

# Hunts Grove Primary Academy

Boulmer Avenue, Kingsway, Quedgeley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL2 2FX

## Inspection dates

5–6 June 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher is well respected and is ably supported by the acting head of school. They have ensured that pupils make good progress both academically and personally in a caring community.
- Leaders at all levels across the multi-academy trust demonstrate a strong capacity for further improvement.
- Staff implement well-established safeguarding procedures to ensure that pupils are kept safe at school.
- Pupils behave well and share exceptionally supportive relationships with each other and with staff. They enjoy school and attend well.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching effectively. Staff are beginning to share their expertise in providing pupils with a stimulating curriculum. As a result, pupils benefit from effective teaching to sustain their good progress throughout their time in this school.
- The current focus on raising the level of challenge presented to the pupils is having a positive impact, including on the good progress of the most able. However, it has not been implemented long enough to ensure that the most able pupils achieve greater depth in their learning.
- Pupils work hard and make good progress. For example, they are able to write expressively and solve mathematical problems. However, there are weaknesses in forming letters and numbers correctly and developing handwriting and spelling skills. This constrains their ability to progress faster and learn more deeply.
- The small proportion of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities achieve well. Staff liaise closely with parents and specialists to ensure that pupils receive effective pastoral and academic guidance.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Their needs are supported effectively from an early age. Leaders use additional funds efficiently to include pupils in school activities and provide effective extra adult support and teaching.
- Pupils who are new to learning English benefit from specialist speech and language support. Once settled, they make rapid gains, especially in developing their phonic understanding.
- Parents hold the school in high regard and welcome its very caring family atmosphere.
- Strong leadership and good teaching ensure that children make good progress during their time in the Reception class.

## Full report

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

- Improve pupils' progress and fluency in writing, especially for those who need to catch up, by establishing a more consistent and effective approach to the teaching and development of pupils' handwriting and spelling across the school.
- Increase the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in their learning by teachers:
  - further sharing existing good practice and making sure that pupils are suitably challenged by the work and activities presented to them
  - ensuring that pupils consistently form numbers and letters correctly when recording their calculations and written explanations respectively in their mathematics books.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Hunts Grove Primary Academy is a growing school located within Waterwells Academy, a fellow member of the Robinswood Multi-Academy Trust. Leaders at all levels, including staff and those with governance responsibilities, work well together. They fully support the executive headteacher's strong lead to ensure that the breadth of staff expertise available is used effectively.
- Leaders take effective action to sustain pupils' good academic and personal development and grow this school, despite delays in the construction of the new accommodation. This clearly shows their capacity to sustain further improvement.
- The executive headteacher is well supported by the head of school of Waterwells and others with leadership responsibilities in both schools. As an effective team, leaders and managers evaluate the performance of the school accurately. They set high expectations for staff and pupils to achieve well. They monitor the quality of teaching, learning and assessment effectively. They ensure that teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are accurate and that the right areas for improvement are targeted. These include, for example, the introduction of a strengthened approach to teaching mathematics, which has enthused the pupils and accelerated their progress.
- Leaders ensure that as the number of pupils attending the school increases, every pupil has equal opportunity to learn well across the variety of activities that the school offers. Leaders demonstrate a determined commitment to raise pupils' achievements further. However, initiatives to improve skills such as handwriting and spelling have not been in place long enough to have had a full impact on outcomes.
- Staff provide high-quality care and support for pupils, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities. The school uses additional funding both for these pupils and for disadvantaged pupils effectively to secure their good progress. Several parents wrote appreciatively about how well these pupils thrive and develop at the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. It includes a strong focus to develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and to extend them across the range of subjects. Leaders ensure that the planned curriculum provides stimulating learning experiences for the pupils, including, for example, the science 'Burst a Bubble' theme day.
- Leaders give pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development strong emphasis, for example through arts weeks and assembly themes such as 'Being Me'. Staff ensure that key values of believe, engage, succeed and try, which incorporate British values such as respect, underpin the day-to-day life of the school.
- Leaders give high status to sports and make good use of the physical education and sport premium to further enhance pupils' skills. Pupils benefit from a range of clubs and specialist coaching that motivates them and increases their participation. For example, the proportion of pupils attending the football club has more than trebled over the past year.
- Staff at Hunts Grove work supportively with parents. A small number of parents expressed concern about the delay in building the new school and in the appointment of its own head of school. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and

expressed these views in the online survey. Parents typically say, 'My children couldn't have had a better start in their education and I am sure that this will continue as they move through the school.'

