

Inspection of a good school: Peterchurch Primary School

Peterchurch, Hereford, Herefordshire HR2 0RP

Inspection date:

16 March 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Peterchurch Primary School are keen to learn. They generally enjoy their lessons, particularly when activities are engaging. For example, they recall the excitement of building a plastic brick model of the Great Wall of China to support their work in history. Pupils benefit from visitors to the school and trips to places of interest. They enjoy a wide range of after-school clubs.

Behaviour is typically good, and disruption to lessons is rare. Pupils know that there is always an adult to talk to if they have a concern. Bullying is uncommon, and any incidents are usually resolved quickly. Pupils dress smartly and take care to present their work tidily.

Pupils study a full range of subjects but leaders have been slow to ensure that pupils' learning builds up over time. Teachers sometimes do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Their subject knowledge is secure, but how well they deliver the planned curriculum varies too much.

The current headteacher has rightly focused on improving English and mathematics. Leaders have developed the curriculum in some other subjects, but there is much still to do to develop the curriculum in all subjects.

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

Leaders understand the importance of teaching pupils to read. From the start, pupils follow a structured programme that introduces them to sounds and letters. Staff check regularly on what pupils know. The school provides pupils with books to read that generally match their ability in phonics. Staff encourage pupils to read at home. Most pupils become enthusiastic readers, motivated by the school's reading rewards. It is too

soon to judge the effectiveness of the new arrangements for supporting pupils at risk of falling behind.

In the older years, pupils learn specific reading skills. Leaders acknowledge, however, that the reading curriculum has not considered the use of whole-class texts carefully enough. As a result, these books do not extend pupils' reading skills as well as they might.

By contrast, in mathematics, the adoption of a structured scheme has helped teachers to plan lessons that build on what pupils already know. Children in the early years develop a secure, basic understanding of numeracy. There is a clear approach to teaching mixed-age classes, with a separate sequence of tasks for each year group. Teachers are starting to use practical equipment and diagrams with pupils to help them understand new concepts.

Teachers have good knowledge of different subjects. They expect pupils to use technical terms correctly. However, there is too much inconsistency in the way teachers implement the curriculum. In particular, teaching sometimes does not provide pupils with a sufficient level of challenge. Some miss out, for example, on the opportunity to reason mathematically or apply their learning in other contexts. Some pupils reported that work was too easy. Leaders ensure that staff know how to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff use the SEND guidance well.

Pupils show an enthusiasm for learning. They behave very well when the activities engage them. For example, in a well-planned physical education (PE) lesson for the Year 2/3 class, pupils worked hard to develop their hockey skills. However, a minority of pupils become a little inattentive if the work does not challenge them enough or enable them to build on their prior learning.

The curriculum includes books and topics that introduce pupils to a range of cultures and traditions. Pupils learn to respect others and treat them fairly. Their broader development is well supported by a range of extra-curricular activities. These have been re-established after the COVID-19 pandemic. Leaders also consider and provide opportunities for disadvantaged pupils.

There is an understandable sense of urgency in the headteacher's desire to improve the curriculum and its implementation. Staff recognise that some measures, like changing the marking policy, have reduced their workload. However, some believe that better account should be taken of their views and experiences.

Several members of staff are new to their roles. Together with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this has created a significant demand for staff training. Subject leaders have had little opportunity to monitor how effectively teachers are implementing the curriculum. This limits their ability to contribute fully to curriculum development in different subjects.

The governing body provides effective oversight of the school. It has an informed understanding of the school's priorities.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that the sequencing of the curriculum and its consistent implementation may usefully serve as the focuses for the next inspection. In addition, inspectors might consider the extent to which all staff are contributing to these improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders make sure that staff are well trained in safeguarding, so that they are vigilant and know of any particular risks to pupils. Staff have ensured that pupils are fully aware of whom they can turn to if they are worried. Leaders take the right steps to involve other agencies that work with children. The school has recently adopted an electronic system for record-keeping, which staff are using effectively. Leaders make the right checks on the staff who join the school.

Governors are well trained and provide effective oversight of safeguarding arrangements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum in several subjects is not well sequenced. This means that pupils are not able to build reliably upon their existing knowledge and skills. Leaders should plan the curriculum in all subjects so that pupils can develop their knowledge progressively over time.
- Leaders have not considered whole-class reading texts in the key stage 2 reading curriculum well enough. Consequently, pupils' reading skills are not developed as well as they could be. Leaders should review and develop the reading curriculum in key stage 2 to ensure that pupils' reading skills are fully developed.
- There is considerable inconsistency in the effectiveness with which staff implement the curriculum. Delays in training have contributed to this. Consequently, some teachers are not providing work that is appropriately demanding for pupils. Leaders should ensure that all teaching contributes well to pupils acquiring and retaining knowledge in the subject being taught.
- Subject leaders have had scant opportunity to monitor the effectiveness of the curriculum in the subjects for which they are responsible. As a result, they have lacked the opportunity to identify weaknesses in the curriculum and contribute to school improvement. Leaders should provide subject leaders with more opportunities to monitor their subjects so they can contribute to the overall school improvement.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2012.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	116718
Local authority	Herefordshire
Inspection number	10211157
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	92
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rose Lloyd
Headteacher	Jason Avards
Website	www.peterchurch.hereford.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Peterchurch Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. There is considerable variation in the number of pupils in the different year groups.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2021. A number of other staff are relatively new to the school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher. Meetings were held with curriculum leaders and the special educational needs coordinator.
- The chair and another member of the governing body met with the lead inspector. The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative of the local authority.

- The inspectors spoke with pupils at social times, and with groups of pupils more formally.
- When inspecting safeguarding, the inspectors looked at the school's procedures for recruiting and checking on staff. They also considered the effectiveness of staff training and the procedures to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including leaders' plans to improve the school and records of governing body meetings. They also reviewed the school's attendance and behaviour records.
- The inspectors took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's questionnaire for parents. An inspector met with parents outside the school at the start of the inspection. The inspectors also considered responses to the surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PE. In these subjects, the inspectors considered the school's curriculum guidance, visited lessons and scrutinised pupils' work. The inspectors also met with pupils and teachers to discuss learning in these subjects.
- An inspector listened to a sample of pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to an adult.

Inspection team

Martin Spoor, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Sian Williams

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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