

Inspection of Phoenix Primary School

Glencoe Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 5QD

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at the school are safe, happy and an active part of their community. The pupils at the school embody the school's philosophy of 'valuing self, others and the environment'. Parents support the school's effective work in securing pupils' mental and physical well-being.

There are high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Pupils have warm and nurturing relationships with staff. They show good manners and consideration to adults and peers alike. When pupils become upset or do not behave as they should, they know there is support available. They are also aware of the consequences of any poor behaviour. They are also aware that they get the chance to repair relationships and that everyone is treated fairly.

Pupils are enthusiastic about learning, and interactions in class and around the school are positive and caring. They value their learning and the opportunities the school provides. Pupils are proud of their school and what they are achieving.

Phoenix Primary is a school where pupils see themselves as active improvers of their community. At the 'homeless sleepover', pupils slept on cardboard to raise money for facilities at a local homeless shelter. The school provides kayaking, forest school and a chance to grow vegetables as ways for the pupils to gain valuable life experience.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has grown from a junior to an all-through primary school. Leaders have implemented an ambitious curriculum. The curriculum is equally ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), who work on the same goals as their peers. From the early years provision, the curriculum in all subjects builds around vocabulary and knowledge in a structured way. In the early years, children learn about the immediate area around the school. For example, they learn about Chatham in key stage 1, progressing by Year 6 into a detailed understanding of the United Kingdom. Outcomes in Year 6 after COVID-19 do not reflect the quality of the comprehensive curricular offer children currently receive at Phoenix. Leaders have recognised the reasons for this historical dip in performance and have taken measures to address this.

Leaders have made reading a priority. A well-developed and effective phonics programme supports early reading across the school. From the first days of Reception, children begin their journey in reading. Staff are well trained and support pupils to be confident and able readers. They can access a wide range of well-chosen books that match their ability. Activities in reading lessons are well chosen for most pupils. There is effective support for building comprehension, fluency and accuracy.

All staff across the school now receive well-planned training and development. This training supports subject knowledge for teachers and support staff. Pupils with SEND

are quickly identified. Staff provide helpful support for these pupils and regularly assess how well they are doing. There has been effective behaviour support training for all staff in the school. As a result, consistent and calm approaches to managing pupils' behaviour can be seen in action across the school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. From early years onwards, the children have warm and nurturing relationships with staff. Pupils show good manners and consideration to adults and peers alike. Bullying and poor behaviour sometimes occur, but leaders address this well. As a result, serious events rarely reoccur, but are dealt with appropriately. Leaders have clear expectations and guidelines for school conduct. This supports pupils in making positive choices. Most pupils attend school regularly. However, too many pupils from some vulnerable groups are persistently absent.

The local governing body and the trustees of the multi-academy trust diligently uphold their statutory duties. They are active in challenging the school leadership. They are well informed and understand the school.

Phoenix Primary School has a comprehensive approach to pupils' physical and mental well-being. Pupils understand equality and diversity. They are proud of their part in being active and positive citizens. The values-based education ensures that pupils are ready for life in modern Britain and the next stages of education. The teaching of the curriculum for personal development starts in the early years, when children are taught how to manage emotions, interactions and their understanding of the world. By Year 6, pupils are polite, tolerant and keen to embody the school's values.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a culture of high-quality safeguarding. Record-keeping is accurate and informs leaders' decisions. Staff are not afraid to challenge systems internally and externally in order to ensure the well-being and safety of pupils. The local governing body and the multi-academy trust actively support and monitor safeguarding. This monitoring of safeguarding effectiveness is thorough and regular. Staff across the school are well trained, and there are regular updates. Staff value training and how it refreshes their knowledge of processes and pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Outcomes at the end of Year 6 have not reflected the quality of the curriculum. Pupils have not met the standards required to be ready for the next stages of education. Leaders must ensure that outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 sustainably improve.

- Persistent absence for some groups is too high. Leaders must refine and focus their approaches to continue to rapidly reduce persistent absence for pupils with SEND and pupils entitled to the pupil premium.

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](#)' 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	138510
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10268392
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Veen Rama
Headteacher	Peter Sears
Website	www.phoenixprimary.com
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 December 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Beyond Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust.
- The local governing body oversees the school, within the trust structure.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has added an additional key stage and early years.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher, trustees, chief executive officer of the trust and the governors.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, design and technology and computing. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records, interviewing staff, and conducting thorough discussions with pupils.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View and on-site activity. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance records and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Toby Martlew, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrea Carter	Ofsted Inspector
Adnan Ahmet	Ofsted Inspector

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