

Inspection of Little Paxton Primary School

Gordon Road, Little Paxton, Little Paxton Primary School, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire
PE19 6NG

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

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	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Little Paxton is a happy school where children are welcomed by the adults who support and care for them. This helps pupils feel safe.

Pupils play nicely together. They are polite and treat each other with kindness because they follow the school's behaviour principles well. Pupils nearly always move calmly around the school. Pupils respond well to staff's high expectations of their behaviour.

Lessons are fun and engaging. This motivates pupils to try their best. Pupils are proud when their efforts are praised. This includes pupils who are disadvantaged and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils value being able to celebrate each other's achievements in weekly assemblies or having lunch with the leadership team as a reward. Sometimes, pupils get to be 'head or deputy head for the day', which inspires them to continue to work towards their academic goals.

Pupils value the opportunity to represent their peers on the Paxton Parliament. This group has opportunities to support the school in charity and school events. Pupils can also represent the school in the many sports teams that celebrate numerous successes throughout the year.

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

There have been significant improvements at the school. The school has reviewed and implemented an ambitious, broad and balanced curriculum throughout the school, starting in the early years. Leaders ensure that teachers, including those new to the school, have the subject-specific training that they need to implement the curriculum.

The new curriculum is well considered in all subjects and for every year group. Pupils learn key knowledge and vocabulary for each subject. This successfully contributes towards building up pupils' learning over time. As a result, pupils remember what they have been taught and are generally achieving well. In a few foundation subject areas, the curriculum detail does not include opportunities for checking how well pupils are doing. Consequently, in these foundation subjects, the checks are not used well enough to enable teachers to adapt the learning with additional challenge. Where this happens, a few pupils do not necessarily make the progress they could.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. The chosen phonics programme ensures that pupils in the early years learn the letter sounds quickly. The books that pupils read help them to apply their learning of letters and sounds to their reading. Effective checking identifies pupils who have fallen behind. Additional teaching opportunities support pupils to catch up. Many pupils learn to read with confidence. Teachers read to pupils daily as part of an effective reading curriculum. Teachers

model how to read with expression. This ensures that pupils develop a love for reading and become fluent and confident readers.

The school has high expectations for pupils with SEND. There is a strong focus for this group of pupils to learn to work independently. Pupils with SEND can and do learn the same curriculum as their peers because teachers adapt their lessons carefully. This ensures that pupils with SEND achieve well. Additional adults support and accurately anticipate pupils' needs. This helps pupils to regulate their emotions and, consequently, successfully access their learning.

Pupils, including children in the early years, are respectful and friendly. Pupils behave well in lessons. Low-level disruption is rare. Where it happens, it is quickly addressed by teachers refocusing pupils with engaging activities. A small number of the older children occasionally need reminders of the behaviour expectations. The school takes effective action to ensure that pupils attend regularly. Therefore, attendance is strong.

The school has implemented a programme that supports pupil development, including relationships and sex education and personal, social, health and economic education. There are some areas of this curriculum plan that are in the early stages of development. The school has not implemented areas of the intended plan that teach pupils to understand more about life beyond the school community. As a result, pupils do not always remember about different cultures and fundamental British values outside of their local area. There are aspects of pupils' wider development programme that are implemented well, such as sports clubs, mental health club and yoga, which pupils really enjoy.

The governing body offers effective challenge and support. This is because it has carefully recruited governors with the skills needed to improve the school. Governors take account of staff well-being, including that of leaders. As a result, staff enjoy working here.

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 few foundation subject areas, the curriculum planning does not enable assessment opportunities to be used well enough. In these subjects, a few pupils may not make the progress that they could. The school should ensure that planning includes assessment opportunities to ensure teachers can further adapt learning so that pupils achieve consistently well.
- A few areas of the personal development curriculum, such as British values and understanding protected characteristics and other cultures, are not as well rooted

as other curriculum areas. Consequently, pupils are not being prepared well enough for life in modern Britain. The school should ensure that the intended personal development curriculum is consistently implemented so that pupils learn to build character. This will ensure pupils are being prepared for the next stage of their lives in all areas of being active citizens, beyond the school gates.

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	110733
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10294931
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	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Maxine Howells
Interim Headteacher	Rebekah Owen
Website	www.littlepaxton.cambs.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	25 and 26 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been an interim headteacher appointed.
- A new chair of governors has been appointed since the last inspection, and the members of the board have all been appointed in the last two years. There are two vacancies on the governing body.
- There have been several changes to the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) personnel since the last inspection. The current SENCo has been in post since January 2023.
- The school does not use any 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.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders, including senior leaders, the SENCo and governors, including the chair of governors. The lead inspector met with the school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and computing. Inspectors looked at a range of books from other subjects, including religious education and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders and the senior leadership team, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took into account the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which leaders had created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents and policies, including the school improvement plan and minutes of the governing body meetings.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents through responses to Ofsted's Parent View. Inspectors gathered the views of staff through Ofsted's staff surveys, as well as interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Suzanne Thrower, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Stuart Pope	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Scott	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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