

The Premier Academy

Saffron Street, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK2 3AH

Inspection dates

16–17 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders and staff have created a school where every child truly matters. They have built a community where all pupils thrive.
- Pupils receive an outstanding education. Those from vulnerable backgrounds are extremely well supported. As a result, pupils' achievement is outstanding.
- Parents and carers have every confidence in the school and are very happy with the education their children receive.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is at the heart of everything the school does. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stages in their education.
- Teachers are very well trained and have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils make outstanding progress because teachers know how to help them improve quickly.
- Teaching assistants support pupils expertly. Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities receive excellent personalised support and make rapid progress.
- Specialist teaching in the performing arts, Spanish and physical education is a strength of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy and excel in these areas of the school's provision.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding; they are polite and confident. Pupils' attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupil leaders confidently help school leaders determine the next steps for the school.
- Personal, social and welfare education is outstanding. Pupils trust that they can talk to any adult about their concerns. Relationships between pupils and adults are very positive.
- Safeguarding is effective. School leaders have developed strong routines and practices that help pupils feel safe at school.
- Standards and outcomes in early years are outstanding. Learning time is used exceptionally well in this area of the school.
- Leaders are determined to improve the strong reading provision, reversing a slight decline in the numbers of pupils reaching the highest standards.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue the school's work to improve reading outcomes further so that even more pupils exceed age-appropriate expectations across the school.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The chief executive officer's leadership has built a truly outstanding school. His determined and innovative approach results in continuing school improvement. He is tireless in finding ways to provide the best education for all pupils.
- The head of education is well supported by other leaders and has embedded rigorous systems and routines. Leaders have very high expectations of all pupils in their care and ensure that they are exceptionally well supported. Consequently, pupils' achievements are outstanding.
- Leaders identify relevant areas to improve through their accurate evaluation of the school's provision. Strategies to achieve even better outcomes in reading are having a very positive impact. These include the work with the school library which is helping more pupils become expert readers.
- Specialist teaching in the performing arts is a strength. Awards won by the school confirm the successes achieved in these areas of the school. For example, the school leads a global science and music initiative involving schools from Australia, Spain and Denmark. Pupils excel in these subject areas.
- Specialist teaching enriches the curriculum experience of all pupils, for example in Years 2 to 6, where physical education is taught by a specialist teacher, and across the school, where all pupils from Reception to Year 6 learn Spanish.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. This is well supported by the regular educational trips. These experiences are helping develop pupils' learning about the wider world extremely well.
- Leaders spend additional funding wisely. They always consider the value that any spending will add to pupils' educational experience. As a result, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make excellent progress and achieve in line with, or better than, other pupils with similar starting points.
- Subject leaders and those with specific responsibilities across the school are very effective. They know the individual needs of pupils very well. As a result, pupils thrive personally and academically because teaching is outstanding.
- Staff receive excellent professional training. Staff enjoy working at the school and feel valued.
- Parents are very happy with the school. They are involved in helping leaders make decisions about the school's next steps. For example, parents were consulted on recent curriculum changes. One parent reflected the views of many: 'The Premier Academy is a world class school with a world class team and world class facilities.'

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school very well. They share the passion and vision of the chief executive officer and the staff. Together, governors support and challenge the chief

executive officer and leaders well. They know the strengths of the school and the areas that leaders are improving.

