School report

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Nunney First School

Catch Road, Nunney, Frome, Somerset BA11 4NE

Inspection date: 15 October 2024

Outcome

Nunney First School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Caroline Ford. The school is part of the Partnership Trust, which means that other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Emily Massey, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Belinda Deery.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like attending this small happy school. Everyone is welcome. There is a warm 'family feel'. Children learn the routines and the high expectations of the school right from the start. Pupils gain confidence year on year. There are many occasions for pupils to shine personally because staff treat them as individuals and celebrate their personal achievements. Pupils learn a lot across the broad curriculum. This prepares them well for middle school.

Staff are always on hand to help. Pupils make friends and learn to respect one another. Typically, pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. What the school calls 'purple learning' ensures that pupils take risks in their learning and become resilient.

Over time, pupils learn about four big ideas, 'communication, conflict, culture and conservation'. This helps them reflect on the complexity of the world. Pupils enjoy the enrichment opportunities the school provides, including sporting events, learning outdoors

and school visits, for example, to an arboretum. Pupils benefit from widening their friendships when on a residential visit with another First school.

Pupils become ambassadors for the school and wider community. For example, pupils embrace undertaking their leadership roles as lunchtime and library monitors. This helps them to become responsible citizens.

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

The school and the trust identify the school's strengths accurately. The school makes good use of trust development programmes. This ensures that staff maintain the right skills and knowledge to teach effectively. Leaders assure pupils' and staff's well-being successfully. A well-established governing body provides valuable challenge and support. It checks that the decisions the school takes are making a positive difference, and they are.

The curriculum is ambitious. It includes all the subject content that it should. Notably, it enables pupils to connect what they know across subjects. For example, Year 4 pupils can explain how they use their mathematical, scientific and computing knowledge to learn in design and technology successfully. Younger pupils use their prior knowledge and investigative skills to classify animal feeding habits. Those just starting school already know to remember to try and speak in full sentences when exploring the properties of shapes.

The school uses a range of tools to check what pupils know and remember over time. However, there are occasions when teaching does not enable pupils to get the immediate help they need if they make errors in lessons or get stuck. Also, at times, teaching does not prioritise more complex subject content as soon as pupils are ready to learn it. Teaching in key stage 2 is adept at filling gaps in pupils' learning as they arise and moving pupils' learning on at the right time.

Overall, pupils learn to read, write and do mathematics well. A successful focus on recalling number facts means that increasingly pupils use their mathematical knowledge to solve problems well. Staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or

disabilities (SEND) accurately. Typically, they access the full curriculum and learn key concepts in the right order.

The school updated its approach to the teaching of phonics after standards dipped. This is proving successful. Children in Reception are keeping up well. Many show genuine excitement as they learn and apply the sounds that letters make for the first time. In other year groups, the minority of pupils who need to catch up are learning to decode accurately. Most of these pupils write in sentences. They are learning to use ambitious vocabulary. However, it is early days. Some pupils do not apply their phonic knowledge to spell accurately.

Staff help pupils to understand the school's expectations of behaviour. They reward the youngest for 'super sitting' and the oldest for their pertinent contributions in class and for applying concentration to complex tasks. If pupils find it difficult to regulate their emotions, staff manage this effectively.

The school challenges poor attendance. It works closely with parents. Pupils now attend well. Persistent absence has reduced markedly.

The curriculum teaches pupils the importance of right and wrong and valuing diversity. Pupils learn first hand from visitors about how different faiths and cultures celebrate important events, such as Ramadan. Pupils know to keep healthy relationships and how to keep safe online. A range of extra-curricular clubs broaden pupils' knowledge.

Every parent and carer who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, would recommend the school. Parents recognise that there has been a lot of change recently. They value the clear communication from the school about any changes that are happening. For example, refining the school's approach to teaching phonics and modifying the individual targets for pupils with SEND. Both these things are building successfully on the already secure foundations in place.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

✓ Some teaching is not adapted to deal with misconceptions or gaps in pupils' learning when they arise. At times, pupils do not move on to more complex learning when they

are ready. This slows pupils' learning down. The trust should ensure that teaching builds firmly on what pupils need to know next so that more pupils thrive in their learning.

- ✓ A minority of pupils do not use and apply their knowledge of phonics to spell accurately. This slows the writing process down for these pupils. The trust should ensure that teaching enables pupils to spell accurately earlier in their schooling and more pupils are able to write with both accuracy and the complexity expected for their age by the end of key stage 1.

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 April 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	142579
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10344705
Type of school	First
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Belinda Deery
CEO of the trust	Emily Massey
Headteacher	Caroline Ford
Website	www.nunneyfirstschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 and 3 April 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- ✓ Nunney First school is part of The Partnership Trust. This is a group of 18 schools in the local area.
- ✓ The headteacher took up her position in September 2024 and works four days a week. On the fifth day a senior teacher fulfils the role as headteacher.
- ✓ The school does not use any alternative provision.
- ✓ The school has three classes. There is a Reception and Year 1 class, a Year 1 and 2 class and a class for Year 3 and 4 pupils.
- ✓ There is a Nursery on the school site. It is registered with Ofsted under the early years remit. It was not part of this inspection.
- ✓ There is a before-school club, which is operated by an external provider.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- ✓ During the inspection, inspectors met with the headteacher and teaching staff. The lead inspector also met with the CEO and other leaders from the trust. She held a telephone conversation with the chair of trustees. She also met three members of the local governing body.
- ✓ The inspectors focused inspection activity on the following groups of subjects: English and science, mathematics, religious education and art and design. For each group of subjects, the inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke with 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' interest first.

- ✓ Throughout the inspection, the inspectors met with groups of staff. There were no responses to the staff survey.
- ✓ An inspector met some parents at the end of the day and had regard to the views expressed through Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Tom Brewer	Ofsted Inspector

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