

Inspection of Corsham Primary School

Pound Pill, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9YW

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2024

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

The headteachers of this school are Lindsay Fry and Kerry Parker. This school is part of Pickwick Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), James Passmore, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robert Ward. There is also a director of education, Julia Fountain, who is responsible for this school and three others.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 11 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Corsham Primary is a welcoming school where everyone gets along. Dedicated staff greet pupils warmly when they arrive. Most pupils flourish academically and socially because staff provide high levels of care and nurture. The school works diligently to refine and improve the curriculum so that pupils learn more over time. This helps pupils get off to a positive start to their education.

The school is a safe place to learn. Staff expect pupils to behave well and follow the 'golden rules', and they do. If pupils have any worries, they feel confident talking to adults or using the 'I wish my teacher knew' box. A highlight for many pupils is the 'celebration assembly', which recognises pupils' achievements. This inspires pupils to aim high.

The school provides many memorable experiences to broaden pupils' horizons and expand their minds. These include residential trips, talent shows and fundraising events, such as 'Indhu Rani' day. Older pupils take on responsibilities, such as becoming peer mediators and sports ambassadors. Younger children look up to them for support and guidance.

The overwhelming majority of parents praise the school's work. They report that their children thrive and develop a love of learning.

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

The school's enquiry curriculum is ambitious. Pupils learn across a broad range of subjects. For example, they enjoy being scientists, historians, mathematicians and artists. Teachers have a comprehensive overview of what pupils need to learn and when. In many cases, pupils' learning builds on previous learning. For example, older pupils use their prior knowledge of materials to investigate conductors and insulators. In art, pupils make simple pinch pots in key stage 1 before producing more complex Mayan sculptures in Years 5 and 6. However, in a few subjects, further work remains to identify the precise 'sticky knowledge' pupils need to learn and remember over time.

Reading is at the core of the school's curriculum. The inviting libraries and class reading areas are home to a range of high-quality books. Staff have carefully mapped out the books pupils will encounter as they move from year to year. These inspire pupils to read more widely and use more adventurous vocabulary in their writing.

From day one of Reception Year, children begin to read quickly. The school's phonics programme and matched books help pupils develop reading accuracy. By the end of Year 1, most pupils gain a strong grasp of phonics. Any pupil who falls behind in their reading gets swift support to help them catch up. Despite this, the transfer of reading skills into writing is less developed, especially for disadvantaged pupils. Some groups of pupils make repeated errors with punctuation, spelling and letter

formation. The school has firm plans in place to sharpen the implementation of writing further to address this.

Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. They present information clearly and revisit important knowledge at the start of lessons. Teachers use wall displays and quizzes to help pupils make sense of the enquiry questions that drive the curriculum. The school's process for identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is comprehensive. Staff give well-targeted support to help pupils overcome barriers to learning. This includes emotional literacy and speech and language support. For the most part, pupils with SEND learn alongside their peers and experience success.

Pupils learn without disruption. This starts in early years where children listen carefully and sustain concentration for long periods. Well-trained staff provide effective support to meet pupils' social and emotional needs. For example, pupils learn the importance of teamwork and to manage risk in the forest areas. Feeding the pigs and chickens helps other pupils with their well-being.

The curriculum fosters pupils' personal development well. A recent careers week introduced Year 6 pupils to future career possibilities. Mock elections to run the school for the day explore the concept of democracy. Visits from the local police and volunteers help pupils learn about online and bike safety. Pupils enjoy a variety of clubs and extra opportunities, including sports, first aid and book writing. Nonetheless, more work could be done to encourage disadvantaged pupils to take up these opportunities.

Governors and trustees know the school well. They bring a strong set of skills and experience to their roles. They ask searching questions to hold school leaders to account for pupils' outcomes and attendance. Across both sites, staff value the opportunities to work together. They appreciate how school leaders consider their well-being and listen. This makes for a happy and committed staff team.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's high expectations for writing are not consistently met by all groups of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils. Some pupils make repeated errors with punctuation, spelling and letter formation. The trust and school should ensure that writing routines are clearly established so that pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop and practise their writing and secure age-appropriate knowledge and skills.

- In a minority of subjects, the school has not been clear enough about the important knowledge it wants pupils to learn and remember. Consequently, in these subjects, pupils do not deepen and connect their knowledge well over time. The trust and school need to define more clearly the most important knowledge so that pupils build on their learning and have the same depth of knowledge as they do in other subjects.

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	136630
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10334695
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	671
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Robert Ward
CEO of the trust	James Passmore
Headteacher	Lindsay Fry (Headteacher, Pound Pill site) Kerry Parker (Headteacher, Broadwood site)
Website	www.corshamprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2013, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school converted from a single-academy trust to join a multi-academy trust in 2017. It is part of Pickwick Academy Trust, a multi-academy trust of primary schools in Wiltshire and Dorset.
- The school operates on two sites that are approximately two miles apart. Each site has its own headteacher. One site is located at Pound Pill, Corsham, and the second site is located at Broadwood Avenue, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 0LX.
- The school use five unregistered alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's

education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteachers, the deputy headteachers, the assistant headteachers and other staff. The lead inspector met with representatives from the trust board and the local governing committee. He also met with the director of education, the professional development director and the CEO of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, history, art and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the school, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also met with curriculum leaders and looked more widely at pupils' work in personal, social and health education and religious education.
- Inspectors listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 reading to an adult.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the lead inspector: met the designated safeguarding leads; checked the single central record of adults working in the school; took account of the views of 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.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during breaktime and lunchtime. They spoke with pupils and staff about behaviour.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how the school supports their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start and end of the school day. They considered responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments. They also considered responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lizzy Meadows	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Ofsted Inspector
Nicolle Deighton	Ofsted Inspector
Marie Thomas	His Majesty's Inspector

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