

Inspection of Cypress Primary School

Cypress Road, London SE25 4AU

Inspection dates: 30–31 October 2019

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection Not previously inspected

What is it like to attend this school?

At Cypress, all pupils receive good education, care and attention. They know that staff go out of their way to help them succeed. Right from the word 'go' in the early years, children make a solid start. This paves the way for the rest of their time at school. Pupils at Cypress soon come to know that the ability to read well is the key to success. Reading is at the front and centre of the school's work.

All pupils learn well and take part in a wide range of activities. This includes learning to play the violin, drama productions, and learning a foreign language. Disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included. These opportunities build their belief in themselves and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

However, in some subjects, staff do not plan well enough to make sure that pupils understand the links between different topics. This restricts pupils' deeper understanding.

Pupils behave well throughout the school and in different situations. Pupils know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe online. They said that, on the rare occasions when bullying occurs, it is dealt with well. This reflects the 'Pegasus values' of care and compassion.

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

Children who join the provision at the age of two make a flying start. Staff provide rich and engaging resources to stimulate children's curiosity. This continues into the Nursery provision, by which time most children have learned good routines and how to work together. The outdoor area in Nursery is stimulating and Reception are continuing to develop their outdoor area. Nonetheless, the sharp focus on phonics, early reading skills and mathematical understanding continues. As a result, most children achieve a good level of development and are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have done a great deal of work to improve what is taught and how it is taught. All teachers are part of at least one subject team that works across the trust. The teams are led by staff who have strong knowledge about the subject and how it can be taught effectively. This expertise is shared with teachers. Staff at Cypress benefit from such focused professional development. As a result, they teach and assess pupils' learning more effectively.

Pupils are given good opportunities to think more deeply about themselves and the world round them. Teachers are skilful at showing pupils how to do this. For example, pupils were asked to explore the meaning of the phrase 'to fight a losing battle'. This encouraged pupils to think about the deeper meaning of what they were reading. In this way, the curriculum supports good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Many pupils are getting better at using what they already know to solve new problems. It is not surprising that standards in reading, writing and

mathematics have improved by the end of Reception and Years 1, 2 and 6.

Pupils read a lot, fiction and non-fiction, and enjoy talking about what they have read. Teachers take time to explain new words and ideas so that when pupils come across them in their reading, they understand the full meaning. The school has many fluent readers in both key stages 1 and 2.

What pupils are required to learn in mathematics is organised well by staff. The links between the different topics are clear and used skilfully by pupils to solve mathematical problems. As a result, pupils achieve well in mathematics in both key stages. However, this is not the case in some foundation subjects. Although the topics are relevant and enjoyable, less detail has been given to linking what pupils learn in different year groups. This limits the progress pupils make through the curriculum in these subjects.

Leaders have already started looking in greater depth at the topics that are taught in different subjects and how these topics are organised. This has happened in geography and is now extended to all other subjects.

The trust assesses and addresses the needs of staff carefully. Members of the academy council and the directors have their fingers on the pulse of what is happening in the school. Morale in the school is high. Staff appreciate the actions that the trust has taken to manage workload better and improve their well-being. The partnership with parents and carers is strong and they are highly supportive of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders know their pupils and their families well. The strong positive relationships that they have built with pupils' families help them to provide early support. They ensure that referrals to other agencies are made promptly. Staff know what to do if they have a concern and they report any concerns quickly to leaders. Leaders are relentless in pursuing help for the most vulnerable pupils when it is needed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders continue to review what staff teach in different subjects and how the topics are organised. This includes the links between topics as pupils move through the years. This is done very well in English and mathematics, providing a strong foundation for all pupils. However, it is done less well in the foundation subjects. Leaders should ensure that relevant staff are given further support to improve their skills in planning a curriculum that has strong links between topics taught in different year groups. This will further improve pupils' understanding in these subjects. Although teachers receive good professional development, leaders

have not extended this enough to improve connections between the topics taught in different year groups.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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're 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	144626
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10128269
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	636
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Kevin Smith
Headteachers	Jo Sorensen and Georgia Buchan
Website	www.pegasusacademytrust.org/cypress-primary-school
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school and has three forms of entry.
- The school is on a split site but on the same road. Two separate heads of school lead the lower and upper sites. The lower school is made up of the early years, including the two-year-old provision, and Years 1 and 2. The upper school is made up of Years 3 to 6.
- The school became part of the Pegasus Academy Trust in September 2017. The trust is made up of five primary schools and employs two executive headteachers who share the post.
- The work of the school is overseen by a board of directors who work across the trust. A local governing body, or members of the academy council (MAC), hold the school's leaders to account for the quality of education provided.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the heads of the lower and upper schools, and with the joint

executive headteachers of the Pegasus Academy Trust. We also met with senior leaders and with three groups of teachers who teach a range of subjects.

- We held discussions with four members of the academy council and with the vice chair of the board of trustees. A meeting was also held with the school's link adviser commissioned by the local authority.
- We held discussions with the designated leader for safeguarding, looked at records and scrutinised the school's safeguarding practice.
- We observed pupils' behaviour throughout the school day and spoke to staff about pupils' wider development. We also held discussions with three groups of pupils about their views of the quality of education the school provides.
- We considered reading, mathematics, humanities (geography and history) and science in depth as part of this inspection. This entailed discussions with senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. We also carried out lesson visits across all sections of the school, sometimes jointly with leaders. We scrutinised pupils' work to gain a view about how much they were knowing and remembering in the subjects chosen for inspection.

Inspection team

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