- Governors fulfil their statutory duties effectively. They use regular school visits to ensure that their safeguarding and health and safety responsibilities are covered well.
- Governors ensure that school funding is spent well to maintain an excellent education for all pupils. They also make sure that any additional funding is used very well. As a result, disadvantaged and other vulnerable pupils achieve outcomes in line with, or better than, pupils with similar starting points nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are very effective and there is a well-established culture of vigilance. Leaders and staff are suitably trained and knowledgeable about their safeguarding responsibilities. Pupils say that they can talk to any adult in school if they have any worries.
- School leaders have very effective systems that help inform, and provide quick and effective support to, pupils and families. Their persistent work to support very vulnerable pupils and their families is outstanding. Consequently, pupils say they feel safe at school. Their parents agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- Teachers use assessment information accurately to identify highly challenging goals for all pupils. Pupils respond well to these across many subjects. In English and mathematics this is very well embedded and used particularly well to inform teaching. As a result, pupils make exceptional progress in these subjects.
- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to question pupils skilfully. Other adults in the classroom are also very effective at this. As a result, adults complement each other well in classrooms, and pupils are challenged to think deeply about their learning.
- Subject-specialist teachers provide exciting opportunities for pupils to excel. For example, pupils were seen fully engaged when learning how to order tapas food and creating voice-overs for animations in Spanish. From classroom visits, it was evident that pupils are making excellent progress in developing their Spanish vocabulary and pronunciation skills, across all year groups.
- Teachers do not shy away from using challenging subject-specific vocabulary with pupils. They use it extremely effectively to help explain learning activities, particularly for pupils who speak English as an additional language. For example, in Year 4 food technology, pupils learned a wide range of new words to improve their knowledge and understanding. This ensured that all groups were successful in their pastry slice making task.
- Teaching assistants are very knowledgeable and skilled. They work very well with teachers in and out of classrooms to support pupils' learning and welfare. In the early years, teaching assistants help children's learning significantly.
- Teaching strongly promotes pupils' confidence and self-assurance across all subjects. For example, in Year 5 mathematics, pupils confidently moved between classrooms to

complete independent learning activities. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in mathematics and many other subjects.

- Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to practise their writing across the curriculum. For example, in history and science pupils are developing their writing skills well, while gaining more subject knowledge.
- Teachers develop pupils' self-assessment skills successfully. In physical education, this type of assessment is used very well to develop pupils' communication skills and ability to work well in teams.
- Teaching and learning are very well planned to support pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils are catching up quickly to other pupils and in many cases make more progress than other pupils with the same starting points.
- Phonics is taught consistently well. Teachers use assessments efficiently to ensure that pupils make exceptional progress.
- Provision to improve pupils' reading is well embedded across the school. The school library plays a central role in supporting the effective development of pupils' reading. In lessons, pupils read well in groups, learn new vocabulary, and make good use of individual reading time to help more pupils become better readers.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are very confident. They are very aware of their own and others' rights and responsibilities in the school community. They talk to adults proudly about their school, because they are very happy here.
- Pupil leaders act as positive role models for other pupils by frequently being involved in assemblies and awarding certificates. They work with school leaders to improve the school. For example, they have helped in designing the new adventure playground.
- Pupils feel extremely safe at school. They know how to stay safe and who to talk to with their concerns, if they have any. They are taught very well about how to stay safe online and how to use technology and the internet appropriately.
- Pupils say bullying is very rare at school. They say that if it happens it is dealt with quickly, because the adults take good care of them.
- Pupils understand how to treat each other equally and why it is important to do so. They told inspectors how some pupils are given extra support in school, which, they said, 'means they are treated equally' because some pupils need more help in order to have a fair chance.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. They conduct themselves exceptionally well around the school and in classrooms. On the very rare occasions they do not behave as

well as expected, they are treated respectfully by adults to help them improve their behaviour.

- The school's 'HELPAS' team works very effectively with some pupils and their families to help the pupils improve their behaviour. As a result, the school has not excluded any pupils since July 2017.
- Pupils respect their school and take care of it very well. They play safely and happily together during their breaks. There is no litter or graffiti.
- Pupils attend school regularly. School leaders quickly address any attendance issues. Pupils and families are well supported, where necessary, with individual action plans to improve their attendance. As a result, even though the persistent-absence rate is slightly higher than in recent years, school systems are reducing it rapidly.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- The school has a very strong record of achieving excellent outcomes in national tests. In recent years, pupils' progress has been consistently well above the national averages for reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2. Pupils at the end of key stage 1, and the early years, have also achieved strong results.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standard in reading by the end of key stage 2 dipped from the exceptionally high attainment achieved in previous years, although the progress of this cohort was still above the national average. Leaders are taking effective action to restore these high standards, for example by involving adult volunteers from the local community and Year 6 reading mentors.
- School information suggests that across all year groups, pupils currently in the school are achieving better than previous year groups. Leaders regularly confirm the accuracy of these standards with other schools. As a result, the school is well placed to maintain the very high levels of pupil achievement.
- Current pupils are making excellent progress in key stage 1 and key stage 2. Morning booster sessions in mathematics and parent reading-support groups offer highly effective support for pupils who risk falling behind.
- The already strong outcomes for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are continually improving.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and skills very well across the broad and balanced curriculum. They achieve high standards in science and other subjects.
- The curriculum is further extended and enriched through a wide range of after-school activities. Pupils value the clubs, such as korfbal, which are all very popular with boys and girls alike. The choir is a strength of the after-school provision. These wide-ranging activities boost pupils' wider achievement and their enjoyment of school.
- Arrangements for pupils' transition to the next stages in their education are excellent. Year 1 teachers start to support their new pupils during Reception Year. They make home visits for pupils from vulnerable groups to support them in the change. In addition, the school has excellent transition arrangements with a wide range of

