

Inspection of a good school: Harbour Primary and Nursery School

Church Hill, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 9LX

Inspection dates:

5–6 November 2019

Outcome

Harbour Primary and Nursery School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Senior leaders, governors and staff are a united, committed team. They are determined that every pupil at the school will succeed, both in their schoolwork and as people. This is equally true for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who are vulnerable.

Pupils really enjoy coming to this school and are proud to be part of it. They use words like fun, exciting and creative to describe everyday life for pupils. One boy said that learning 'is always active'. Even when there are subjects that pupils like less, teachers make them enjoyable.

Pupils behave well, both in school and at free times. At playtime, they are kind and considerate, even when playing lively games. Some pupils have specific needs that means they sometimes struggle to behave. Staff meet these pupils' needs well, helping them to regulate and understand their emotions.

Bullying happens occasionally, but it is almost always reported and dealt with quickly. Pupils are very clear that they must not ignore bullying if it happens.

Parents are full of praise for the school. Several were impressed that staff know all pupils and parents individually. Parents feel involved and included.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school provides a well-planned curriculum that covers the full range of subjects in the national curriculum. Teaching captures pupils' interest, so they are enthusiastic and want to learn. Pupils are proud of their growing knowledge and skills. They behave, work hard in lessons, listen carefully to adults and classmates and join in well. Teachers open pupils' eyes to the town of Newhaven and the local area, where there is a wealth of history on their doorstep. For example, pupils are designing new stained-glass windows for the church, based on their learning in history. Pupils visit exciting places and join in clubs and

activities outside of the school day. Staff make sure that disadvantaged pupils join these activities.

Pupils with SEND do well in the school. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides strong leadership and expertise. This helps teachers to provide well for these pupils, but also for other lower-attaining pupils.

Reading has a central role in the school. The richly resourced library at the heart of the school reflects this. Senior leaders see reading as the 'bread and butter' of education. Children start learning to read using phonics in the Nursery. By the time they have reached the end of Reception they are well on their way to becoming fluent readers. In 2019, pupils in Year 1 did not achieve well in phonics. Senior leaders spotted this weakness mid-way through the year and acted quickly. Pupils are now learning phonics more successfully. By the end of key stage 2, pupils achieve well in reading.

Leaders have worked hard to improve the mathematics curriculum and teaching in the school, especially in key stage 2. Pupils at the end of Year 6 have not achieved as well as they should in the last two years. Leaders introduced a new approach to mathematics to improve things. Teachers focus on helping pupils to really understand what they are learning. Pupils' learning is carefully sequenced in small steps to make sure that they are confident before moving on. Pupils are also better at remembering times tables and number facts. This helps them to approach new learning more confidently and solve calculations more quickly.

Staff help pupils to develop in character and to become mature, ready to move on to secondary school. They provide extensive support for pupils' emotional and mental health. Pupils of all ages enjoy many opportunities to take responsibilities. Pupils in Year 6 apply to become 'truly trusted' and take on many responsible jobs. They are clear that only those who live up to the school's high standards can expect to be awarded this highly valued role.

Children get off to an excellent start in the early years. Leaders are enthusiastic and completely understand the value of play in helping children to learn. Staff are skilled and enable these children to flourish, from two-year-olds in the Nursery to pupils in Reception. Teachers plan a treasure chest of exciting activities that absorb children's interest and help them to grow in knowledge and skill. The foundations for future learning are all sown successfully here. Children love learning. They feel safe. Parents are delighted with the care and education that their children receive in the 'foundation stage village'.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Senior leaders understand the possible risks that pupils in this area face. They make sure that everything is geared to keeping pupils safe. Pupils learn about all aspects of safety, including road and online safety.

Pupils feel safe in school. People are kind and look out for each other. They know that

there is always a trustworthy adult to talk to about any worries.

Staff go out of their way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable families. As a result, pupils are safe and flourish despite some being faced with difficult and challenging situations at home.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils in Year 1 did not achieve well enough in the phonics screening check last year. Senior leaders acted decisively to address weaknesses that they saw. Leaders should fully embed the new approaches to the teaching of phonics so that the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check is at least at the national average.
- Outcomes in mathematics at the end of Year 6 have been variable in recent years. There were improvements in 2019. Attainment rose sharply, but pupils' progress was still too low. Senior leaders have spared no effort in identifying the underlying reasons for this and have introduced a new mathematics scheme into the school as a result. This is having a positive impact. Leaders should ensure that the improvements in the mathematics curriculum and teaching continue to strengthen so that outcomes at the end of Year 6 continue to rise.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Harbour Primary and Nursery School to be good on 4–5 May 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school. If you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	114441
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10111375
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Anthony Mayo
Headteacher	Christine Terrey
Website	www.harbourprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 May 2016

Information about this school

- The school has provision for two-year-olds.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher regularly throughout the inspection. I also met with the deputy headteachers, one in her role as the SENCo. Meetings were held with four governors - including the chair of governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. I met with several parents on the playground at the end of the school day
- I did deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. These deep dives consisted of linked activities to gather evidence about how well pupils are helped to gain knowledge and skills. I had a discussion with the headteacher and meetings with the leaders of each of these subjects. I visited lessons in all year groups, including the nursery. I spoke to pupils and teachers from these lessons and looked at their work. These work scrutinies were carried out with subject leaders. I also had a meeting with the leaders of science, art, religious education (RE), and relationships, sex, health and emotional education (RSHE).
- I spoke to pupils and staff throughout the inspection to reach an understanding of the

school's safeguarding arrangements. This was in addition to a meeting with the headteacher to discuss how the school keeps pupils safe. Safeguarding was also discussed at the meeting with governors. I also looked at various documents relating to safeguarding, including a case study of a vulnerable pupil.

- I considered 80 responses to Ofsted Parent View, 60 responses to the staff survey and 153 responses to the pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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