

# Inspection of a good school: Peartree Spring Primary School

Hydean Way, Stevenage, Hertfordshire SG2 9GG

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Inspection dates:

8 and 9 March 2023

## **Outcome**

Peartree Spring Primary School continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils are very happy at school. They feel part of the 'Peartree family', where adults are pleased to see them each day. School is a happy, warm and calm place to learn in.

Pupils behave very well. They know that adults in school have high expectations of their behaviour and learning. They respond to these expectations by listening carefully to their teachers, working hard and doing their best.

Pupils know that good friends are loyal, kind and trustworthy. Pupils value the friendships that they make in school, and enjoy each other's company. They are accepting and respectful of each other's differences. They learn in a rights respecting school, and everyone is included, unique and special.

Pupils feel safe. They understand what bullying is. Although it rarely happens in school, they know what to do if it does. Pupils trust adults. They understand that if they need help, adults will support them, sort out any problems and help them to feel less worried.

Pupils learn about a range of different people through the curriculum and the regular 'dream catcher' assemblies. They are inspired by the way others overcome barriers. This supports pupils' belief that they, too, can achieve their ambitions.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. They have designed a broad and interesting curriculum. They want pupils to achieve well and so have ensured that their curriculum supports this aim. Leaders have set out what they want pupils to know and remember in most subjects. In a few subjects, however, they are less clear about the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn, including the key subject vocabulary. Where this happens, teachers are unsure about the most important content that pupils need to remember. As a result, pupils do not recall their prior learning or use it effectively to tackle new learning. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they should in these subjects.

Teachers are well trained to teach the curriculum. They present new information to pupils clearly. Teachers plan together and help each other to teach effectively. They use assessment well, reviewing previous learning and going over knowledge that pupils do not remember. They ensure that all pupils use the same-quality resources. Pupils enjoy learning, have positive attitudes and behave very well. They rarely interrupt learning.

Teachers teach early reading expertly. They provide effective routines and resources, including in the early years. Pupils become confident and eager readers. Teachers plan lessons so that pupils can practise their reading throughout the day. They identify pupils who need more support with their reading and provide extra time for them to practise and improve. For a small number of pupils in the early stages of learning to read, books do not contain the sounds they are familiar with. Pupils then struggle to read independently or fluently. This impacts on their confidence and eagerness to read.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They identify the needs of pupils with SEND quickly. They provide clear information to teachers to help them to support pupils. Expert staff from the school's Willow Centre provide further advice to teachers. Teachers value the support that they receive from their colleagues. Pupils with SEND achieve well, join all lessons with their friends and are confident learners.

Early years provision is a strength of the school. Children make a very positive start to school. Leaders of the early years are knowledgeable about children and their learning. They have high expectations of children's behaviour and achievement. Children are confident, independent learners who are ready to move on to the next stage of their learning.

Leaders take every opportunity to ensure pupils are responsible, aware and respectful members of their community. Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, visits and visitors. They have opportunities to take responsibility for school life and to be part of competitions with others. They learn how to take care of their mental and physical health.

Governors and leaders work effectively together to improve the school further. They take staff's workload into account when making decisions about school improvement. Governors receive appropriate information from leaders and other sources. This supports them in setting further priorities for the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders train staff to identify concerns about pupils. Staff report and record their concerns quickly. Leaders have developed effective systems in school so that pupils receive help when needed. They work effectively with other agencies to keep pupils safe. Leaders ensure that appropriate checks on staff are undertaken before they are employed by the school.

Pupils learn how to keep safe when working online. They learn how to have healthy and fulfilling friendships and relationships.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In a small number of curriculum subjects, leaders are not clear enough about the most important knowledge that pupils need to retain. Consequently, teachers are not sure about the most important content, or the key vocabulary, they need to teach. In these cases, pupils do not remember all the knowledge that leaders want them to. Leaders must ensure that the curriculum is sufficiently detailed in all subjects, so that teachers can teach the most important knowledge and check effectively whether pupils remember it.
- Teachers do not consistently provide all pupils who are learning to read with books that contain the sounds and words that they read confidently. As a result, these pupils find reading more difficult. This impacts on their confidence and reading fluency. Leaders and teachers must ensure that pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read have books that match the sounds and words that they are confident in reading so that they become confident and fluent readers.

## **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 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 in March 2017.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117206
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10241541
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	621
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Tracie Bere
<b>Headteacher</b>	Teresa Skeggs
<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://peartreespringjm.herts.sch.uk">https://peartreespringjm.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	15 and 16 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast- and after-school club.
- The school manages and operates a specialist provision for pupils with SEND, the Willow Centre. Leaders use this provision if pupils require alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders and members of staff, including the special educational needs and disabilities leader.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history and science. For each of these subjects, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' books.
- The inspectors looked at plans and work from other curriculum areas.

- The inspectors met with safeguarding leads to examine the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks and leaders' records of safeguarding. They also spoke with teachers and pupils about safeguarding.
- The inspectors spoke with leaders and pupils about behaviour. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school.
- Inspectors spoke with teachers about the curriculum and workload.
- The inspectors spoke with those responsible for governance and a representative of the local authority. They also spoke with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors also considered 77 responses to Ofsted's online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including 56 free-text responses.
- The inspectors also took account of 77 responses to the Ofsted survey for pupils and 40 responses to the Ofsted survey for school staff.

### **Inspection team**

Debbie Rogan, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Paul Fykin

Ofsted Inspector

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