

Inspection of Castel Primary School

La Route De St. Germain, Castel, Guernsey GY5 7PH

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 November 2024

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development and welfare	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly school. The school has developed a nurturing and inclusive environment. The United Nations Convention on the rights of a child underpin the values and policies of the school. Pupils live up to these values. Through their actions, they demonstrate that they are kind and caring towards each other. Pupils appreciate the help they receive from staff to support their emotional well-being.

The school has high expectations for all pupils to be confident, successful learners. Pupils behave well. They follow school routines very well, including in the early years. For example, pupils move around the school sensibly and calmly. In the playground, pupils of all ages play together harmoniously.

Pupils are rightly proud of their school and relish the opportunity to represent the school in different tournaments, such as netball, football and athletics. Older pupils take on leadership roles at school. Members of the school council raise awareness about the importance of helping others. Pupils know they make a difference to the school.

Many parents and carers speak very highly of the school. They appreciate the range of opportunities the school provides for all pupils, which help pupils to broaden their experiences.

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

The school's new leadership has worked alongside the Education Office to strengthen the curriculum and manage change at the school. As a result, the school has designed an ambitious curriculum that has been well received by staff. Change has been managed sensitively and effectively. Staff appreciate the ongoing professional development that helps them to implement the curriculum effectively. As a result, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding successfully over time. However, in some subjects, teaching does not check how well pupils understand what they have been taught. When this occurs, pupils move on to new content before they have a secure understanding of prior learning. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge.

Reading is at the heart of the school's curriculum. Children begin to learn their phonics sounds as soon as they start school. Phonics is taught consistently well from Reception and through key stage 1. The books pupils read match their phonics knowledge. Pupils enjoy reading. Older pupils talk with passion about their favourite authors. They appreciate that the school has ensured there is a wide and diverse range of books for them to read in the school library.

The school is continuing to improve the provision for pupils with additional learning needs (ALN). When necessary, teachers make adaptations so that pupils with ALN learn the curriculum alongside their peers. However, targets to support pupils with ALN are at times not informative enough. Furthermore, the school does not routinely check the effectiveness of pupils' learning plans. This means that sometimes the provision for pupils with ALN is not effective.

Clear routines are quickly established to help pupils feel safe and settled in Reception Year. A sharp focus on children's personal, social and emotional development helps to build resilient, inquisitive and creative minds. For example, children enjoy 'little explorer' sessions where they learn how to cook over an open fire. Nevertheless, teachers' checks on what children know and can do are not routinely used to adapt the curriculum sufficiently well. This means that sometimes children do not learn as well as they could.

The school has high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Right from the start, pupils in the early years learn to treat people with respect and kindness. Staff help pupils understand how to behave well. Pupils learn to make the right choices. As a result, playtimes are harmonious and the classrooms are calm and orderly.

The well-being of pupils, parents and staff has a high profile at the school. The school monitors pupils' attendance and supports families to ensure children attend school regularly. The school's work to promote pupils' attendance is effective. Pupils' attendance is strong.

The provision for pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Enrichment experiences such as trips to local castles, nature reserves and dairy farms help bring the curriculum alive and deepen pupils' understanding. Pupils learn to stay safe online. They also learn to stay safe in their local community and the sea through dedicated sea-swimming lessons. Pupils are proud of their roles and responsibilities such as house captains, reading ambassadors and as school councillors. These roles help pupils to build independence and confidence.

Staff are supportive of school leaders. They say their workload and well-being is managed well when the school introduces new initiatives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In some subjects and in the early years, teachers do not consistently check that pupils fully understand what they have been taught. As a result, learning activities do not match what pupils know and can do. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school must ensure that assessment is used

effectively in all subjects and in the early years to inform curriculum design and to support pupils' next steps in learning.

- Targets to support pupils with ALN are at times not precise and informative enough. This means the provision for pupils with ALN sometimes does not meet their needs. The school needs to ensure that provision is precisely matched to pupils' needs to ensure pupils with ALN achieve well.

School details

Inspection number	10354371
Type of school	Primary
Age range of pupils	4 - 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	363
Appropriate authority	The States of Guernsey
Headteacher	Pete Curtis
Website	www.castelprimaryschool.co.uk
Date of previous Ofsted inspection	Not previously inspected by Ofsted

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 35 of the Guernsey Education Law 1970.

- 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with teachers, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 met with the headteacher and members of the senior leadership team including the additional learning needs coordinator. The lead inspector spoke with the officers from the Education Office.
- The inspectors gathered parents' views by considering the responses to the Guernsey Parent Survey and by talking to parents. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the questionnaires, issued at the time of the inspection.

Inspection team

James Gentile, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Marie Thomas	His Majesty's Inspector
Gavin Summerfield	His Majesty's Inspector

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