support.

Staff provide a nurturing environment for sixth-form students to focus on learning. They work closely with students' home schools and external organisations. This supports individual students' studies and transition to adult life. This means that

students feel supported and well cared for. Some students have been negatively impacted by prior experiences. Here, staff take a creative and diligent approach to supporting their next steps, for example through securing different kinds of work experience and helping students to obtain alternative qualifications.

The school's approach to teaching the curriculum is inherently inclusive. For example, staff initially get to know pupils and their individual needs. They then set out a bespoke curriculum for each pupil. Many pupils have additional special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with pupils' home schools. They review and provide evidence for pupils' education, health and care plans. In reading lessons there is a focus on vocabulary. This supports pupils' understanding in subjects such as science and geography.

Leaders have carefully created a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum to meet pupils' needs. This includes topics to build pupils' confidence and communication skills. Pupils learn how to stay safe and how to take care of their own health. Older pupils learn important knowledge about independent living. Staff collaborate with clinical professionals to ensure that topics are delivered in a sensitive and practical way. Pupils also have unique targets to support their personal development. They gain a greater understanding of themselves. Pupils are proud of their achievements.

Members of the management committee bring a range of expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm. Since the previous inspection, staff have noted their increased presence and support. Staff feel appreciated. Leaders support staff to work across all school sites. This approach means that staff develop new expertise and feel more connected as a team. Leaders have developed ways of sharing information about hospital education with external organisations. This gives leaders greater assurance that when pupils leave the school, they will be better supported back in their home schools.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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	134765
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10288482
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	4 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	25
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	6
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Nadine Gooding-Hebert
Website	www.pilgrim.cambs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils with complex social, emotional and mental health needs at two sites (Croft and Darwin) based at Ida Darwin Hospital. Pupils with physical health needs are taught at Addenbrooke's Hospital.
- All pupils are hospital inpatients. Pupils are dual registered with their home schools or colleges.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

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.
- To gain an understanding of how information is shared, the lead inspector spoke with clinical professionals who work closely with staff at the referral unit. Inspectors also observed a ward handover meeting.
- The lead inspector met with the headteacher and four members of the management committee and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils.
- To evaluate safeguarding procedures, the lead inspector met with the headteacher and a senior leader to review the unit's register of staff and regular visitors and discuss how safeguarding information is recorded and shared. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector considered the responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, including parents' free-text responses. The lead inspector also considered 11 responses to Ofsted's survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Hannah Stoten, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kay Leach

Ofsted Inspector

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