

Pebsham Primary Academy

School Place, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN40 2PU

Inspection dates

11–12 June 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a happy, caring school. Pupils are proud of their school and of their achievements. They behave well and are respectful to each other and to adults.
- Good leadership, from senior leaders, governors and the trust, has secured improvements since the previous inspection.
- Staff are very proud to work at Pebsham. They share leaders' determination to continue to improve outcomes for all pupils.
- Leaders' focus on ensuring that pupils learn well across the wider curriculum is effective. The interesting, well-planned activities ensure that pupils deepen their skills, knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects.
- Leaders' priority on promoting pupils' mental and emotional well-being is a highly successful aspect of their work. As a result, pupils have an excellent understanding about how to keep healthy, both in body and mind.
- The leadership of teaching is effective. As a result, the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is typically good, although there remain some inconsistencies.
- Effective action has been taken to improve the teaching of mathematics. Leaders keep a close eye on this to make sure that the new approach is increasingly embedded.
- Much good work has been done to improve pupils' outcomes in reading. Nonetheless, there is more to do to make sure that pupils make even better progress.
- Pupils generally make good progress. However, too few are working at the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have established a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils feel very safe in school and are well looked after.
- Children achieve well in the early years. As in the rest of the school, sometimes activities do not provide the challenge needed for children to excel.
- Attendance is good for many pupils. However, the attendance of some pupils remains stubbornly low.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards further by ensuring that:
 - inconsistencies in teaching are effectively tackled
 - the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, are consistently challenged and enabled to excel
 - pupils read books which are well matched to their reading ability
 - more pupils develop a love of reading.
- Further the good work already done with parents so that more understand the need for pupils' good attendance and absence rates are reduced.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, together with her deputy and the inclusion manager, make an effective senior team. They have successfully embedded a culture of improvement.
- Rigorous and systematic monitoring by senior leaders and the trust ensures that all have a firm grasp of the school's strengths and the priorities for improvement. This is ensuring that the school continues to go from strength to strength.
- Teachers receive timely and good ongoing support to improve their practice. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Staff share the ambition and vision of leaders. They appreciate the support they receive, both from senior leaders and the trust. As a result, morale is high.
- Leaders have clear aims for the wider curriculum and have completely overhauled it. They have ensured that it reflects the school's values of 'pride' by promoting pupils' positive well-being, respect, independence, determination and enquiry. The curriculum is broad and exciting.
- Themes are planned which include memorable activities with clear learning objectives. These objectives are structured so that they build securely on pupils' learning. For example, Year 6 pupils explore the concept of inheritance, carry out fair tests, create databases and convert them to graphs, using their well-developed computing skills. Pupils' historical knowledge builds progressively, enabling pupils to develop subject-specific vocabulary and use it effectively to describe historical events, such as the invasions of the Vikings.
- Excellent use is made of the nearby beach to enable pupils to deepen their understanding by learning outdoors. The 'beach school' curriculum is designed to enable pupils to become 'seashore explorers' and earn badges for the completion of different activities. For example, making and flying kites, making stone music and dancing on the beach.
- The recently appointed inclusion manager has made a very good start in leading the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). She has ensured that the identification of pupils is accurate and that funding is carefully targeted to support their achievement.
- Leaders use the pupil premium grant well. They understand the barriers to learning for disadvantaged pupils and are committed to ensuring that these barriers are overcome as well as possible. As a result, the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are good and improving.
- The effective use of the sports premium has ensured that an increasing proportion of pupils take part in sports, tournaments and competitions.
- Senior leaders have established strong links with most parents. Frequent meetings and workshops help parents to know how they can help their children's learning. However, there is more to do to ensure that even more parents understand the importance of pupils' good attendance.
- Parents are complimentary about the work of the school. They particularly value how

