

Inspection of Putnoe Primary School

Church Lane, Bedford, Bedfordshire MK41 0DH

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 July 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

The headteacher of this school is Simon Petch. This school is a single academy trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Donna Neely-Hayes. There is no chief executive officer.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and harmonious because they are all highly tolerant and respectful of each other. Pupils from diverse backgrounds care for each other, hold hands and include each other in their games. If ever anyone is feeling sad, staff quickly notice and come to chat things through.

Everyone wants to learn, behave well and do their best. Pupils show the school values such as politeness, trust and honesty in everything they do. They are deeply committed to these values at all times. This is because the school regularly focuses on each value and celebrates and rewards pupils who show these.

Pupils know that 'knowledge is power strengthening you' or, as the school refers to it, 'KIPSY'. They relish the interesting range of subjects that are brought to life through trips and experiences. For example, pupils recently visited local universities to learn all about physics, through conducting crash tests.

Even younger children strive to achieve their best. Most pupils achieve the high expectations that the school has of them. They love reading and eagerly get through a wealth of books. A small minority of pupils require further support to write to a consistently high standard.

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

The school had a difficult circumstance with the sad death of the previous headteacher in 2021. Leaders have undertaken exceptional work to recover from this and move the school forward. Consequently, key stage 2 attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is improving.

Leaders place pupils' welfare at the heart of everything they do. They go to extraordinary lengths to support families with the wider challenges they sometimes face. As a result, pupils attend very well. They are supported to be in the right place to learn when they arrive at school. This is because leaders use their expertise to work effectively with other agencies to remove barriers that impact negatively on pupils' education.

The school's curriculum is both ambitious and broad. Leaders have identified the important knowledge pupils should learn in each subject. Teachers use assessment diligently to make sure pupils can recall and apply this knowledge well. For example, in music, pupils use complex subject vocabulary confidently because of this.

The school has an effective whole-school approach to teach writing. However, sometimes, staff do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across the curriculum. This includes in the early years. Consequently, a small minority of pupils do not develop their writing as well as they should.

The school has evolved a very effective approach to teaching children to read. Staff are experts at teaching reading. Pupils get precisely targeted support where they need it and read with confidence and fluency. They develop their understanding of the meaning of texts well. Staff help pupils to develop a love of reading by fostering their love of books through dedicated time in the library and a wealth of opportunities to read across the school day.

The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to be fully included in class. Staff provide additional help, such as writing scaffolds and modelling of examples, to enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and learn it well. This includes in early years, where support staff know children's individual needs well and work caringly with them to ensure these are met.

Leaders have ensured that children in early years have a wide variety of interesting activities to explore that help them to develop well in each of the seven areas of learning. Children successfully secure important attributes such as sustaining focus and respecting and including others.

Pupils go out of their way to support one another. They care about each other's feelings and offer help to those who need it. The school has a consistently highly positive culture of behaviour and attitudes. Everyone wants to learn and play their part in contributing to the class.

Personal development is very richly promoted and opportunities are vast. For example, the school coordinates days where pupils learn first-hand from the fire and police services about important issues such as road safety. This helps them to learn about society and being responsible citizens. Most pupils take up the highly meaningful leadership roles which the school provides. For example, the school council led work on organising a famous athlete to come into school to raise money for charity. This taught pupils about both democracy and strong moral values.

Staff are extremely appreciative of the high-quality professional development opportunities and support that leaders provide. Trustees continually evolve their skills and capacity. This enables them to challenge and support the school robustly.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not plan enough high-quality opportunities for pupils to develop their writing across the curriculum. As a result, a minority of pupils do not always produce writing that has sufficient depth or extends their writing ability well enough. The school needs to ensure that all teachers plan regular

opportunities for pupils to practise, extend, and develop their writing across the whole curriculum so that all pupils consistently develop their writing ability well.

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	139519
Local authority	Bedford
Inspection number	10323733
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	543
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Donna Neely-Hayes
Headteacher	Simon Petch
Website	www.putnoeprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up their post in March 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative providers of education.

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.
- To discuss governance an inspector met with the chair of trustees and some other trustees.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, family worker, designated safeguarding lead and behaviour and personal development leads.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, science, physical education and music. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 spent time in early years and spoke with children and staff there. They also considered the curriculum in some other subjects, including geography, art, personal, social, health and economic education and relationships and sex education.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and at social times.
- 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 considered responses to Ofsted's pupil survey and Ofsted's staff survey. They considered responses to the parent survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text messages.

Inspection team

James Chester, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Lawrence

Ofsted Inspector

Sarah Fowler

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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