

# Inspection of Potton Primary School

Mill Lane, Potton, Sandy, Bedfordshire SG19 2PG

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Inspection dates:	4 and 5 February 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Potton Primary School is a happy and friendly place in which to learn. Pupils enjoy one another's company, with smiles and laughter aplenty in the playground. Staff want the best for pupils, and they set high expectations. Pupils live up to these expectations, learning well.

Most pupils behave well in school. They listen carefully in lessons and try their best. There are times, though, when some lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour. These instances are reducing as staff become more adept at supporting these pupils. Pupils understand the expectations that staff have of how they should behave.

Pupils enjoy contributing to school life. They take on various leadership roles and show their helpfulness when doing jobs in school. Pupils love to see the results of their fundraising work, for example the brand-new books in the library. Pupils are guided to see differences in themselves and others. They know that everyone is 'unique' and that all should be seen as an individual. Older pupils have a well-developed knowledge of how to stay safe. They know the risks that they face, such as when they are online, and have a clear understanding of the steps that they can take to keep themselves safe.

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

The formation of Potton Primary School has not been without challenge. Leaders and governors have gone through some turbulent times but their effective work means that they are now in a much more stable place. The school's successful work in curriculum design, and providing staff with regular and relevant training, means that pupils learn well. Teachers explain new ideas and concepts clearly. This helps pupils to understand more of the curriculum they are taught.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs accurately identified. Precise provision is in place for pupils with SEND to meet their different needs. The school keeps a close eye on how these pupils are getting on, carefully checking that they receive the support that they need to help them continue to learn and develop well.

Reading is at the heart of the school. The school makes sure that by the time pupils finish Year 1, they are well versed in phonics. The school develops pupils' phonics knowledge so that they become fluent and confident readers. The few who need more help with reading receive well-tailored support in their additional sessions. They catch up quickly. However, they sometimes find the reading that they are asked to do in class tricky. In some other subjects, pupils can find their learning too hard or too easy. This is because the school has not checked that activities are precisely designed to build on what they know. This means that some pupils, on occasion, do not learn as well as they could.

The governing board has provided strong and effective support for the school through the process of becoming a primary school. It keeps a keen eye on aspects such as finance and safeguarding. While this is the case, the governing board does not always hold the

school to account for the quality of education with as much rigour as it does in other aspects of the school. This means the challenge provided to leaders in this area is less strong than in other aspects.

The school's fine work to improve attendance is paying dividends. It keeps a sharp eye on attendance. If a pupil starts to miss too much school, the school acts swiftly, working with parents and carers to halt this decline and get things back on track. Attendance is now high.

The school's recently revised approach to managing pupils' behaviour is working well. This approach helps those pupils who sometimes do not behave well to modify their actions and words. However, some staff have not been helped to fully understand the principles behind the school's new approach. They are not fully versed in applying the behaviour systems as the school intends.

Children in the Reception classes learn and develop well. They know and follow the class routines. Children share equipment with one another and show kindness and care for their friends. Staff help children to use and remember more words. Children use their growing vocabulary to express their ideas while they learn.

Many pupils have a well-developed moral compass. They clearly know right from wrong. They know it is right to speak up if they see something that is wrong, and not stand by silently. Pupils listen carefully to others and show respect if other people have different views or beliefs from themselves. This means pupils leave the school as well-rounded young people.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- At times, teachers do not closely match activities to meet the specific needs of pupils. This means that, on occasion, pupils do not always learn as well as they could. The school should make sure that all teachers receive support to adapt the curriculum consistently and effectively for pupils' varying levels of understanding and need.
- Some staff do not fully understand the principles behind the school's new approach to managing behaviour. This means that, at times, some pupils who need additional support to help them behave well do not always receive the right guidance. The school should continue to provide training and support for all staff to help them understand and implement the behaviour policy as leaders intend.
- The governing board does not hold the same depth of knowledge around the quality of education as it does on other aspects of the school. This means the board does not hold the school to account for the quality of education pupils receive with as much

rigour as it does in other aspects. The school should ensure that the board develops its knowledge and skills to carry out its roles, to continue to improve and sustain the quality of education pupils receive.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	109475
<b>Local authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10378434
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	394
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Bryan Sonnen (Interim Chair)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jordana Watts
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pottonprimary.co.uk">www.pottonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	11 and 12 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school has been a primary school since September 2023, following the restructure of Potton Lower School and Potton Middle School.
- The headteacher took up her role in September 2022 and the deputy headteacher joined the school in September 2023. The headteacher was not at school during both days of the inspection due to illness.
- The governing board is currently led by the vice-chair of governors in an interim role.
- The school currently makes use of one unregistered alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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.
- Inspectors held meetings with the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and a range of other school staff. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing board. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in geography, computing and music.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: 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' interests first.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including attendance records, pupil records, records of governing board meetings, school development plans and school self-evaluation documents.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and Ofsted's online staff survey. Inspectors met with groups of staff and pupils during the inspection to gather their views.

### **Inspection team**

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lynda Walker

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