secondary schools. As a result, all pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Early years provision

Outstanding

- Leadership of the early years is outstanding. Leaders are providing children with an engaging curriculum. Children are highly motivated and enthused by activities such as making chocolate volcanoes. They are well stimulated to learn and quickly take part in activities. As a result, children are making excellent progress.
- Children cooperate well with each other. They are keen and motivated in class. Teachers plan carefully and consider parents' feedback to make sure that they tailor learning for the individual child's needs. Furthermore, parent focus groups are helping parents and children practise and learn together.
- Teachers use assessment information with precise accuracy, to help plan the children's next steps in learning. Standards continue to rise because teachers know the children's needs well and plan appropriately for them. For example, children quickly develop their muscle coordination skills through well-directed play.
- The children's literacy development is promoted extremely well. Teachers successfully develop children's understanding and use of a wide range of vocabulary to stimulate children's language development.
- Teachers have very high expectations for all children. They have well-embedded routines that ensure that no time is wasted in learning. For example, the end-of-day 'show and tell' activities are highly effective in maximising children's learning.
- Work with other agencies is well coordinated. As a result, children who have SEN and/or disabilities are very well supported and make very strong progress from their starting points.
- The wider provision for children is excellent. For example, dance classes are enjoyed by children, as are the opportunities to learn Spanish. Trips and visits by the police, dentists, an ambulance crew, together with opportunities such as learning to write Chinese letters, significantly boost and broaden the children's knowledge and skills.
- Children feel safe and know how to stay safe. Parents confirm that their children are safe in the early years.
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are well supported. Staff work closely with parents to overcome any barriers to their children's learning. As a result, these children make excellent progress.
- Staff are using the smaller-than-usual outside learning space very effectively. The children use a wide range of resources in the outside space well. Ambitious plans are in place to create a new and larger outside space.

School details

Unique reference number	136275
Local authority	Milton Keynes
Inspection number	10054146

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	632
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Paul Ayres
Headteacher	Warren Harrison
Telephone number	01908 373 621
Website	www.tpamk.co.uk
Email address	admin@tpamk.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 July 2013

Information about this school

- The Premier Academy is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The Premier Academy converted to academy status on 1 September 2010 to form a single academy trust, The Premier Academy Ltd. The headteacher is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The chief executive officer and a separate board of directors are responsible for Eaton Mill Nursery, which is located on the same site but is inspected separately.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 47 lessons to observe pupils' learning, many with the head of education and/or senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with the chair of the trust and with several members of the governing body.
- Inspectors met with the chief executive officer, the head of education and other senior and middle leaders, as well as teachers and non-teaching staff.
- Inspectors met with pupils and talked to them during play and lunch breaks and during lessons.
- The inspection team considered 39 responses to the staff survey, responses to the school's own annual pupil survey, and 233 responses to the parent survey, including 111 accompanying free-text messages.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record and other safeguarding policies and documentation.
- The inspection team considered information provided by the school, including the self-evaluation and development plans, as well as plans and evaluations for the use of additional funding.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of pupils' work with senior leaders, looked at pupils' work during their visits to lessons and heard a small group of pupils read.
- Inspectors considered the school's published performance information and its internal information about pupils' progress and attainment.

Inspection team

Dylan Davies, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Clare Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Ashcroft	Ofsted Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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