

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

Wisbech Road, Thorney, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE6 0ST

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 January 2025

Outcome

The Duke of Bedford Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in the school's positive ethos. They routinely demonstrate the school's 'HEART' values, such as teamwork. On the playground, for example, pupils readily help others when the need arises. Older pupils look out for younger pupils and show them how to play with kindness. In the early years, children play well together. They share and take turns.

Pupils understand the importance of learning. Children in the early years are inquisitive. They enjoy exploring the stimulating learning activities the school provides. In lessons, pupils show fascination and ask interesting questions about what they are studying. They work hard to achieve the school's high expectations. When faced with something tricky to learn, pupils show determination and keep trying. Overall, pupils learn the curriculum successfully and are well prepared for secondary education.

Pupils benefit from the many enrichment and extra-curricular opportunities at the school. They have lots of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. For example, all pupils experience learning how to play musical instruments. In pupil-led clubs, pupils learn how to manage time, resources and people while offering fun activities to their peers. Owing to the school's well-focused support and encouragement, most disadvantaged pupils take part in at least one extra-curricular activity each week.

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

Since the previous inspection, the school has strengthened the design of the curriculum. The curriculum is organised well so that pupils learn knowledge in a logical order. This

helps pupils build knowledge over time. For nearly all subjects, the school has provided guidance for teachers that clarifies the exact knowledge pupils must learn. Teachers follow the school's guidance and arrange learning activities that typically enable pupils to learn the curriculum well.

Teachers routinely check what pupils know and understand. When pupils misunderstand or forget something, teachers give timely support. This typically ensures pupils do not fall behind in the curriculum.

Overall, the school has effective measures in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Working with external agencies, the school identifies pupils' needs and usually gives clear guidance to staff about how best to support pupils. At times, however, the school's guidance is not sufficiently precise to help staff make the adaptations to their teaching that some pupils with SEND need. As a result, some of these pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they could.

Reading has a big profile at the school. Pupils enjoy reading. They enthusiastically recommend books to their peers in the school's 'read and rave' sessions. They also have fun completing the reading challenges set by the school librarians. In Nursery, two- and three-year-olds develop their use of language and build their vocabulary. They delight in the stories and nursery rhymes regularly shared with them. Staff precisely follow the school's approach to teaching early reading. As a result, nearly all pupils can read fluently by the end of key stage 1. When pupils find reading difficult, staff provide effective support to help these pupils to become fluent readers.

Starting in the early years, children learn the school's high expectations of their behaviour. During lessons, pupils sustain concentration and focus on what they are trying to learn. Pupils appreciate the recognition they receive in assemblies for their good conduct. The school gives strong support for pupils who find it difficult to manage their emotions and behaviour. These pupils are well equipped to discuss their feelings and find positive solutions to frustrating situations.

The school prepares pupils well for life after primary education. Pupils learn about how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and how to stay safe at school, at home and in the community. Pupils understand fundamental values such as democracy and the rule of law. The school ensures pupils learn about the diverse lifestyles and beliefs in modern society. Pupils show respect for the differences of others. They also sensitively discuss controversial issues found in the wider world.

Since the previous inspection, governors and leaders have led the school through a period of substantial staff and leadership changes effectively. Governors have articulated a clear vision for the school, including high expectations for pupils and staff. Governors ensure that they get the information they need to know the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They hold leaders to account to ensure that the school continues to develop the quality of provision for pupils.

Governors and leaders have engaged well with staff and parents. Parents are positive about the school. Staff value the team ethos at the school and the high-quality training they receive. They appreciate the way governors and leaders have supported their well-being while also working to improve the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- For some pupils with SEND, the school's guidance for staff is not sufficiently precise so as to enable staff to understand these pupils' needs and how best to support them. This means staff occasionally do not arrange learning activities that address these pupils' needs. As a result, these pupils do not always learn the curriculum as well as they could. The school should provide staff with appropriate information about the needs of pupils with SEND and ensure that staff are skilled at using that information to help these pupils to learn as well as they could.

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 June 2019.

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	110705
Local authority	Peterborough
Inspection number	10345111
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	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Cowdell
Headteacher	Rebecca Hales
Website	www.dukeofbedford.peterborough.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- In September 2016, the school took responsibility for the running of the on-site pre-school.
- The school's age range recorded on the government's register of schools, Get Information About Schools, is four to 11. The school has two- and three-year-olds in the nursery.
- The headteacher took up her post in January 2025. Prior to this, the deputy headteacher served as interim headteacher.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school care.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the chair of the governing body, members of the governing body, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons, when moving around the school and during lunchtimes and playtimes. The inspector also considered a range of documents and other information about the behaviour, attitudes and personal development of pupils.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Parent View, and the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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