

# Herringham Primary Academy

St Mary's Road, Chadwell St Mary, Grays, RM16 4JX

**Inspection dates** 3–4 March 2015

| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>   | Previous inspection: | Not previously inspected |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
|                                | This inspection:     | <b>Good</b> <b>2</b>     |
| Leadership and management      | Good                 | 2                        |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | Good                 | 2                        |
| Quality of teaching            | Good                 | 2                        |
| Achievement of pupils          | Good                 | 2                        |
| Early years provision          | Good                 | 2                        |

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The Executive Principal, head of school and deputy headteacher provide strong and focused leadership. They are extremely well supported by governors and by the academy trust. This has ensured that teaching is good and pupils achieve well.
- From their different starting points, children get off to a good start in the Reception classes and make good progress. This continues in Key Stages 1 and 2 so that by the end of Year 6 pupils reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils make progress that is similar and often stronger than others in the school. Gaps in attainment are closing rapidly.
- Pupils demonstrate the school's 'ten core values' well. They behave well and are polite and welcoming. They talk freely, animatedly and confidently about their work at school. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils enjoy the varied range of themes and activities they explore at school. This is reflected in their attendance, which is average. They understand the school policy, 'It's not ok to be away!'
- Provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They feel safe at school and are well cared for by adults and by each other.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. Pupils have carefully planned support that helps them to make good progress.
- Strong leadership of the early years has led to rapid improvement since the academy opened and has secured good teaching and good achievement in the Reception classes.
- Parents express very positive views of the academy. Some describe its work as 'stunning'.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers occasionally set work that is too easy for the most able or too difficult for the least able.
- Teaching assistants are not always deployed as well as they could be in lessons to help pupils make rapid progress.
- Teachers' marking does not always give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work.
- Presentation in pupils' books is sometimes untidy and left unchallenged by teachers.
- Subject leaders do not always evaluate the impact of their actions on pupils' achievement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons or parts of lessons, including four joint observations with the Executive Principal, the head of school, the deputy headteacher and the special educational needs coordinator. Teachers in all year groups were observed at least once.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in books and on classroom displays. They listened to pupils reading and attended assemblies.
- Inspectors met with all leaders in the school and with a group of governors.
- The chief executive officer of the academy trust met with inspectors and brief discussions were held with a local authority representative.
- The inspection team met with groups of pupils and talked to them during lessons, in the playground, in the dining hall, and as they moved around the school. Pupils took inspectors on a curriculum 'tour' of the school.
- The 38 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were taken into account, and inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of the day. The school's own information on parental views was considered.
- Questionnaire returns completed by members of staff were taken into consideration.
- Many school documents were reviewed. These included development plans, policies, records of monitoring, safeguarding and planning records, information for families, and governing body documents.

## Inspection team

|                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| Ruth Dollner, Lead inspector | Additional Inspector |
| Barbara Chevis               | Additional Inspector |
| Sean Small                   | Additional Inspector |

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Herringham Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in October 2012. When its predecessor school, Herringham Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- Herringham is a larger than the average-sized primary school. It is part of the Gateway Learning Community Trust, along with three other primary schools and one secondary school. The schools are all located in the same geographical area.
- The early years consists of two full-time Reception classes.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. An average proportion of pupils come from a range of other minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and eligible for the pupil premium is well above average. This is additional government funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is average. Some have complex physical and emotional needs.
- The Executive Principal works part time in another Gateway Trust school. The head of school, who is currently on family leave, returned to the academy for the duration of the inspection. The deputy headteacher is responsible for the leadership and management of the early years and has been acting head of school during the head of school's absence.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

- Improve leadership and management by making sure that subject leaders evaluate the impact their actions have on pupils' progress.
- Improve teaching to help more pupils make rapid progress and raise attainment further by ensuring that:
  - marking and feedback to pupils consistently helps them to improve their work and that untidy work is always challenged
  - teaching assistants are always deployed effectively in lessons
  - work is always set at the right level for the least and most-able pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### Good

