

Hurst Drive Primary School

Hurst Drive, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 8DH

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher is well respected by parents, colleagues and pupils. He has created an effective leadership team to help him raise standards. As a result of leaders' high expectations, determination and ambition, the school has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- Governors are well informed and ambitious for the school, and their thoughtful leadership has played an important part in the school's recent improvement.
- The senior leadership team is careful and thorough when checking how well pupils are progressing. This attention to detail has a positive impact on teaching and learning, so that standards have risen.
- Leaders and managers at all levels have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. They are unwavering in their efforts to help all pupils to succeed.
- The school spends its considerable additional money wisely to help disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils make good progress in all areas of the curriculum.
- Safeguarding is effective. There are well-organised procedures to keep everyone safe, and pupils feel safe and well looked after at school.
- Teachers have generally high expectations about what pupils can achieve. However, in key stage 1 there are inconsistencies in the level of challenge provided, especially in English, mathematics and phonics.
- Pupils make good progress in all subjects and leave school ready for a successful start at secondary school. However, outcomes for pupils at the end of key stage 1 and in phonics in 2016 were not high enough. Leaders have taken swift action, enabling these pupils to catch up quickly.
- Pupils almost always behave well in their classrooms and around the school. They are polite and sociable, enjoy sharing ideas in lessons and work collaboratively with their classmates.
- Senior leaders employ a good range of strategies to reduce absence. As a result, attendance has improved steadily over the last three years.
- Results submitted to Ofsted's Parent View website show that the overwhelming majority of parents are very happy with the school. Parents speak positively about the quality of teaching, learning and behaviour.
- Staff provide a safe, stimulating environment in the early years. However, children's communication skills are not as strong as they could be because teachers and other adults do not use questioning well enough.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and outcomes at key stage 1 by ensuring that:
 - work in phonics, English and mathematics is appropriately challenging and engaging, is well matched to pupils' needs and deepens understanding.
- Improve communication, language and literacy in the early years by ensuring that:
 - teachers and other adults make better use of questioning to give children more opportunities to practise their communication skills.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, in close cooperation with his leadership team, has worked with vigour and determination in order to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching. The accuracy of teachers' assessments has also improved. As a result, outcomes are much better, especially at key stage 2. The depth, quantity and presentation of pupils' work have improved considerably.
- Staff and governors speak passionately about the many ways in which the school has improved since its previous inspection. The headteacher has created new ways of monitoring and improving teaching. For example, teachers work in small groups called 'triads' to discuss how to plan exciting lessons. Senior leaders enable class teachers to visit other classrooms to learn new ways of improving their own teaching. This has helped all teachers to improve their effectiveness.
- Leaders have introduced new ways to help pupils enjoy learning. For example, teachers plan some of their lessons across the curriculum and enable pupils to work in small, mixed-ability teams to solve problems together. These lessons encourage good communication skills and give pupils the confidence to try different solutions and to support and challenge each other.
- Senior leaders check carefully on how well pupils are learning, by undertaking a detailed analysis of assessment information and by gathering a wide range of evidence about progress and attainment. Leaders organise regular meetings with teachers to discuss how well pupils are doing and to ensure that any pupil falling behind can get help quickly in order to catch up.
- Robust systems are in place for the management of teachers' performance. Leaders ensure that teachers maintain high expectations about what pupils can achieve and that school policies, including the presentation of work and marking, are followed. Newly qualified and recently qualified teachers spoke enthusiastically about the support they have received from school leaders and their mentors. One young teacher told inspectors, 'We all feel that we have made great progress because we receive useful feedback on our teaching and achievable targets to help us improve.'
- Middle leaders, as well as senior staff, value the professional development that the local authority provides, which they feel has helped them to develop their own leadership skills. The school's own external improvement partner knows the school very well.
- Senior leaders do not find it easy to recruit or retain staff. Nevertheless, as a result of leaders' successful recruitment techniques, the situation has stabilised and the school is fully staffed for the new term.
- Senior leaders have not only been focusing on improving standards in English and mathematics, but in all subjects. The quality of handwriting, together with the general presentation of pupils' work, has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- School leaders develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural growth well. Leaders use carefully chosen texts to teach pupils about social justice, with themes including the work of notable people from different races and cultures. Particularly noteworthy is the school's innovative contribution to equalities, by sensitively introducing pupils to

information about lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender people.

- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced and equips pupils well for the next stages of education. Art is a particular strength of the school, led by a skilled art specialist, and some high-quality artwork is displayed in the school's gallery. The broad range of good-quality work in religious education books is supplemented by visits to local places of worship, including Runnymede Mosque, Neasden Hindu Temple and a local Christian church. Pupils enjoy learning Spanish as their modern foreign language and Year 6 pupils are able to participate in a short residential visit where they participate in adventurous activities.
- Assemblies and lessons also help pupils to learn about British values. Inspectors watched an assembly in which pupils were sensitively guided to share their responses to recent terrorist attacks in London and Manchester. This learning was skilfully interwoven with messages about how to keep ourselves safe.
- Leaders use the physical education sports funding well. They have engaged specialist sports coaches to teach in the school, to organise sports clubs and to support teachers' professional development.
- School leaders use the pupil premium funding creatively to support disadvantaged pupils during whole-class teaching, small-group work and one-to-one support. Leaders have also used the funding to provide a free breakfast club and access to specialist tuition using the internet, and to help fund a pastoral coordinator who helps pupils improve their social skills and build their confidence. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make good progress in their learning.
- The leadership of support and learning, and the use of funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is good. Parents of these pupils are kept well informed about their learning and development. As a result, pupils make good progress across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Senior leaders' planning for school improvement is effective and they have correctly identified the most important priorities for improvement. Areas for improvement from the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed.
- School staff tackle any issues of discrimination well. This promotes equality of opportunity and contributes to a harmonious and orderly school.

Governance of the school

- Governors have played a key role in the improvement of the school. They have supported and challenged senior leaders to bring about much-needed improvements to teaching in order to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, governors challenged the headteacher about the impact and value for money of some activities funded by the sports premium and, consequently, improvements were introduced. Nevertheless, some records, including minutes of meetings and information about governors' monitoring visits, are not as comprehensive as they should be.
- Governors hold senior leaders to account for the progress that pupils make. They look carefully at information about outcomes for pupils, and use this knowledge to establish priorities for school improvement. Governors challenge staff performance through an

effective performance management system.

- Governors are well aware of the particular challenges facing the school, including the recruitment and retention of teaching staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Checks on the suitability of staff are appropriate. Staff receive regular training and they know what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare or safety.
- Leaders are systematic in the way they monitor pupils who are deemed to be at risk of harm. Leaders act swiftly to provide support for such pupils, bringing in outside agencies when needed. The electronic record system is highly efficient because it enables staff to alert leaders quickly if they are concerned about a pupil. Leaders can easily forward this information to professionals who can offer further advice and support. All safeguarding records are well organised and securely maintained.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are kept safe in the school environment and on educational visits. Risks that different activities may present are identified and staff are clear about the measures they must take to minimise risk. Parents and carers agree that pupils are well supported and that staff keep everyone safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers ensure that pupils learn from their mistakes and think carefully about how they can improve their own work. Pupils confirmed that they appreciate the feedback they receive. The quality and quantity of work in religious education books shows that pupils are making good progress and learning about a broad range of topics, including information about different faiths and religious customs. During one lesson, a Year 2 pupil who was learning about Judaism by studying artefacts, showed his understanding by commenting, 'The Torah is a scroll and it is very special to Hebrew people.'
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have improved considerably since the last inspection. As a result, standards are good across the curriculum. Nevertheless, opportunities to offer more challenging work, which deepens pupils' understanding, especially in key stage 1, are not as effective as they should be.
- Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to apply their literacy skills by writing in depth across the curriculum. Writing is extensive, including in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Topics often begin and end with an exciting activity, which captures pupils' imaginations. For example, Year 2 pupils enjoyed sharing hot chocolate and marshmallows around a campfire as a thrilling start to a new series of lessons about journeys.
- In mathematics, teachers provide a good balance of work, which includes calculations and arithmetic as well as reasoning and problem solving. This allows pupils to consolidate and deepen their understanding, although sometimes the work is not sufficiently challenging in key stage 1.

