

Inspection of Peaslake Free School

Colmans Hill, Peaslake, Guildford, Surrey GU5 9ST

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 September 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this small village school. They thrive socially and feel safe in this nurturing environment where everyone is included. There is a real sense of belonging and being a part of a community. Adults know every pupil well. Relationships are strong and pupils know adults will help them if they have any worries.

Leaders and governors ensure pupils have many opportunities to develop their personal skills. Pupils particularly enjoy working in the nearby woods and learning about the natural world. They develop important skills, such as teamwork and how to use tools safely. Pupils build on these skills in woodwork club and in their sports teams.

Pupils enjoy playing with their friends. Incidents of bullying are rare. Pupils know an adult would listen and sort out any such problems. In lessons, pupils sometimes lose concentration and focus. This stops their learning.

Leaders ensure that pupils experience a broad curriculum. However, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 do not learn as well as they should. This is because in some subjects, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn precisely enough.

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

Reading is a high priority with leaders and governors. The new phonics scheme is well organised and structured. Teachers have been well trained. As a result, phonics is taught consistently across the school, including in Reception. The youngest children learn phonics from the moment they start school. Teachers ensure that pupils read books that match the sounds that they are learning. This enables pupils to read accurately and develop their fluency. Leaders make sure that teachers check pupils' phonics knowledge regularly. Pupils who fall behind are given extra support and therefore catch up quickly. Pupils develop their love for reading by being read to daily. Teachers ensure that pupils, including children in the early years, are introduced to a wide range of interesting texts.

Systems are in place to quickly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are fully included in all aspects of school life. Teachers ensure that they access the same curriculum and learn alongside their classmates.

In many subjects, other than phonics and early reading, leaders have not set out clearly what pupils need to learn and in what order. Leaders have not made sure that teachers are as well trained in other subjects as they are in phonics. Teachers are not confident what the next steps are that pupils need to learn, for example in art and history. Leaders do not ensure there are rigorous systems in place to check

what pupils know and understand. As a result, pupils are not able to build on previous knowledge and their learning becomes disjointed.

However, children in the Reception Year receive a curriculum that covers all the areas of learning. The early years leader knows the small steps children need to learn across the curriculum. Leaders' emphasis on making sure children develop and understand a wide vocabulary is helping to ensure they are ready for their next stage of learning.

Pupils do not always behave as well as they should. Leaders have high expectations of pupils. However, their behaviour is not consistently well managed. Pupils, including the youngest children, do not listen carefully enough to their teachers. They enjoy their learning but do not take as much care as they should with their writing and number work. Some pupils do not always try their best. This can affect what they learn and remember.

Leaders and governors are quite rightly proud of the opportunities and the variety of experiences the wider curriculum provides for pupils. All pupils go swimming every week. This not only develops their swimming skills, but also builds their confidence and independence. Pupils are proud to be chosen to be the class 'helping hand'. They know the school's values of kindness and respect. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures, and they visit different places of worship. In particular, pupils learn to respect people from different backgrounds through video classes with a school in Kampala. Leaders ensure that pupils begin to understand British values and what makes a good citizen.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school's culture of safeguarding has recently strengthened. Staff are well trained to identify the signs of abuse and they are confident in using the school's new systems to record any concerns. The designated safeguarding leader responds promptly to reported concerns and makes sure that children and families get the support they need. A linked governor makes helpful checks to ensure that all staff know how to use the new systems and procedures. Governors have recently enhanced their recruitment checks to ensure that these are fully compliant.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum thinking is not fully developed. Teachers do not have the subject knowledge they need to build a well-sequenced curriculum. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders need to set out how pupils' learning will build over time so that they remember important knowledge, and they need to make sure that teachers are well trained to teach the curriculum.

- Pupils' attitudes to learning are not as strong as they should be. Their lack of focus in lessons slows learning down and interrupts teaching. Leaders need to make sure that staff reinforce the school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour so that pupils' learning improves.

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	140203
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10227478
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	41
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mark Foster
Headteacher	Sara Dangerfield
Website	www.peaslakefreeschool.com
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average one-form entry infant school.
- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, early years leader, teachers and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and history. For each deep dive, inspectors visited lessons, spoke to pupils, talked

to teachers and looked in pupils' books. Inspectors also reviewed curriculum documents for history and art.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, reviewed records of recruitment, met with the safeguarding governor and looked at safeguarding records.
- Inspectors observed pupils in the playground, reading to a familiar adult and moving around the school.
- The lead inspector spoke to 18 parents on the playground, considered the views of 33 parents who responded to the confidential questionnaire for parents and 29 parents who provided free-text responses. Inspectors also took account of responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Becky Greenhalgh, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Lorraine Clarke	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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