- The academy is well led by the Executive Principal, the head of school and the deputy headteacher. They are ably supported by the governing body. Since the academy opened, leadership has secured improvements in teaching to make sure that teaching and achievement are good.
- Senior leaders' evaluation of the academy's performance is accurate, showing their clear understanding of what is working well and prioritising the right areas for improvement. They are well supported in this by the other schools in the academy chain and by the chief executive of the academy trust.
- Leaders and staff have created a strong climate for learning in the academy. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and are encouraged to do well. This demonstrates the academy's commitment to equal opportunity and its determination to tackle discrimination.
- Senior leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching in the school is robust and accurate. It is followed up effectively to ensure that it leads to improvements in teaching and achievement. Any under-performance is tackled swiftly. This has led to considerable staff turnover since the academy opened. Targets for staff development and pay progression are linked to pupils' achievement.
- The inclusion team, led by the special educational needs coordinator, has ensured that provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is good. The care and support given to these pupils, some of whom have complex physical and emotional needs, is excellent. It is a great strength of the school. Interventions are carefully targeted at individuals' specific learning needs and are evaluated and adjusted frequently, following rigorous, ongoing assessments by the inclusion team. This means that the pupils make good progress.
- In her role as early years coordinator, the deputy headteacher has supported staff effectively in making changes to the indoor and outdoor learning environment and to planning and assessment procedures to improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This has ensured that all of the early years areas of development are planned for and taught well, resulting in strong progress for the children.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is successfully fostered through the broad curriculum operating within and beyond the school day. The academy prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain through its '10 core values'. Tolerance and respect are strong themes in assemblies and in topic work which compares different religious beliefs. This encourages pupils to respect beliefs that are different to their own. British values feature strongly on displays around the school. Topics such as 'famous British people' and 'the history of Britain' are evident.
- Leaders have been relentless in their drive to improve attendance, which is now average. Strong, effective systems are in place to reduce absences, and pupils understand how important it is to attend school every day.
- The pupil premium funding has been used well to benefit disadvantaged pupils across the academy. Disadvantaged pupils make progress which is in line with or better than other pupils, and gaps in attainment are closing rapidly.
- The additional primary physical education and sport funding has also been used well. It has enabled more pupils to access a range of sporting activities and has meant improved provision. For example, 'The Energy Club' takes place after school and highlights the importance of healthy eating and regular exercise. Pupils from the academy have featured in several newspaper articles because of their sporting performances. The funding has also supported staff professional development.
- Leaders and governors ensure that all safeguarding requirements are met. Procedures are well understood and followed carefully by all staff.
- The large majority of parents who completed the online survey Parent View say they would recommend the academy to another parent. The school's own parent questionnaire also reflects this view. Parents

receive a good level of information about the academy through the website and through regular newsletters.

- Leaders of the academy maintain a good relationship with the local authority and still make some use of the training that the local authority provides. Staff benefit considerably and are well prepared for the implementation of any national and local initiatives.
- Subject leaders for mathematics and English have clear action plans for further improving teaching and learning. They know that the actions they have put in place have led to improvements in the quality of teaching in their subjects but have yet to evaluate the data on pupils' progress to confirm the impact of this on pupils' achievement across the school.

#### ■ The governance of the school:

- Governance is outstanding. The governing body are extremely effective in challenging and supporting the work of the academy. They provide an excellent range of experience and expertise and are ably led by the Chair. Collectively, they strengthen the school leadership significantly.
- Governors share the senior leaders' ambition to take the academy further forward. They have a very good understanding of the priorities for raising achievement and improving teaching further.
- Governors seek appropriate external advice to support them in the performance management of the Executive Principal. They are fully informed about the performance management of teachers and apply the link between performance management, pupils' progress and teachers' pay. They hold the school to account well for its spending and have a good understanding of the way that additional funds have been used to benefit pupils.
- The governing body ensures that it carries out its statutory duties effectively.
- Governors monitor the work of the school closely and continually evaluate their structures and systems to become more effective. Each governor has a year group they are linked to, and they visit the school regularly. Governors attend pupil progress meetings with teachers, and this means they have a detailed understanding of how well pupils are doing. Some governors also work with pupils in school, supporting reading and other activities. They are very much part of the life of the school and are a highly committed and effective group.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This has a strong and positive impact on their learning. Pupils try hard in lessons and enjoy the activities provided. They support each other with learning, often without being prompted to do so. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, one pupil volunteered advice to another pupil who was trying to solve a problem. Reassuring her classmate she said, 'I'm only telling you this to help you, you know.' A Reception child was seen supporting a classmate with a mathematics activity: 'Come over here, we can do it together!' This was typical of pupils' attitude to each other across the academy.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, in the playground and around the school. They are respectful and polite, and take every opportunity to have a friendly chat with visitors. They are engaging and lively in conversation. They show pride in their achievements and in their school.
- The '10 core values' are demonstrated well by pupils across the school, and they are keen to show their stickers which celebrate good behaviour and achievement. Pupils understand the behaviour policy and the consequences of any poor behaviour. There are well-established effective systems and structures in place to manage behaviour, and all staff adhere to them.
- There have been no exclusions in the past year. The very few minor incidents are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Pupils say that, 'If there is any name calling, we fix it.'

