



SEF 2024

### School Context

**Evidence:**

The school has 45 in a year group in the Main school. Of the 218 children in Summer 2024:

EAL	SEND	PP
28%	14%	7%

The school has a vibrant nursery provision. There are two EYFS classes in the main school. In KS1&LKS2, the children are taught in mixed year groups of 90 in a Key Stage.

Teaching is at least good and, together with a rich and relevant curriculum, contributes to a vibrant learning environment, significant growth in students' knowledge, and excellent attitudes to learning.

Pupils, and particular groups of pupils, have excellent educational experiences at school and these ensure that they are very well equipped for the next stage of their education.

There is excellent practice that ensures that all pupils have high levels of literacy appropriate to their age.

The school's practice consistently reflects the highest expectations of staff and the highest aspirations for pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs.

Staff work collegiately with shared planning, shared classes and peer mentoring. Having Key Stage Leads means that each Key Stage is highly focussed and effective.

The school's thoughtful and wide-ranging promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their physical wellbeing enables them to thrive in a supportive, highly cohesive learning community. The school had a SIAMS and Ofsted inspection in November 2023 – both rated the school as a good provider.

Attendance at September 2024 is 97%

## Quality of Education :2

### **Evidence:**

Teaching is judged to be at least good with some outstanding practice because:

“Pupils work hard to meet the staff’s high expectations for them to achieve well.” Ofsted 2023

Challenging targets are set at the end of each academic year between the current and prospective class teachers. Teachers plan an adapted curriculum using many elements expected in quality first teaching. Learning objectives are clearly communicated to children, and are shown to be effective due to outcome. A comprehensive overview of the curriculum intent, implementation and impact is available in the public domain on the school’s website. Medium term plans are discussed and modified during teacher planning meetings which take place weekly.

We have a dedicated group of Teaching Assistants many of whom are well trained and highly effective in supporting identified groups. Teachers are well trained in delivering the Unlocking Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme. The school is fortunate to have a wide range of degree subjects amongst its staff such as R.E; French; Science; History. The Head and Deputy hold NPQH and the Head holds a Certificate of Educational Studies. The Assistant Head holds a Masters in Educational Management.

The school ensures that careful use of a dedicated training budget results in appropriate CPD being undertaken which is linked into school improvement.

Performance management is used to embed whole school teaching targets, which are then personalised for each practitioner. The School development plan outlines the vision for the school. Staff play an active role in articulating, implementing and embedding this vision and are committed to its implementation.

Monitoring is thorough and follows a termly focus agreed with the EA and the Board.

Summative Data systems have been developed by the school in order to inform effective interventions and high light areas of underperformance as well as exceptional practice.

Parents are kept fully informed of their child`s learning through termly reports consultations and open events.

### **Evidence:**

2024 Initial Data Analysis Headlines

EYFS- 64% of pupils achieved a Good Level Of Development

Phonics- 80% of pupils achieved the expected standard

KS1

Reading- 75% of pupils achieved the age related standard

Writing- 66% of pupils achieved the age related standard

Maths- 77% of pupils achieved the age related standard

Year 4

Times tables- The average score attained was 21.4/25

Reading- 83% of pupils achieved the age related standard

Writing – 74% of pupils achieved the age related standard

Maths- 75% of pupils achieved the age related standard.

**Areas for improvement:**

To continue to improve outcomes in writing through:

- (a) Continuing to access high quality training with Herts For Learning will inform improved practice
- (b) Set up cross-phase working with feeder schools to establish expectations and share best practice

To ensure a consistent application of the reading curriculum by:

- (a) Carrying out an audit of current practice
- (b) Continuing to provide high quality training and support for staff

To implement a new scheme for the teaching of music

**Behaviour and Attitudes: 2**

**Evidence:**

'The effectiveness with which the curriculum supports SMSC is judged to be good because:

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding, reinforced through innovative approaches to learning outside through the Forest Schools' initiative. This enables pupils to appreciate the wonders of the natural world, whilst working together as teams to complete specific projects, such as the building of dens.