- Teachers provide effective learning opportunities and questions that closely match the needs of most pupils. For example, in a Year 6 class, a teacher's effective planning enabled groups of pupils to explore the use of descriptive language in a literacy text, asking pupils to explain, 'How does the author use imagery to make the scene appear?'
- Teachers have good knowledge about the subjects they teach. They make most lessons interesting and engaging and they ensure that pupils have a clear understanding about what they are expected to learn in each lesson.
- Classroom support staff make a positive contribution to lessons, particularly for those pupils who need additional support in their learning. Support staff work in partnership with teachers, using appropriate teaching resources and asking questions effectively to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills.
- Phonics teaching in key stage 1 is inconsistent. In some lessons, work is well planned, interesting and meets pupils' needs effectively. In others, the work is too hard and pupils find it difficult to make progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff and governors are successful in ensuring that the school provides a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can flourish and enjoy their learning. Leaders encourage responsibility through older pupils working in roles, such as peer mediators, play leaders, learning mentors, digital leaders and house captains. This teaches all pupils to respect each other, cooperate together and be sociable and polite in lessons and around the school.
- In their classrooms, pupils have the self-assurance to put forward their points of view, and to debate with others politely but confidently. Pupils know how to stay safe in and out of school, including when using the internet. Pupils explained to inspectors about e-safety, for example, the importance of keeping personal contact information confidential and never sharing their passwords. Teachers promote e-safety on a regular basis.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's Parent View online questionnaire agreed that staff give personal development and welfare a high priority. In particular, one parent commented, 'My thanks go to the very caring and compassionate staff', and another parent told inspectors, 'My child gets lots of help and encouragement and his confidence has grown so much.'
- Senior leaders act quickly and appropriately to address any incidents of bullying, derogatory language or racist comments. They keep detailed information about individual pupils' behaviour, and their well-timed interventions minimise disruption.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Teachers, learning support staff and leaders all share

high expectations about pupils' behaviour. Pupils work well together in lessons, sharing ideas, discussing their work and completing tasks cooperatively. Pupils are usually polite and kind to one another and courteous to adults.

- The school is an orderly environment and pupils walk calmly and sensibly around, entering and leaving lessons, the playground and assembly with due regard for school rules.
- Leaders and staff know the pupils well and individualised plans are in place to support those pupils who have identified behavioural needs. While most pupils behave well during most lessons, some do occasionally become inattentive. These incidents of low-level misbehaviour, while infrequent, generally result either from a lack of understanding by pupils about their work or from an activity that is either insufficiently challenging or too hard.
- Senior leaders use of a wide range of strategies to promote attendance, including careful tracking of absence, weekly attendance awards and firm sanctions to address lateness and reduce unauthorised absence. A free breakfast club has been established to encourage parents to get their children into school early. Rewards, such as a fun afternoon each term for the class with the highest attendance, also help to reduce absence.
- A pastoral support worker is active in offering support to families where attendance is an issue. Despite these initiatives, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils is still slightly lower than that of their peers.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Since the previous inspection, outcomes for pupils have improved considerably, notably in key stage 2. In 2016, progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 was above average when compared with other primary schools in England. Progress in writing was particularly strong for all pupils as well as for the 14 disadvantaged pupils in the cohort who did as well and sometimes slightly better than their peers.
- The standards reached by all pupils, including by disadvantaged pupils, at the end of Year 6 in national tests last year were in line with the national average in reading, and well above average in writing and mathematics. In reading, the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining the higher standard was in line with the national average, while in writing and mathematics the most able pupils far exceeded national expectations. However, at the end of key stage 1 in 2016, a very different picture emerged because, until recently, teaching and assessment in key stage 1 had been inconsistent. The proportion of pupils meeting the expected standard was below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. While very few pupils managed to reach greater depth in writing, the proportion of pupils attaining greater depth in reading was in line with the national average and was well above average in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils in Year 1 who met the expected standard in their phonics screening check has been below the national average for the last three years. Encouragingly, the school's own assessment information includes convincing evidence

that this is likely to improve in 2017 because many more pupils are already meeting the expected standard.

