

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Portishead Primary School

Station Road, Portishead, Somerset BS20 7DB

Inspection dates:

11 and 12 March 2025

Outcome

Portishead Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Lucy Sargent. This school is part of Lighthouse Schools Partnership, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Gary Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Adele Haysom.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school has high expectations, which pupils respond well to. The school supports pupils, including the most vulnerable, to achieve their potential. Pupils learn a broad and balanced curriculum that enables them to know more about their locality as well as the wider world.

From Reception onwards, pupils have their eyes opened to a range of different career possibilities beyond their time in school. Pupils learn about the 'people who help us', hearing from doctors, firefighters, police and other services. A recent visit from a nuclear engineer engaged pupils to think about their future aspirations.

Pupils are happy in school. They respect each other, staff and visitors. The school is a very positive place that embodies the school's ethos of creating lifelong learners. Pupils understand school routines. At breaktimes, pupils play well together. Older pupils have buddies in the younger years and support them in their choice of games, such as skipping and ball catching. There are plenty of activities in which pupils can engage. The school organises external coaches so that older pupils can play football, basketball and netball. Pupils enjoy the school's wide range of extra-curricular clubs, from 'Eco 6' to chess.

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

Pupils achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. School leaders have introduced improved curriculums in subject areas such as history. The school has an agreed approach to teach the key concepts that pupils must know. However, some teachers do not use the school's agreed strategies consistently. For instance, sometimes, teaching does not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. When this occurs, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and cannot recall their learning over time.

Children learn phonics as soon as they start school in Reception class. There is a sharp focus on making sure that all pupils swiftly become fluent readers. Staff are supported to ensure that they have the expertise to teach phonics effectively. They make sure that pupils who have fallen behind catch up quickly. As a result, those who struggle to read become confident and fluent readers rapidly.

Leaders have diligently set about making the school inclusive and one where pupils feel a strong sense of belonging. They ensure that every pupil has a chance to learn and shine in their achievements. The school fulfils its commitment to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) skilfully. The school has developed a professional team of experts so that pupils' needs are met.

Children in Reception engage in focused and purposeful conversations with well-trained staff. This provides children with an enriched and expanding vocabulary. Children build an understanding across all areas of learning systematically. This strong start supports children to be ready for Year 1.

The school acts quickly and robustly to check and understand the causes for any absence. The persistence of staff ensures that most pupils attend daily. Leaders go above and beyond in their support of families so that the most vulnerable pupils attend as much as possible.

The school has strong relationships with parents who are positive about the school and what it does. There are very few incidents of bullying. Leaders deal with them appropriately when they do happen. There are fair and well-organised systems for behaviour, which pupils follow regularly. These have eliminated any elements of aggression and derogatory language.

Pastoral support is well planned. Pupils feel safe and have trusted adults with whom they share any concerns. Pupils develop into responsible, positive and active citizens. In an age-appropriate way, pupils are aware of their development towards adolescence. They understand the importance of healthy relationships. Most pupils are ready, academically and socially, for the next stages of their education.

The school values the trust's support. It helps the school maintain the effective level of education that pupils receive. Governors understand their role. They provide challenge in a meaningful way so that the school maintains its momentum to continually improve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not apply the school's agreed principles of effective teaching consistently, including checks on pupils' understanding. As a result, some pupils do not remember key concepts and do not deepen their knowledge well over time. The trust must ensure that teachers use effective strategies to deliver the curriculum so that pupils secure their knowledge well over time.

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	143282
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10344760
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	397
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Adele Haysom
CEO of the trust	Gary Lewis
Headteacher	Lucy Sargent
Website	www.portisheadprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2019

Information about this school

- This school has been part of the Lighthouse Schools Partnership multi-academy trust since September 2016.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 met with the headteacher, other senior staff, the co-chair of the governing body and three governors, the CEO of the trust and the chair of trustees, a group of teachers and groups of 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 considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments. They also reviewed responses to the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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