

# Inspection of a good school: Halifax Primary School

Prince of Wales Drive, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 8PY

---

Inspection dates:

3–4 December 2019

## Outcome

Halifax Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

'Team Halifax' reflects the character of the school. There is a strong sense of a community where pupils are encouraged to work and play together. Pupils speak highly about the things they learn and the clubs that they enjoy. They say that this is because of the staff who help them. They told me that teachers make school fun and interesting. New topics are introduced with exciting starts that help to 'hook' pupils into their learning.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils understand how the 'four Bs' – be caring, be respectful, be safe, be responsible – help them to get along together. Behaviour is good. Pupils respond quickly to adults' instructions and they listen to what teachers have to say. This ensures that pupils work hard in lessons.

Pupils understand the different forms bullying can take. They told me that this was rare in their school. They know that adults would sort it out immediately if it were to happen. Parents and carers agree that their children are well cared for. As one parent wrote on Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire, 'They are a very caring staff and I feel that my child is always in safe hands'. This reflected the view of others.

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

Leaders have revised the content of their curriculum. Their plans show what pupils need to know across each year group and in every subject. For example, in science, I saw pupils using what they had learned about different animal features to help with ideas of evolution. However, some subject plans do not always make clear the things pupils have learned previously. These plans do not consider the knowledge children have gained in early years. This means that teachers do not always know how their plans build on what pupils have learned.

Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons. Pupils' responses to specific questions help teachers to plan the next steps. Leaders have not yet developed how they

will check pupils' achievement in the foundation subjects. This means that leaders do not know how well their subject plans are working.

Reading is well taught across the school. Leaders ensure that younger pupils learn the different sounds that letters represent. Additional lessons are provided for those pupils who need to keep up with their peers. The books pupils read are well matched to the sounds they are learning. Pupils read fluently and with increasing confidence. Regular storytimes provide pupils with enjoyable opportunities for sharing books. Leaders help pupils understand the importance of books. For example, books are awarded to pupils as prizes for pupils' achievements.

Leaders ensure that pupils develop their confidence in mathematics. Daily sessions called 'jump start' help pupils to practise and recall their times tables. Pupils are encouraged to 'prove it' by explaining their reasons for solutions to mathematical problems. There is still more work to do. Plans do not identify the things pupils that should know for all the things they learn about in mathematics. For example, pupils could not answer questions about time because they did not understand the 24-hour clock.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides good support for teachers. She ensures that support plans for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are effective. Teachers use these plans well so that pupils are meeting their personal targets.

Leaders provide additional experiences to enrich the curriculum. Leaders particularly encourage disadvantaged pupils to take part in clubs and activities. This is helping to develop the interests and talents of disadvantaged pupils. Pupils learn about being good citizens. They have opportunities to be a school councillor or work as a 'rota kid'. Learning how to be part of a team is important at Halifax Primary.

The early years environment is a busy and happy place. Children are engrossed in their activities, working independently and confidently. Adults ensure that children use activities to play purposefully to develop their creativity and curiosity. I watched children as they used junk materials to construct space rockets, and were thinking how they could stick tubes together and decorate their models.

Children take care of one another. They learn to collaborate by sharing their play. Outdoors, a group of children constructed an obstacle course and then invited others to join them. Well-constructed plans for children's development ensure that they are well prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have established a strong team ethic. Staff say that leaders offer an 'open door' to address any issues with workload. The trust has played an important role in helping to train new teachers. This has contributed well to the stability of staffing.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide staff with regular training about keeping pupils safe. Staff know how to recognise signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. Staff are encouraged to report their concerns, no matter how small. Leaders have introduced an efficient system for making referrals. This enables those who are responsible to act promptly when raising concerns. The arrangements to recruit new staff and for those who visit the school are secure and well maintained.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They have lessons about using the internet safely and reporting any concerns to adults.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders' curriculum plans identify the key knowledge and skills that pupils will learn in every subject. They do not show the prior knowledge that pupils need to use to build their understanding. This means that some pupils do not embed the new things that they learn into their long-term memory. Leaders must ensure that curriculum plans include all the component knowledge pupils need to help them remember, including what they have learned in early years.
- Leaders do not have any ways of checking what pupils know and understand across the foundation subjects. This means that leaders do not know whether their curriculum plans are working. Curriculum leaders should ensure there is a consistent approach to check what pupils have learned so that they can evaluate the effectiveness of their plans.

## **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 the predecessor school, Halifax Primary School, to be good in October 2015.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	144217
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121424
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	417
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Roger Fern
<b>Headteacher</b>	Anita Krishna
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.halifax.omat.org.uk">www.halifax.omat.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- On 1 April 2017, Halifax Primary School converted to become an academy and joined the Orwell Multi-Academy Trust. When its predecessor school, Halifax Primary School, was last inspected, it was judged to be good.
- The school manages a breakfast club by invitation only.

## Information about this inspection

- I met with the headteacher, school leaders (including the SENCo), the leader of pupil premium and school staff. I held discussions with members of the trust and the local governing committee.
- The subjects considered as part of this inspection included early reading, mathematics, and science. In each subject, I visited lessons, looked at the work in pupils' books, and held discussions with subject leaders, teachers and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, I reviewed school policies, risk assessments, procedures and records. A meeting was held with two designated safeguarding leaders, including the learning mentor, to review examples of actions taken to keep pupils safe. I also checked staff's knowledge of how to keep pupils safe from harm. I scrutinised the school's behaviour records.

- I spoke with parents as they arrived at school with their children. I also considered 56 responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 54 free-text messages. I scrutinised 30 responses made on the staff online survey. I also considered 81 responses made on the pupil online questionnaire.

### **Inspection team**

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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](mailto: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/](http://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](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2019