

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Priory Primary School

Pamber End, Tadley, Hampshire RG26 5QD

Inspection dates:

3 and 4 June 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Matthew Walsh. This school is part of a single academy trust, which means that other people in the trust have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Prubjyot Sahota.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and positive school where pupils enjoy attending. They know that they have trusted adults that they can turn to if they have any worries. The whole-school 'buddy' system is highly effective in helping older pupils learn to be responsible role models. As a result, playtimes are harmonious, there is a wonderful unity across ages and pupils feel a strong sense of belonging.

Pupils celebrate differences between themselves and others. They are encouraged to become considerate and tolerant. They benefit from expert speakers who inspire them, such as representatives of the Windrush community and alumni who are world champion athletes. Pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities on offer to them, such as first aid training, tag rugby, performing in recitals and even den building.

The school aspires for all pupils to receive a high-quality education. The school identifies the differing needs of pupils with SEND accurately and swiftly, and children in the early years get off to a strong start. The school expects all pupils to achieve well. However, it does not ensure that all pupils are building a secure body of knowledge. Some pupils are not prepared for their next stages of education as effectively as they could be as a result.

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

The school has a broad and balanced curriculum. It has thought carefully about the important and interesting knowledge that it wants pupils to learn across the full range of

subjects. This knowledge is carefully sequenced so that pupils can build on what they already know to deepen their understanding over time. In the early years, the curriculum is equally well structured and lays firm foundations for the children's learning. Many subjects benefit from enriching activities. For example, in art pupils are inspired by visiting artists, they enter poetry competitions for English and visit a submarine museum for history.

Most pupils typically learn well across a range of subjects. However, sometimes the curriculum is not being delivered as well as the school intends. Activities do not always align with the intended learning. The implementation of the curriculum does not always help pupils to know more and remember more over time. Some pupils lose focus in lessons and become disengaged because the curriculum is not sufficiently taught. This is because the school's checks on the overall effectiveness of its curriculum are not as secure as they could be. As a result, the school does not have an accurate picture of what is working well and what is not.

Children get off to a very positive start when they join the school. Staff are very caring and help develop children's communication and language skills by skilfully interacting with them, extending their understanding. As soon as children start in Reception, they are introduced to the joys of stories, rhymes and songs. Early reading is a high priority in school. Staff implement the school's chosen phonics programme consistently and effectively. Children begin to learn to read as soon as they start in Reception. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they know. Well-trained staff provide effective support for pupils who are at risk of falling behind in reading. These pupils get the support they need to catch up quickly.

The school has robust systems for monitoring attendance and reducing persistent absence. Pupils attend school very regularly and on time. Staff work successfully with the few parents and carers who need to overcome barriers to good attendance. As a result, attendance is consistently high. Equally, the school has effective processes in place to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are included in all aspects of school life. Pastoral care is strong, and warm nurturing relationships are established as soon as children join the school in the early years.

The school provides high-quality opportunities that make an effective contribution to pupils' wider development. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe both online and offline. Pupils are proud of their sporting successes in the competitions they take part in. There is a wide range of clubs on offer, including unusual sports such as 'Quidditch'. Pupils have a secure understanding of people's differences and how diversity enhances the richness of society. For example, each class contributed to a school charter based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This helps pupils appreciate and respect the wider world.

Trustees fulfil their statutory duties and are fully committed to the development of the school. However, they have not checked in sufficient depth what the school has told them about the quality of education. As a result, the trustees do not have a fully accurate view of the areas that the school must prioritise.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority.)

- Some learning activities do not deepen pupils' learning. This is because they are not always precisely aligned to the intended curriculum. Consequently, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff are suitably equipped to design learning tasks that help pupils to learn the curriculum effectively.
- Subject leaders do not receive sufficient time or training required to conduct their roles. This is a barrier to swift and effective curriculum implementation. The school must ensure that subject leaders receive the professional opportunities needed to carry out their roles expertly.
- Trustees do not have a sufficient depth of understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. This means that trustees have not challenged leaders sufficiently well about how well pupils at the school are achieving. Trustees should continue to develop their role so that they hold leaders fully to account for the school's performance.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024, graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in February 2020.

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	136447
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10379850
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	188
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Prubjyot Sahota
Headteacher	Matthew Walsh
Website	www.theprioryprimaryschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 February 2020, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a single academy trust, named The Priory Primary Academy Trust.
- The school runs a before-school club.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

- 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in this evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders. The inspector also met with representatives of the board of governors, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector met with some pupils and members of staff to discuss their views of the school. The inspector also took their views into account through their responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys.
- They considered responses to the online survey for parents and carers, Ofsted Parent View.
- 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.

Inspection team

Ginny Rhodes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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