

Inspection of a good school: Pilsley Primary School

Station Road, Pilsley, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S45 8EU

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

Outcome

Pilsley Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Pilsley Primary School. They start the day ready to learn and enjoy their lessons. They talk with enthusiasm about school life. Pupils flourish because they understand and meet the high expectations set by staff. Pupils say that they feel safe. They like the rewards they earn for doing their best. They enjoy making a positive contribution to the school, such as being playground mini leaders.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They behave exceptionally well. They know that staff quickly sort out any problems and that bullying is not tolerated. Bullying rarely occurs. Pupils know that if they have concerns, staff are always available to talk to them.

Pupils enjoy a wide range of experiences during their time at the school. They learn to play musical instruments, take part in woodland activities and learn to swim. They attend sports clubs and the cookery club. Pupils debate and consider different viewpoints. Visits to an outdoor activity centre, a train museum and residential visits have a lasting and positive impact on pupils. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One parent, typically commented: 'The genuine relationships between staff and pupils create a family atmosphere full of kindness.'

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and well-planned curriculum. They have provided training to develop staff's subject knowledge. They have thought carefully about the key knowledge pupils should learn and when. For example, in science, pupils learn about the heart before they learn about the effects of exercise. As a result, pupils build their knowledge and skills progressively from early years to Year 6. In some subjects, teachers do not always plan activities that match the ambition of the curriculum. When this happens, pupils make slower progress.

Pupils revisit what they have learned through regular memory tasks. This helps pupils know more and remember more. Teachers check to find out what pupils know. In reading

and mathematics, for example, teachers identify pupils who have gaps in their learning. These pupils receive extra support that helps them to improve.

Leaders have made reading a priority at the school. Pupils quickly begin to learn to read when they start in Reception. All staff are trained to teach the school's chosen phonics programme. The daily phonics sessions are highly structured. Teachers make sure that books are matched to the letters and sounds that pupils are learning. Teachers read daily to pupils from a wide range of texts. Leaders identify pupils who may be falling behind in their reading. These pupils receive extra support to catch up. Pupils practise reading regularly to become fluent readers. Pupils say that they enjoy reading.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to achieve well. They identify pupils with SEND quickly. Plans to support their learning are clear and teachers use them well. Pupils with SEND access the full curriculum. Teachers adapt their teaching to meet these pupils' needs. Leaders ensure that staff are trained to deliver well-planned support in lessons. The work in their books shows that pupils with SEND learn the curriculum. Staff in the designated unit for pupils with SEND support pupils with more complex needs effectively.

Children in the early years make a positive start to their education. Leaders make sure that there is a sharp focus on developing children's communication and language. Children demonstrate well-developed social skills when playing together, for example sharing tools in the sandpit. Teachers use a range of activities to develop early literacy and mathematics knowledge. As a result, children are ready for their next phase of learning.

Most pupils attend school regularly. However, some pupils are absent from school too often. Leaders have made changes to, and improved the systems for, managing attendance to make their expectations clear to all parents. This is beginning to have an impact.

Leaders promote pupils' broader development. The curriculum plays a key role in developing pupils' character. There is a wide range of lunchtime and after-school clubs. These help to develop pupils' interests and talents in music, art and sports. Pupils know about a range of world faiths. They recognise and celebrate diversity. They are respectful of each other's differences. Pupils learn about physical and emotional health and healthy relationships. However, pupils do not talk confidently about British values, such as democracy and the rule of law.

Senior leaders have a good understanding of what is working well in the school and what needs to improve. Governors are well informed about the work of the school. They hold leaders to account. Staff say leaders consider their workload and well-being. Staff enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the work given to pupils does not help them to learn the intended curriculum. As a result, pupils do not always develop their knowledge in these subjects as well as they could. The school should ensure that the work teachers give to pupils is matched to the ambitious aims of the intended curriculum.
- Pupils do not have a secure understanding of British values, particularly democracy. As a result, they are not fully prepared for life in modern Britain. The school should make sure that all pupils gain deep knowledge of British values and their distinctive place in society.

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](#)' 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	112605
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10313220
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Karen Potts
Headteacher	Lynn Brook
Website	www.pilsleyprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since January 2023.
- The school has a designated unit for pupils with SEND.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with leaders, including the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, curriculum leaders and the early years leader.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and physical education. To do this, he met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. The inspector also listened to pupils reading to an adult.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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. The inspector considered pupils' behaviour at various times of day, including in lessons, around the school site and at lunchtime.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted online surveys for staff and parents. He spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The inspector met with the chair of governors and some other governors.
- The inspector spoke with the school's local authority school improvement adviser on the telephone.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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