well their children are cared for. The comment from one parent typified a number of responses: 'Pebsham teachers really care about the children and have always listened to any concerns I have had.' Several parents commented on how much their children had enjoyed the school's recent 'healthy mind and body week'.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors in the local governing body support and challenge senior leaders well. Governors are determined that their impact makes a positive difference to pupils' personal development and academic outcomes.
- Governors make frequent visits to the school to talk to staff and pupils. They carry out frequent reviews on aspects of the school's work, for example, safeguarding procedures and pupils' behaviour. As a result, they have an accurate understanding of the school's work.
- Governors receive timely, good-quality training from the trust. This gives them a clear understanding of their role.
- Trustees, through the work of the regional executive director, are knowledgeable about the work of the school. The regional executive director, ably supported by his deputy, works closely with the local governing body and school leaders to make sure that plans for school improvement are effective. They make sure that the school receives frequent checks through reviews carried out from within the trust as well as from external advisors.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school's website and documentation show that safeguarding is taken very seriously. Furthermore, in school, there is evidently a strong culture of safeguarding. Parents, staff and pupils agree that the school is a safe place to be. Pupils have a very good understanding about how to keep safe. For example, they know how to keep safe when on the beach and when using the internet.
- Systems and processes are robust. Staff and governors receive appropriate training that reflects the most recent legislation and guidance. As a result, they know precisely what to do if they have any safeguarding concerns. Any referrals are made promptly.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Classrooms are bright and inviting and provide useful prompts for pupils' learning. Displays celebrate pupils' work and reflect their exciting learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use this effectively to pose questions which probe pupils' understanding and encourage them to explain their thinking. For example, during the inspection, Year 2 pupils thought carefully about phrases such as 'cutting a tooth' and 'on account of' when learning to make inferences from a text.
- Teaching is usually effective in ensuring that pupils gain knowledge and further their understanding. This is particularly strong in the wider curriculum. Teachers make sure that there is a clear sequence of teaching so that pupils embed their learning.

- Most teachers make best use of the curriculum to ensure that teaching is lively and interesting. They go to great lengths to make the learning accessible and enjoyable for their pupils. For example, teachers use the outdoor learning curriculum well to teach about sundials or how to create digital art.
- Teachers have worked hard to adapt their teaching to the new system for teaching reading. This has helped to improve pupils' progress. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils read books which are at an appropriate level of difficulty.
- While the overall quality of teaching is good, there are some inconsistencies. These are where good practice is not fully embedded, and where teachers' expectations are not always high enough.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. This is an aspect of the school's work of which it is, rightly, proud.
- The curriculum, particularly as part of the 'beach school', contributes exceptionally well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils have opportunities to think deeply about important issues and learn to respect the views and ideas of others. For example, following a visit to the beach, Year 6 pupils wrote their own creation stories and learned about those of different cultures. These types of activities enable them to debate issues in a mature, considered way.
- Special events, such as the recent 'healthy body, healthy mind' week, promote pupils' personal development exceptionally well. During the week, pupils learned more about 'mindfulness' as well as nutrition and how to keep healthy. Pupils told inspectors how much they valued learning more about how life is for people with disabilities. These types of activities do much to ensure that pupils become good citizens.
- Pupils develop their emotional well-being well through taking part in activities linked to the beach, for example taking part in beach yoga, making 'kindness stones' and having time to reflect on life while by the sea.
- Relationships across the school are strong. Pupils develop their self-confidence and self-esteem well in this nurturing atmosphere. Year 6 pupils told inspectors that they feel well prepared for secondary school.
- Pupils contribute to the school's safeguarding culture. For example, pupils developed a 'fish' poster (fast, instant, school, help) with the slogan 'Don't be a little fish on your own, get together as a school', to highlight the need to contact an adult with any safeguarding concerns.
- Pupils have a good understanding about the different types of bullying, including homophobic and cyber bullying. The school's records show that incidents of bullying are extremely rare, and are dealt with thoroughly when they do occur.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs provide a safe, welcoming place for pupils outside of school time.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite to adults and confident to talk about their views of school life. They work cooperatively in pairs and small groups. Pupils say that, although a few pupils do not always behave well, teachers deal with it so that it does not usually interrupt their learning. Pupils behave well around the school, for example in the lunch hall and on the playground.
- Pupils enjoy school. School leaders work hard to increase the school's overall attendance. They have introduced a variety of measures to reduce absence, including working with families. Nonetheless, there are still too many pupils whose attendance rate remains too low.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, at the end of key stage 2, the proportions of pupils who reached age-related expectations in reading and writing rose significantly so that they were above the national averages. The proportion of pupils who reached age-related expectations in mathematics also rose markedly from the very low 2017 figure. However, this remained below the national average and represented weak progress from pupils' starting points.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reached age-related expectations in writing was above the national average. However, the proportions for reading and mathematics fell to below the national averages.
- As a result of concerted action by leaders, pupils currently in school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Phonics is taught well from early years onwards. This helps to prepare pupils well for reading in key stage 2. The newly introduced system to teach reading ensures that pupils develop good skills, and most read fluently and with good expression. However, not all pupils develop the enjoyment of reading for pleasure that will support their next steps in learning.
- Pupils learn to structure their writing well and use adventurous vocabulary. They develop their skills by writing for different purposes and in different styles.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. Pupils welcome the structure that the newly introduced approach provides. Pupils practise mathematical skills and learn to apply them in problem-solving activities. For example, Year 3 pupils deepen their understanding of measure when carrying out science tests to find the strongest paper or the bounciest ball.
- Pupils' 'learning journeys' indicate that achievement in subjects other than English and mathematics is mostly good. For example, in music pupils learn to compose tunes, using an awareness of duration and dynamics. They develop their art skills through, for example, creating fish from discarded plastic bags.
- In 2018, disadvantaged pupils made more progress than non-disadvantaged pupils nationally in reading and writing, but made much less progress in mathematics.

