

Inspection of a good school: St Peter's Infant School

Holcombe Road, Rochester, Kent ME1 2HU

Inspection date:

9 May 2024

Outcome

St Peter's Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are enormously proud of their small, happy and friendly school. They eagerly show off their work and talk excitedly about what they have been learning. Pupils are confident and happy because they feel safe and well cared for by nurturing staff. The 'Golden Rules' such as 'work hard, be kind and gentle' are evident in the respectful way pupils treat each other. Staff provide effective help to pupils that find managing their emotions more difficult. Where needed, staff arrange further professional support for these pupils and their families.

Despite its small size, the school provides pupils with a huge range of important learning experiences that help develop their independence and life skills. Pupils enjoy walks to the local shops to practise using money while navigating roads safely. Opportunities to learn about British values such as democracy are meaningful and age appropriate. Pupils voted onto the school council ensure they have their say when using fundraising money to make school improvements like purchasing new play equipment. A new gardening club provides opportunities for parents to help their children to design and plant a new sensory garden in the school. The school goes to great lengths to ensure every pupil can benefit from the school's wider offer.

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

The curriculum is carefully designed to provide pupils with the important knowledge that they need to be ready for key stage 2. The curriculum is dynamic as teachers adapt learning topics to match the changing interests of pupils each year. Visits and experiences help pupils apply their learning outside of the classroom environment. When pupils are learning about shape in mathematics, teachers use a school visit to Rochester Castle to explore the features of cuboids and cones. Pupils can typically remember learning and apply ideas in different ways.

Teachers often present information clearly and in a way that pupils understand. However, learning does not always meet the specific needs of each pupil. While staff understand

pupils' special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), teaching is not always designed to help all pupils learn as well as they could. In some lessons, learning activities can be too difficult for pupils who do not have the reading skills they need to understand what teachers expect of them. In addition, in some lessons, the work is not ambitious enough for those pupils that have a secure understanding of concepts. This potentially limits how much some pupils learn.

Learning to read is a priority across the school. As soon as children join Reception, they begin to learn the letters and corresponding sounds needed to form new words. Most staff have phonics expertise, so they are able to support pupils to apply their phonics knowledge when reading unfamiliar words. Pupils read regularly. Those that need further opportunities to practise reading receive additional support. Pupils read from a wide range of books that match the sounds that they are learning in class. Teaching approaches to help pupils talk about stories and familiar rhymes help pupils to understand what they are reading and the features of storytelling. Consequently, pupils enjoy reading and pupils typically learn to read well.

Clear routines and consistent approaches ensure that pupils behave well. This is a kind school where pupils feel safe and happy to learn. Staff are tenacious and seek additional help for those pupils who need more support to manage their behaviour. The school recognises the importance of good attendance. It works with the local authority and other professionals to ensure that poor attendance is effectively addressed. The school recognises there is more work to do in partnership with families to improve everyday attendance and punctuality to school.

A culture of inclusion ensures that all pupils have access to a wide range of additional opportunities. Many pupils speak English as an additional language. They read books in their own language to help them enjoy a rich range of stories. Pupils play happily together in thoughtfully designed play spaces. They work together to help each other navigate over tricky obstacles. During assemblies, pupils celebrate the achievements of others. They also dance and sing, performing new songs together. Disadvantaged pupils have additional opportunities to take part in clubs, trips and activities, such as learning to ride a bike. All pupils benefit from these meaningful opportunities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Learning is not always designed to meet the specific needs of pupils. This potentially limits how well some pupils are able to gain the knowledge and skills that they need. The school must ensure that teachers have the training and pupil information they need to adapt learning approaches to enable all pupils to achieve all that they are capable of.

- The school does not always intervene effectively when pupils begin to not attend regularly. Consequently, some pupils miss out on the education that the school provides. The school should continue to strengthen its work in ensuring pupils get the help they need to attend regularly and promptly.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 2018.

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	118576
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10321852
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	68
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicholas McMillan
Headteacher	Joanna Worrall (Interim)
Website	www.stpetersinfants.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 December 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The interim headteacher took up their post in February 2024.
- The school does not make use of 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. 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 governors, including chair of governors. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and science. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. An inspector also listened to pupils read. Inspectors also looked at other aspects of the school's curriculum.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 spoke with pupils about their experiences of school life. Inspectors took account of the views of parents, carers and staff through conversations and responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Michelle Payne, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Catherine Hylands

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024