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet all statutory requirements. Safeguarding checks on staff and governors prior to their

appointments are very thorough. The building is kept safe and secure at all times.

- Pupils feel safe at school and say they are well cared for by adults. Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Teaching assistants have particularly warm and caring relationships with pupils. Pupils' well-being underpins all their work at the academy. Pupils know they can go to any adult if they have worries or concerns.
- Pupils show good awareness of the different types of bullying and they understand the implications of using the internet safely. Pupils and parents agree that incidences of bullying are rare and are dealt with effectively.
- The academy's work to keep pupils who have medical conditions or have a disability safe in school is exemplary. Personalised care plans and timetables for individual pupils ensure that they feel safe and secure. Pupils know they will be taken care of, and this helps them engage fully and enjoy their life at school.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Teaching is typically good. As a result, pupils make good progress over time in reading, writing and mathematics. This has sustained average attainment at the end of Year 6 since the academy opened. The school's own progress data and work in books indicate that attainment is set to improve because of the rapid progress pupils are making as a result of improvements to teaching.
- Because of well-directed teaching and good-quality extra support, disadvantaged pupils make progress that is in line with or better than their classmates. Gaps in attainment are closing rapidly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs learn well because they benefit from a wide range of interventions to support both their learning and their pastoral care. This includes activities such as therapy involving plastic construction bricks, which has enormously benefited some pupils. The inclusion team provides outstanding care and support to pupils with very complex learning and emotional needs. This has a significant impact on pupils' well-being and overall development.
- Teachers and teaching assistants strive to make learning interesting. Teachers and teaching assistants often work together in lessons to bring about rapid progress. This was seen in a Year 6 mathematics lesson where pupils explored the '75' times table. The teacher and teaching assistant modelled number line strategies together, then each supported different ability groups to apply this learning. All groups made strong progress in this lesson because roles, responsibilities and planning were clear.
- Teachers demonstrate good questioning skills in mathematics and English lessons, and across other subjects. This enables pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding across the different subjects and topics they are taught.
- Teachers typically select interesting themes, topics and books for children to respond to in writing. For example, pupils wrote to the Prime Minister to tell him how Herringham 'is the best school ever!' Good links are made across subjects and pupils apply their learning in literacy lesson across the curriculum. For example, in science Year 4 pupils wrote explanatory texts based on the scientific themes they were exploring.
- Reading is taught particularly well. In Key Stage 1, pupils apply their learning from their lessons in phonics (the sounds letters make) to their reading and writing. They read confidently and fluently. Pupils across the school read widely and often across all subjects. For example, work in mathematics folders demonstrates that pupils in all year groups across Key Stage 2 are challenged by complicated word problems that require swift accurate reading to decide on the mathematics skills needed to solve the problem.
- Occasionally, work is not set at the right level for pupils to make good or better progress. This is particularly true for some less-able pupils who are targeted for support from teaching assistants in

lessons. Teaching assistants sometimes struggle to support pupils if a task is not matched to the pupils' particular learning needs and if their role in the learning is not clearly defined by the teacher. Occasionally, the most-able pupils are not given work that challenges them to achieve the higher levels of which they are capable.