There have been no fixed-term or permanent exclusions for fourteen years.

Parent View returns +94% at least good or don't know for questions relevant to this section. There is very little bullying and the school is pro-active in raising issues through the PSHE curriculum and take part in anti-bullying week. Incidents are dealt with swiftly according to policy.

"Behaviour around the school is generally calm as pupils are respectful of each other and adults" Ofsted 2023

The SLT are active 'on the gate' greeting parents and children and reinforcing our open door policy. Teachers and TA's are also part of the parent interface on the playground. Teaching Assistants play an integral role in the pastoral side of school life as well as supporting children academically.

The school has in-house catering facilities and the kitchen has the highest food hygiene rating of 5. The school provides breakfast at the Before School Club, and lunches with a high take-up rate.

Social development plays an extremely important role in the EYFS with staff encouraging collaborative learning and social skills as an integral part of the curriculum. Responsible roles are encouraged throughout the school for example belonging to the School Council. Children also assist in for example, organising worship, helping younger pupils and other jobs around the school.

The school follows our own Faith, Hope and Love vision in assembly. In addition, the school has strong links with All Saints church. The leadership and clergy work together to provide relevant worship materials for the children both at school and at church. In addition, Pulford Children attend church on a termly basis and celebrate the major Christian Festivals as well as taking an active part in Sunday worship on special occasions. The school works in close partnership with our neighbouring middle school with teachers working across the phase to ensure a smooth transition between year 4 and 5. In addition the school works in close partnership with the other 27 schools in the Learning Community.

The school takes part in a wide range of charities including raising money for CHUMS, Children in Need, and the Bishops of St Albans harvest appeal. The Headmaster co-ordinates the town-wide Remembrance service in Church Square.

**Areas for improvement:**

- To continue our whole school journey exploring diversity.

**Personal development: 2**

**Evidence:**The school currently judges personal development to be good.

The school has become much more diverse in recent years in terms of financial wellbeing, ethnicity and faith. This has enabled our community to learn and listen to a greater variety of views and beliefs.

The school take mental health very seriously and have a robust policy. The staff have had a training day devoted to mental well-being. This area has been discussed with Michele Geddes, SIA. The school has an excellent attendance record with few hard to reach families. Two members of the SLT have completed Mental Health Lead training and a development plan was introduced in Sept 24.

The school has a Forest School which enables pupils to develop self-confidence, teambuilding skills and self-esteem. The school follows eco-friendly guidelines and children are encouraged to care for their environment. The school use the Education Endowment Toolkit when considering provision for their Pupil Premium children. Pulford's outdoor education is of benefit to all, but especially benefits those from disadvantaged backgrounds. PP children are tracked carefully through the school's tracking system and provision maps and interventions put in place to close the gap.

The school take children's safety seriously and not only have a robust safeguarding approach but also take part in NSPCC projects, on-line safety projects with the Police, and bike-ability with the local PCSO's.

**Areas for improvement:**

- To improve staff wellbeing by:
  - (a) Reviewing current structures and systems that will lead to more effective communication with parents (pupil progress meetings, reporting systems, marking and feedback, policy review)
  - (b) Re-aligning expectations with different stakeholders

## Leadership and Management: 2

### **Evidence:**

The school currently judges the quality of leadership and management to be good.

Leaders, including governors, have high expectations and set ambitious targets for all groups of pupils. Leaders have a strong strategic overview of the school and have played a major role in guiding and implementing its planned expansion over time.

This expansion had provided greater capacity for extended leadership and the strong development of teams has meant that a wider range of leaders are now actively engaged in monitoring and in driving improvement. As a result, this year has seen significant moves forward in distributed leadership.

Systems for monitoring the school's work and for the appraisal of staff are rigorous.

Governors receive regular and detailed information about the school's work through the headteacher's report and monitor the school's work closely. They receive regular updates on the quality of teaching and on pupil attainment and progress. As a result, they hold senior leaders to account effectively. Governors have a range of skills which are brought to bear to support the school. They monitor the budget and ongoing expenditure closely and undertake benchmarking to ensure value for money.