## **Governance of the school**

- Academy leaders at multi-academy and advisory board levels work together effectively to provide good governance. They give strong support to the executive headteacher in driving the well-considered development and strategic direction of the school.
- Members of the academy board set high expectations that leadership and staff skills across the multi-academy be fully utilised to help pupils achieve well.
- Board members are managing the growth of this developing school. They have recently appointed a new and substantive head of school for Hunts Grove to commence duties in September 2018. This reflects their strong commitment to increasing leadership capacity so that leaders can continue to drive school improvement effectively.
- Board members carefully question and challenge staff with leadership responsibilities. They hold them to account for the way that decisions and actions influence pupils' achievements and, by so doing, secure a good understanding of strengths and areas to improve.
- Board members check the use of additional funds carefully. For example, they ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are well supported and make good progress.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding, typified not least by the very supportive relationships with pupils, nurtured so carefully by the staff. Leaders ensure that effective procedures are known and implemented consistently by those who work in the school. Currently, this is 'a school within a school' and pupils, for example at break and lunchtimes, are additionally safeguarded by the diligence of staff at Waterwells as well as Hunts Grove. Leaders, at trust and advisory board levels, ensure that the required records and checks, including of adults who work with children, are kept fully up to date. These encompass, for example, details of regular fire drills. Training in the government's 'Prevent' duty ensures that staff keep pupils safe from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. All those who spoke to the inspector or responded to online surveys, including pupils, parents and staff, expressed the view that pupils feel safe and are kept safe at school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- The quality of teaching is good. Consequently, pupils make good progress. Teachers and well-deployed teaching assistants establish very supportive relationships with the pupils. These help to sustain pupils' good behaviour and the positive learning atmosphere in classrooms, which secure pupils' eager commitment to their work.

- As the number of pupils and classes has increased, new and existing teachers have strengthened the way they assess pupils' skills and meet their different needs. Leaders, teachers and teaching assistants collaborate and share expertise to ensure the accuracy of their assessments. Consequently, staff know the pupils well and set realistic but challenging targets to secure pupils' good progress.
- Teachers are skilled in planning teaching and learning experiences that advance pupils' understanding effectively. Leaders and teachers identified that some pupils lacked confidence in developing their writing skills and that this was slowing their progress. Staff have been quick to respond and establish a curriculum based on interesting texts and topics that motivate the pupils. Currently, pupils across the range of ability are responding well and learning enthusiastically. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 listened with fascination to the teacher reading 'Claude in the City' by Alex Smith. Pupils in Year 1 were equally absorbed in examining the wild flowers they had collected in the school field.
- Teachers' accurate assessments of pupils' skills and achievement help them to match work closely to their different needs and to accelerate pupils' progress. This is particularly effective in support of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities. Pupils who enter the school with little or no English also make good progress in response to additional speech and language support from skilled teachers and teaching assistants.
- Teaching in mathematics is effective, not least because of the pupils' clear understanding and appreciation of the school's 'Do it, stretch it, solve it' activities. Pupils, including the most able, are responding well to the increasing level of challenge in the teachers' focused questioning. This is helping to deepen their understanding.
- The teaching of reading and phonics is good. Pupils learn well from frequent opportunities to read books, in school as a class, in groups or individually. The pupils' reading records show that parents, guided by teachers, also contribute well to the development of the pupils' skills by listening to them read at home.
- Teachers question pupils carefully to extend their knowledge and deepen their thinking across the range of subjects. Teachers ensure that classroom displays stimulate pupils' interest and provide beneficial guidance, especially in mathematics and English. Teachers insist that pupils present their work in books across the curriculum neatly. However, there is less consistent emphasis on pupils forming letters and numerals correctly and spelling words accurately. At times, this weakens the development of pupils' handwriting skills and their confidence to write more fluently. It also restricts pupils' ability to record their reasoning and achieve higher standards in mathematics.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils at Hunts Grove love coming to school and develop positive attitudes to their learning. The pupils are proud of their school and value the extra friends and learning opportunities provided by their host Waterwells School. For example, during the inspection, pupils were extremely happy to mix with others at breaktimes.

- Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibility and do so enthusiastically, for example as school councillors. They eagerly offer ideas when learning in lessons and about how to improve the school. These are valued by staff and have led, for example, to the provision of the popular 'Trim Trail' outdoor learning area.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves and each other safe. They understand the different forms that bullying can take, including for example cyber bullying, and know to talk to an adult if they have any concerns. Pupils said, 'There is very little bullying here and if it does happen adults quickly sort it out.'
- Most pupils are keen to learn and try hard in lessons. A small number of pupils, although making good progress, still need and receive close adult support to sustain full engagement in learning activities.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils of all ages work well together and relate extremely warmly towards each other and staff. The supportive relationships, which underpin good learning, reflect the welcoming atmosphere and consistently strong pastoral care sustained in the school. School leaders and staff have worked diligently to settle new and frequently changing numbers of pupils as this new school has grown in size and developed. Staff have successfully boosted pupils' self-confidence and improved the behaviour of pupils since the school first opened. This is evident in the much-reduced records of behavioural incidents and, in recent terms, elimination of the need for exclusions.
- Leaders and staff have worked with determination to improve pupils' attendance. In previous years, attendance has been adversely affected by high rates of persistent absence within the small year groups. The current rate of attendance, which is slightly above that found nationally, reflects the significant reduction in persistent absence. This positive improvement in pupils' attendance also stems from strong support from parents and the pupils' enjoyment of school. Parents say, 'My child is very happy and enjoys coming to school every day.'

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Since the first intake of Reception children entered the school in 2015, the levels of skill and knowledge evident have varied considerably from year to year. Until this academic year, the skills of pupils on arrival, which have included a significant proportion entering Years 1 and 2 as well as Reception, have been lower than those typical for their age.
- Results in the Year 1 phonics screening checks over the past two years have exceeded those found nationally. This reflects effective teaching of phonics, especially for several pupils who arrived with little or no English. Currently, pupils continue to make good progress in developing their reading skills as they respond enthusiastically to interesting texts studied in class.
- The school's first set of performance data at the end of Year 2 in 2017 showed that the proportion of pupils reaching standards expected for their age was below national levels. However, given the much-changed nature of this small year group of pupils,

with less than half of them having started in Reception, this information does not reflect their good progress during their time at Hunts Grove.