- According to the school's own tracking system, supported by evidence seen in workbooks, most pupils currently in the school are making good or better progress. Some pupils, particularly those currently in Year 3, are still trying to catch up. Senior leaders and governors are well aware of this, and inspection evidence supports teachers' and leaders' assessment information, showing that these pupils have made very significant progress this year and many are back on track.
- Recent test results, together with inspection evidence, show that the large number of disadvantaged pupils, including those who are most able, are making progress in line with other pupils nationally. There is good evidence that the school has successfully used the pupil premium grant to help pupils overcome any barriers to learning that they have faced.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, starting in the early years, where staff quickly identify their additional needs and how these can best be met. The school's inclusion leader carefully measures the impact of intervention programmes, ensuring that pupils make good progress.
- Outcomes in subjects other than English and mathematics are also good. Pupils' work in their topic and religious education books is detailed and very well presented. Outcomes in art are particularly strong.
- All groups of pupils, including the most able, make good progress. However, some are capable of doing even better. Some pupils in Year 1 are not currently doing as well as they should because their work is not consistently well matched to their needs.

Early years provision

Good

- The children in the early years make a good start to their education. Teachers establish routines that enable children to settle quickly into their learning. Links with parents are strong, and this aids the children's transition into school. As a result, children become confident, inquisitive learners who are eager to explore new ideas and challenges.
- Staff provide high-quality care to children. Consequently, children feel safe and they behave well. Children concentrate well and show perseverance when carrying out tasks. They get on well with each other and enjoy learning and playing together.
- Most children enter Reception with skills at below typical levels for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress and, by the time they leave Reception, a reasonable proportion of children are working at good levels of development.
- Assessment has been inconsistent in the past and outcomes have fluctuated over the last three years. Current assessment systems are more reliable because leaders have improved procedures.
- The indoor and outdoor learning environments have improved markedly since the previous inspection because leaders have invested funds wisely. As a result, children are extending their learning experiences, making better use of the improved

opportunities and enjoying their learning even more.

- Teachers and other adults know the children well. They plan activities which are well matched to the children's own interests.
- The early years leader has a realistic picture of the strengths and areas for improvement. She has accurately identified that adults do not make enough use of questioning. This can limit the opportunities for children to practise their speaking and listening skills. It also means that, at times, they do not receive the extra challenge that would enable them to make maximum progress.
- Safeguarding procedures in the early years are effective and statutory responsibilities are met.

School details

Unique reference number	117180
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10031382

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Emma Kight
Headteacher	Chris O'Connor
Telephone number	01992 624099
Website	www.hurstdrive.herts.sch.uk
Email address	head@hurstdrive.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	11–12 June 2015

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- This is a larger than average primary school.
- A high percentage of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A high percentage of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national figure, including the proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum

expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

- The school has been receiving support and challenge from Herts. For Learning, a school improvement service linked to the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 25 lessons. A number of these lessons were visited jointly with the senior leaders. Inspectors also made some short visits to lessons as part of learning walks throughout the school.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met a group of pupils to gain their views of the school and spoke to pupils and parents informally.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime, in assembly, at the start of the school day and in lessons.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including: assessments and records of pupils' progress; the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance; records of how teaching is managed; minutes of governors' meetings; records of governors' and the local authority's monitoring visits; the school's self-evaluation information and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, three newly qualified teachers and one recently qualified teacher, the inclusion leader, subject leaders, two pastoral support workers and the early years leader. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and the 32 staff questionnaire responses.

Inspection team

Nick Rudman, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Stewart Caplen	Ofsted Inspector
Diane Hawkes	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017