

Inspection of a good school: Penn Wood Primary and Nursery School

Penn Road, Slough, Berkshire SL2 1PH

Inspection dates:

30 and 31 January 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and vibrant school where the focus is for all pupils to achieve the best they can. The school's vision of 'better never stops' is reflected in the positive attitudes and achievements of pupils. Pupils feel there is a togetherness to their learning, which motivates them to make high levels of effort. Positive encouragement and clear expectations from staff mean pupils keenly participate in activities, share their ideas and work together to solve problems. They take pride in the contributions they make.

At the heart of the school community, is the 'Tree of Life'. This provides a meaningful focal point representing the school values of 'Community, Kindness, Respect and Excellence'. Pupils uphold these values in their conduct around school. Pupils play together happily during social times.

Pupils are keen to contribute to school life and the wider community. They enjoy being able to influence changes in the school through 'School Voice'. All pupils contribute to fundraising activities, and many enjoy competing for the school in sports events. Roles such as 'Reading Ambassadors' provide opportunities for older pupils to work with and support younger pupils. They help to cement the schools' supportive ethos among pupils.

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

There is a broad and ambitious curriculum, which has been carefully developed and refined. Curriculum thinking is strong with careful consideration of how pupils build knowledge over time. In early years, the curriculum identifies the important knowledge and skills that children need to know. This means that children are well prepared for learning subjects in key stage 1. The curriculum's effectiveness is continuously reviewed, with changes being made to further improve how well all pupils learn. Across subjects,

there is a well-embedded focus on learning vocabulary, which means pupils can write and explain increasingly complex ideas very well.

Teachers use their expert subject knowledge to explain and model new ideas highly effectively. They use questioning consistently well across the school. Through this, they systematically identify how well pupils understand new knowledge and then reteach any areas where learning is not as secure as it might be. This careful method means that all pupils confidently complete the activities they are set and tackle increasingly complex tasks with enthusiasm. For example, in mathematics and physical education, pupils explain in detail their approaches to solve problems or develop their sporting techniques.

The specific needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified well. Effective adaptations support pupils with SEND to apply and secure their understanding of new knowledge. 'The School House' provides bespoke teaching for pupils with more complex SEND so that they develop essential skills and greater independence.

There is a rigorous approach to the teaching of reading. The school promotes a love of reading widely through the broad range of books across the curriculum, assemblies and regular use of the library. Pupils recognise and discuss thoughtfully how reading supports their creativity and well-being. Phonics is skilfully taught from the start of Reception. The school tracks pupils' progress closely and makes sure that any pupils who need extra help promptly receive support and catch up quickly.

Pupils are very keen to learn. They arrive promptly for lessons after playtime. Across lessons, behaviour is consistently calm and respectful. In early years, children learn the essential routines and language which support effective learning. When teachers give explanations, pupils listen attentively. They undertake activities with focus and present their work with pride. If a pupil's attention drifts, they are quickly refocused on the learning. Around school, pupils' behaviour is courteous and considerate supported by well-established routines and clear expectations from staff.

There is a broad range of rich opportunities which engage pupils with the diverse nature of the local community and the wider world. Assemblies, visitors, workshops, and trips are used to broaden their horizons. Events like 'Diwali Day' provide meaningful experiences for pupils to engage with and understand different cultures and views. Pupils enjoy participating in drama, dance and sports events. They equally value leadership roles like 'Student Voice Reps' which provide pupils with experience of representing others.

There is a culture of continuous improvement running throughout the school. There is an accurate view of the school's work, which means further changes continue to build on existing strengths. Staff feel involved in this process and value efforts to ensure that the workload remains manageable so they can focus on teaching. Governors maintain strong oversight of the school's work and meet their statutory duties well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 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	130372
Local authority	Slough
Inspection number	10296339
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	691
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of governing body	Carol Pearce and Rosa Hopkins
Headteacher	Claire Fletcher
Website	www.pennwood.slough.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher has been in post since September 2023.
- The school is not currently using any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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 in to account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, assistant headteachers and subject leaders. The lead inspector met with representatives from the governing body and spoke to a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, 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 looked at additional samples of pupils' work in English, reading, science, geography and French.
- The inspectors observed playtime activities.
- 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school. They looked at the schools' self-evaluation documents, local authority reviews and school development plan.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. This included speaking to parents at the gate.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

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