

Inspection of Moulsecoomb Primary School

The Highway, Moulsecoomb, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 4PA

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Adam Sutton. This school is part of The Pioneer Academy, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Lee Mason-Ellis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Joanne Bouwens.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils offer everyone a warm welcome to their friendly and inclusive school. They are happy and proud to be part of this caring community. The school offers a compassionate learning environment. This is achieved through a nurturing and supportive ethos. As a result of clear expectations and impressive pastoral care, pupils behave well. When pupils struggle to manage their emotions, expert help is on hand to get them back on track.

There is high ambition for all, and particularly for pupils who are disadvantaged or have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Achievement has improved across the subjects, with particular success in reading.

Carefully considered curriculum and assembly activities prepare pupils well for modern Britain. From the stimulating early years environment through to pupil leadership roles in key stage 2, pupils thrive with rich opportunities. 'The Pioneer Passport' guarantees an array of life experiences for all, including theatre visits, choir performances and residential trips. All are provided free of charge, so nobody misses out. Pupils are overjoyed to see their efforts celebrated on 'Family Fridays', when parents and carers visit classrooms to see pupils' work.

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

Reading is at the heart of the school's recent improvements. Staff develop children's vocabulary and language skills impressively in the caring early years environment. In Nursery, Reception and beyond, children learn the sounds they need to read words. They develop a love of stories with expert guidance from well-trained staff. Teachers check gaps and provide frequent catch-up opportunities, ensuring that nobody gets left behind. As a result, pupils become confident and fluent readers, well prepared for their next steps. Since the school joined the trust, pupils' attainment has improved. Across the subjects, pupils demonstrate secure knowledge. Teachers check what pupils know and give them helpful guidance to improve their work. However, the school has further work to do to ensure that the pupils' learning in writing and mathematics is as successful as the progress they make in reading.

The curriculum is precisely planned with knowledge, skills and vocabulary. The trust provides continuous training opportunities for staff. This ensures that teachers' subject knowledge is strong, and teaching methods are consistent and effective. Pupils with SEND receive suitable help to access the school's broad and engaging curriculum. With unwavering support from leaders, staff are quick to identify additional assistance that pupils need. Disadvantaged pupils benefit particularly well from this strong support. Teachers use resources and adapt tasks to make lessons accessible for all. Lesson activities are crafted to excite and inspire. In Nursery, children are enthralled by a game that involves guessing mysterious sounds. Further up the school, pupils are inspired by science investigations about the human body, using jelly as an essential learning resource.

Behaviour at playtime and lunchtime is joyous. Pupils are thrilled to ride their scooters around the track, while others enjoy the 'fairytale forest', climbing tower or trim trail. In

classrooms, conduct is mostly sensible and positive. Clear expectations prevent lessons from being disrupted. A range of pastoral activities help pupils to become calm and safe if they feel unsettled. However, attitudes to learning can be inconsistent. While many pupils try their best, others lack resilience and show less enthusiasm.

The school has worked tirelessly to improve attendance, which was poor in the past. Disadvantaged pupils' attendance is now much closer to the school average. This success has been achieved through a range of pastoral and supportive measures. However, while attendance and punctuality have both improved significantly, some pupils are still persistently absent and, therefore, missing too many days of school.

The school promotes a set of 'personal goals' to help pupils to be adaptable, empathetic and respectful. Pupils embrace multiculturalism, celebrating a range of faiths and beliefs. They regularly showcase fundamental British values through experiences, such as elections for school councillors and house captains. Sport is a strength, enriched by wider opportunities, such as the inspirational table tennis club. Boys and girls value equal opportunities to shine when they represent the school in a range of events. Pupils learn to take responsibility by caring for the school guinea pigs and chickens. Gardening activities boost pupils' mental health and well-being, giving pupils opportunities to proudly develop their impressive school grounds further.

Leaders at every level share a vision that everyone is welcome and included at their school. Leaders are dedicated, compassionate and inspirational, leading by example. These values have steered the school through a turbulent period. Staff are highly motivated, engaged and proud of their school. Trustees and governors provide superb support and challenge, ensuring that the school is a beacon for equality.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils make stronger progress in reading than in writing and mathematics. This means that pupils are less well prepared for secondary school in writing and mathematics. The school must ensure that teaching ensures high achievement across all subjects so that pupils are prepared for their next steps.
- Some pupils demonstrate low enthusiasm and resilience in their attitudes to learning. This can stop them from achieving highly. The school should further embed efforts to engage and motivate pupils to ensure high achievement for all.

- Some pupils are persistently absent from school. This means that they miss out on important learning time. The school must continue to prioritise work to improve attendance for this group of pupils.

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	14680
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10339694
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	194
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Joanne Bouwens
CEO of the trust	Lee Mason-Ellis
Headteacher	Adam Sutton
Website	www.moulsecoomb.brighton-hove.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Moulsecoomb Primary School converted to become an academy in November 2022. When its predecessor school, with the same name, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school offers before- and after-school clubs, overseen by the trust.
- There is a nursery for three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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 the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, trust leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of governors.
- The lead inspector met with the chief executive officer of the trust and trustees, including the chair of trustees.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, physical education, mathematics and science. For deep dives, 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.
- Inspectors also discussed and evaluated pupils' work across wider foundation subjects, including geography and history.
- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils read. The inspector observed catch-up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils to learn their views about the school. Inspectors also took account of responses to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of parents and took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Heather Fearn

Ofsted Inspector

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