

Inspection of North Petherton Primary School

School Fields, North Petherton, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6LU

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 September 2021

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and happy in this friendly and welcoming school. Leaders, and staff, want the best for pupils and form caring and supportive relationships with them. Pupils are proud ambassadors for the school. They are sociable, polite and respectful to staff and visitors. Pupils enjoy coming to school and being with their friends. Pupils trust adults to help them.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They have particularly appreciated the support given to them during the pandemic. Typical comments include 'staff put on brave faces and smiles during scary times' and 'children's education has not changed'. They were touched when staff put out balloons to welcome pupils back after lockdown.

Adults have high expectations of pupils, including their behaviour. They explain rules carefully and most pupils follow their lead well. Leaders allow pupils to become excitable when learning sparks their enthusiasm. They help pupils to understand when it is time to settle down to work.

Adults provide extra support for the minority of pupils who have difficulty managing their emotions. Staff deal with issues calmly and sensitively in order to cause the least disruption to learning possible. Pupils confirm that bullying is rare and say that adults sort any problems quickly.

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

The headteacher and deputy headteacher are highly motivated and ambitious for all pupils. Staff and governors share their ambition.

Leaders provide a rich and interesting curriculum, which is enhanced by exciting experiences. They break learning down into well-sequenced blocks. Teachers support pupils well to develop the knowledge and skills they need for the next stage of learning. Leaders provide effective training for staff to improve the implementation of the curriculum.

Adults inspire pupils to develop a love of reading. Pupils are taught to read as soon as they start school. Early readers regularly practise phonics, which helps them to become confident, fluent readers. Leaders have purchased new resources to further improve the teaching of reading. Pupils love listening to stories and choosing from a wide range of books. However, sometimes the teaching of pronunciation in phonics is not accurate so as to ensure that all pupils are taught correctly.

The well-designed mathematics curriculum consistently helps pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge to find things out. For example, children in the early years count spots on dice and match them with number cards. Pupils develop their historical understanding well. Exciting opportunities help them to learn about local

history and brings the subject to life. For example, pupils enjoyed a trip to a local building site to look at artefacts with an archaeologist. They were very interested to find out that it used to be a Saxon settlement.

Pupils enjoy regular music lessons. They learn songs and play instruments such as the guitar. Children in the early years enjoy dancing to music. They learn to hear and tap the beat in music.

However, the computing curriculum is still in the early stages of development. This is because the school has experienced delays in establishing a reliable internet connection and appropriate hardware. As a result, pupils do not yet develop the knowledge and skills that they should.

The recently appointed special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has made a good start. She identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and plans extra support for them. However, she has not yet had time to check the impact of this work.

The school provides wonderful opportunities to support pupils' personal development. For example, pupils build dens and make rope swings in forest school sessions. Pupils try orienteering and canoeing when they visit Kilve. Children in the early years learn to explore, share and take turns when they bury gems in the sand and construct racetracks.

Pupils learn about relationships in personal, social and health education (PSHE). For example, children in the early years learn how to make new friends when they start school. Other pupils learn about racism and bullying. However, leaders have not yet had the opportunity to consult with parents about the relationships and sex education (RSE) curriculum. This means that leaders have not yet been able to improve the PSHE curriculum to incorporate this.

Governors are committed to supporting the school and the community. They work closely with staff to evaluate learning in some subjects. However, they do not fully understand how well pupils learn across the curriculum. This means they do not yet have an accurate view of the quality of the curriculum as a whole.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff place pupils' safety at the heart of all they do. They know their pupils and families well and swiftly identify pupils who may be at risk. Leaders work closely with specialist agencies to provide pupils with help when they need it. Leaders regularly check that this support is making a difference.

Leaders provide staff with appropriate training. Staff can explain how to record and refer concerns. Pupils are taught about how to stay safe, including when working online. They confirm that staff at school help them to be safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have developed an effective curriculum in most subjects. They have clearly identified the building blocks of knowledge they want pupils to learn. However, in some subjects, plans are in the early stages of development. As a result, pupils do not develop the knowledge and skills that they should. Leaders must ensure that they continue to improve and embed these plans so that pupils are fully prepared for their next stage of learning.
- Leaders, including governors, do not consistently review the effectiveness of the implementation of the curriculum in all subjects. Consequently, they are not fully able to evaluate how well pupils are learning the curriculum. Senior leaders, subject leaders and governors will need to check how well pupils are achieving across the curriculum.
- Leaders have not yet consulted with parents about the curriculum for RSE. As a result, leaders have not been able to ensure that the curriculum complies with the requirements of statutory guidance. Leaders must act swiftly to design and implement an appropriately planned and sequenced RSE curriculum.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	135830
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10204982
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Gavin Roberts
Headteacher	Gary Hobbs
Website	www.northpethertonprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The SENCo took up post in April 2021. Prior to this, the deputy headteacher was acting SENCo.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and the early years leader.
- The lead inspector met with a group of governors and held a phone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, computing, history and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to pupils and teachers and looked at pupils' work.

- Inspectors reviewed the school’s safeguarding records, including the single central record and safeguarding arrangements. They also spoke to pupils and staff about safety.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour in lessons and at other times of day, including breaktime and lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils, staff and parents to gather their views of the school. They reviewed 82 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, along with 40 additional free-text comments. Inspectors took account of 35 responses to the survey for staff and 64 responses to the pupils’ survey.

Inspection team

Catherine Beeks, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Catherine Leahy	Ofsted Inspector
Paula Marsh	Ofsted Inspector

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