Leaders have forged strong relationships with parents and other stakeholder groups. They are responsive to parental feedback, which is regularly sought and acted upon.

The school promotes an engaging and exciting curriculum, with Forest School provision and outdoor learning being particular strengths. "Pupils learn regularly outdoors. This helps to build their resilience, imagination and understanding of nature." The strong focus on music and drama, for example the recent Year 4 production of "Pirates and Mermaids", provides clear links between the curriculum and extracurricular provision. As a result of the many learning opportunities across the curriculum and beyond, pupils demonstrate a strong love of learning.

Leaders are committed to sharing their skills with other schools and the wider community, as evidenced by the lead taken in promoting Religious Education where a number of schools have taken advantage of the RE Trails for Harvest and Christmas organised by Pulford during the current year.

As Pulford is a Church of England School, leaders promote a strong spiritual life, with close links to All Saints Church. Through this, and through the strong commitment to Christian Values, leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.

Leaders are strongly committed to diversity and inclusion, which is modelled in a variety of ways, for example the acceptance of a range of vulnerable students on work experience from a local Upper School.

Leaders work hard to promote a culture of safeguarding amongst staff, pupils and stakeholders. The Head and Deputy have both completed 'Train the Trainers' course and have updated all staff and newly qualified staff.

The HT and responsible officer meet regularly to set and monitor the budget which is then shared with sub-committees, full governors and office staff. SLT and the Resources committee secure best value on all large bids or orders.

The school embraces a relationship - leadership style approach. Currently four members of teaching staff hold a formal curriculum leadership role (numeracy, literacy, RE and early years). These staff members regularly train and update colleagues. They are lead teachers in their field. Other staff have responsibility for other areas such as MFL and PSHE.

Additional time is made available to support these functions. The leadership team have a time allowance for performance management, SEND roles and dedicated headship time

Excellent relationships are forged with our EA who knows the school well, SEND providers and the wider community particularly All Saints Church.

The school made a successful bid for grant funding from Verulam Trust House and Culham St. Gabriel. This has enabled the school to widen our outstanding RE practice to other schools in the town.

The Year 4 children go to Blue Peris outdoor activity centre do develop the skill set required for transfer to Middle School.

The school supports ITT with the University of Bedfordshire and supports many people looking for work experience. The school has supported a former TA through ITT training at the school who has now completed her NQT year.

The updated website has been of benefit to parents both with information and providing simple quick links to areas of interest .

The school operates a modified open door policy and good relationships have been forged with the Travelling Community and others where the reading of letters may be an issue.

Staff meetings have a challenging range of subject matter to assist in sharing of best practice throughout the school. Peer moderation in numeracy, literacy and science are regular features.

Safeguarding is effective and training regular. Robust policies are in place with experienced DSL's on the SLT and in the Pre-school.

**Areas for improvement:**

- Develop a strategic plan for the future development of the school, given the impending changes in structures at a local and LA level.

## The effectiveness of Early Years : 2

### **Evidence:**

The school judges the effectiveness of early years to be good.

Monitoring records show that the quality of teaching and learning has improved in the Pre-school, reflecting the significant work over the past 5 years to ensure that all staff are highly skilled. The headteacher indicates that the staff form a strong and happy team, based on his regular meetings with them and the regular visits he makes to the setting.

The learning environment is vibrant and engaging and as a result, children are keen to develop their skills and to engage with the exciting curriculum on offer. This has ensured that younger pupils within the setting are 'foundation stage ready' by the end of the summer term. Adults and key workers are well known to them, securing improved transition to the next stage of their development.

The developments in outdoor learning and Forest School have proved particularly positive for younger children, who engage effectively in outdoor learning on a regular basis.

As a result of the work done this year, all groups and cohorts of children have made good progress through the 'ages and stages'. Assessment has been rigorous, reflected in 'learning journeys'. The school has developed systems with summative assessment in the EYFS to more closely align with the rest of the school.