Disadvantaged pupils currently in school make increasingly good progress because of well-targeted support, tailored to their needs.

- The most able pupils generally make good progress. However, too few pupils across the school work at the higher standards. Improving the progress of the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, remains a focus of the school's work.

Early years provision

Good

- The proportion of children who reached a good level of development in 2018 was slightly above the national average. This represented good progress. Children currently in Reception make good progress overall. As a result, most children are well prepared to continue their learning in Year 1.
- As elsewhere in the school, the early years is a safe, nurturing environment in which children thrive. Children behave well. They know the routines and enjoy the activities provided. They quickly learn to share their toys and play happily together.
- Staff know the children well. They make careful checks on children's achievement and know what they need to learn next. Activities are planned which enable children to learn well across all areas of their learning. During the inspection, children enjoyed 'searching for dinosaur eggs' in the sandpit, making cupcakes and playing in the mud kitchen. However, at times, activities do not enable the most able children to reach the higher standards, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics, of which they are capable.
- Positive partnerships are made with parents. Induction arrangements are carefully planned. As a result, children make a quick start to their learning when they join the school.
- The early years is led effectively. The leader is keen and committed. She has a good understanding of the strengths of the provision and recognises that there is more to do to make sure that activities consistently provide the challenge needed for children to excel.

School details

Unique reference number	140411
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10088166

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wendy Morgan
Headteacher	Rachel Martin
Telephone number	01424 215 175
Website	www.pebsham-tkat.org
Email address	office@pebsham-tkat.org
Date of previous inspection	13–14 December 2016

Information about this school

- Pebsham is smaller than the average-sized school. The school became a member of The Kemnal Academy Trust (TKAT) in January 2014.
- The board of trustees delegates many responsibilities to the local governing body. The headteacher is held accountable by the regional executive director, who also monitors the work of the local governing body.
- Children in the early years are taught in one full-time Reception class.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is similar to the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is also similar to the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast and after-school club which is managed by the academy.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors evaluated learning across the school. Nearly all lessons were visited jointly with the headteacher, deputy headteacher or inclusion manager.
- Inspectors looked closely at pupils' work to inform their judgements about the achievement of pupils currently in school.
- Inspectors talked to several groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning, to find out what it is like to be a pupil at Pebsham. Inspectors observed a singing assembly, lunchtime and playtime. Inspectors also took account of the six responses to Ofsted's online pupil questionnaire.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, a group of teachers and support staff, a group of governors, and representatives from the trust. Inspectors took account of 19 responses to Ofsted's online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents gathered from 105 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and 19 free-text comments. An inspector also had conversations with parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's website and a range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, behaviour and bullying, attendance, the school's evaluation of its own performance and the school's development plans.

Inspection team

Joanna Toulson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Liz McIntosh	Ofsted Inspector

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