- All teachers have worked to implement the academy's marking and feedback policy, but not all teachers' marking gives pupils clear enough guidance on what to do to improve their work.
- Sometimes, work in books is poorly presented, particularly in mathematics. This is because the plain paper in these books does not always support pupils when drawing shapes, lines and forming numbers of an appropriate size. When teachers challenge pupils to take writing through the writing process to the 'publication' stage in writing books, the quality of presentation is good.

### **The achievement of pupils is good**

- Children join the early years with skills that are broadly typical for their age but are often weaker in speaking, reading, managing feelings and behaviour, and being imaginative. By the time they leave the Reception Year, the majority of pupils have developed the skills and knowledge necessary to cope with the demands of the next stage of their education. By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment is above the national average. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 has been average since the academy opened. The school's own data and work in books indicates that this is set to improve.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading was above the proportion that did so nationally. The proportion making above expected progress was well above the national figure. The proportion of pupils making expected and more than expected progress in writing and mathematics was similar to the proportion that did so nationally.
- Progress of disadvantaged pupils was strong in 2014. The proportion of pupils making expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics was similar to that seen nationally for all pupils. The proportion making more than expected progress in reading and writing was above the proportions seen nationally for all pupils, and in mathematics proportions were broadly in line with national.
- Disadvantaged pupils who left the school in 2014 were a little ahead of their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. They were ahead of pupils nationally in reading and less than half a term behind them in writing and mathematics. Gaps in attainment are closing rapidly because disadvantaged pupils who are currently in the school are making similar or stronger progress than others.
- In 2014, Year 1 attainment in the phonics screening check (an assessment of pupils' knowledge of letters and their sounds) was above average and the school's own tracking and work seen in phonics lessons indicates that this is expected to improve further this year.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make strong progress because of the good teaching they receive. Many pupils have complex physical or emotional needs. All are making progress which is in line with their classmates. Some are making rapid progress because of the excellent work of the inclusion team.
- The proportion of the most-able pupils achieving the higher levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below national average in 2014. The school has reviewed and developed planning and has strengthened teaching so that there is a sharp focus on improving the attainment of the most able in reading, writing and mathematics. The majority of pupils in the current Year 6 are working at or above national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics and their teachers are ensuring that the most able are working within the higher levels. Occasionally, tasks set for the most-able pupils in other year groups do not help them achieve what they are capable of.

**The early years provision is good**

- The deputy headteacher, who is also responsible for the leadership and management of the early years, has ensured that there has been significant improvements in provision since the academy opened, resulting in improvements in children's achievement.
- All areas of development are thoroughly planned for and children benefit from a mix of adult-led and child-initiated work. Children enjoy the range of stimulating activities and enticing resources on offer, both inside and outside the classroom. A child who was entering the writing 'den', invited inspectors to: 'Come in here! I write my own words in here!'
- Children make good progress in the Reception classes and the majority of them achieve a good level of development by the end of the year. This means that they are well prepared for Key Stage 1.
- Children work and play happily together and learn from each other, as well as from the adults. Warm relationships exist between adults and children. Adults listen to children and stretch their thinking and understanding through discussion and questioning.
- The particular learning needs of individual children are met, and those with weaker skills when they start school catch up quickly. Children who have special educational needs receive outstanding care and support.
- Staff observe and make notes on children's progress regularly. This gives an accurate picture of each child's 'learning journey'. Just occasionally, when adults enter information on tablet computers during activities, it can prevent them engaging fully with children at the point of learning. It does, however, result in high-quality illustrative 'learning journeys' that chart the progress of the children and which include good contributions from parents.



## What inspection judgements mean

| School | Grade   | Judgement            | Description  |
|--------|---------|----------------------|--|
|        | Grade 1 | Outstanding          | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 2 | Good                 | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.   |
|        | Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.   |
|        | Grade 4 | Inadequate           | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

## School details

|                                |          |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | 138962   |
| <b>Local authority</b>         | Thurrock |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 456066   |

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

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Type of school</b>                      | Primary                                |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 4–11                                   |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 385                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Maggie Smith                           |
| <b>Principal</b>                           | Viki Reid (Executive Principal)        |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | Not previously inspected as an academy |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01375 842407                           |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01375 842407                           |
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