- Pupils in classes across the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their different starting points. In particular, pupils write extensively and expressively and are confident to tackle and solve mathematical problems.
- Current pupils in Year 2 are working at levels expected for their age. Assessments and pupils' recorded work also show that, in response to effective teaching, those pupils in Year 3 who previously did not achieve well at the end of Year 2 are making accelerated progress and catching up well this year.
- Pupils with different needs and levels of ability also derive extra benefit from the specialist expertise of Hunts Grove staff and also colleagues at Waterwells. Pupils who are new to learning English also benefit from extra specialist support. As a result, in relation to their individual needs and starting points, these pupils are currently making at least similar and at times faster progress than other pupils in the school.
- As a result of increased challenge, more pupils are beginning to work at higher than expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics. Currently, however, some pupils still form letters and numbers incorrectly when recording their work in books. Other pupils, including some of the most able, also have difficulty developing expected handwriting and spelling skills for their age and this restricts their ability to learn more deeply.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Leadership and management of the early years is strong. The early years leader works very effectively with the Reception teacher. Together, they sustain strong safeguarding and welfare procedures to keep children safe.
- Leaders check the children's stage of development efficiently to secure an accurate understanding of the different needs of children entering this new school each year. This underpins their secure ability to provide and, as necessary, adapt the learning experiences provided for the children to maintain their good progress. As a result, pupils across the range of ability, including those who have SEN and/or disabilities, are well supported.
- The teachers and teaching assistant maintain excellent links with parents, which supports the children's introduction to full time schooling and continued enjoyment of school. Staff provide parents with good guidance to support children's productive learning at home. Parents who spoke to the inspector praised the way that staff respond to their views and keep their children safe.
- Staff ensure that the resources and activities provided for the children, both in and out of doors, support learning effectively. The combination of stimulating experiences, such as investigating a sea creature topic as well as carefully-planned teaching of phonics, helps children to progress well in their learning.
- The starting points of children currently in Reception are higher than those found in previous years. However, some children initially lacked self-confidence when learning with others. Caring staff have addressed this aspect successfully to the degree that children now make rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development.

- The quality of teaching learning and assessment is good. The rigour of staff in establishing clear routines and high expectations underpins the children's excellent behaviour and relationships with each other and the staff. These are evident in the confident way that children show good levels of independence and willingly share ideas and learn well together.
- Children listen well to the teacher's and teaching assistant's carefully considered questions. Most respond well and are increasingly thinking more deeply about their learning activities. For example, during the inspection children were encouraged to research using books to find out how many legs they should put on their drawings of an octopus. As a result, children make good progress in developing their reading, writing and mathematical skills.
- Children show good phonic knowledge and understanding when attempting to read new words. They also understand that some words begin with capital letters and know their number bonds up to 20. Although much improved this year, at times when recording their work, a small number of children are prone to reverse their numbers and form letters incorrectly. Even so, an above-average proportion of children achieve a good level of development at the end of Reception and are well prepared for the transition to Year 1.



## School details

Unique reference number	141696
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10042652

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Richard Barnard
Executive headteacher	Kim Hoodless
Telephone number	01452 881962
Website	<a href="http://huntsgrovepa.co.uk/">http://huntsgrovepa.co.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:reception@huntsgrovepa.co.uk">reception@huntsgrovepa.co.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Hunts Grove Primary Academy opened as an academy free school in March 2015 and joined the Robinswood Multi-Academy Trust, which now consists of Robinswood, Waterwells, Moat and Hunts Grove Primary academies.
- Hunts Grove currently shares the Waterwells facilities and plans to move into its own purpose-built accommodation next year.
- Governance is undertaken at a multi-academy level by a trust board and at school level by members of an advisory board.
- The executive headteacher provides leadership oversight for all schools in the multi-academy trust. Currently, day-to-day running of the school is supported in an acting head of school capacity by the head of school of Waterwells. A substantive head of school for Hunts Grove has now been appointed and will commence his duties at the school in September 2018.

- Hunts Grove is well below average in size.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- Currently, there are four year groups in the school accommodated in three classes; children experience early years provision in a Reception class and there are separate Year 1 and combined Years 2 and 3 classes.
- The school provides its own breakfast club.

## Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, the inspector held meetings with the executive headteacher and other staff who have leadership responsibilities and with the chairs of the board of trustees and advisory boards of the school. He visited classrooms with the executive headteacher and other leaders and collected and scrutinised samples of pupils' work in books. He talked with individual pupils during visits to classrooms. The lead inspector listened to selected Year 2 and Year 3 pupils reading to their teacher and talked to them about their progress and the school. He observed lunchtime and breakfast club arrangements and talked with pupils and support staff. In addition, he examined a range of documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' attendance, pupils' progress and the school's self-evaluation and development. He took account of 19 responses to the Ofsted online Parent View survey, 19 additional written comments from parents and four responses to the staff survey. The lead inspector also talked to some parents as they brought their children to school.

## Inspection team

Alexander Baxter, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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