

# Inspection of a good school: Hartsfield Junior Mixed and Infant School

Clothall Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire SG7 6PB

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Inspection dates:

8–9 January 2020

## Outcome

Hartsfield Junior Mixed and Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Hartsfield is a welcoming and happy school. Pupils like their teachers, who make learning 'interesting and fun'. Pupils enjoy the lunchtime and after-school clubs. They take part in a range of sport activities, often achieving great success.

Leaders encourage pupils to support the local community, such as visiting residents at a nearby retirement complex. Recently, pupils asked local businesses to provide free refills of water for the public, to reduce the use of plastic.

Parents appreciate the varied experiences that help children to be 'well-rounded individuals'. Parents praise the 'enthusiastic and dedicated' headteacher and staff who 'make the school an enjoyable and interesting place.'

Teachers have high expectations of how pupils behave. Pupils respond positively. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. They build on each other's ideas and learn successfully. Around the school and at break times, pupils are kind and considerate. Pupils follow the new school rules: 'Be safe, be respectful and be responsible.' They told me that these remind them 'how to behave and make the school better'. Pupils and parents confirm that bullying hardly ever happens. If it does, pupils are sure that staff will sort it out straightaway.

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

Leaders make sure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. English and mathematics are taught effectively. Pupils achieve well in these subjects throughout the school. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to help pupils build on their knowledge and understanding. The curriculum is well planned in other subjects, such as geography and art. Pupils are supported to make links and deepen their understanding of what they learn, using what they know already. For example, in a Year 1 art lesson, pupils were using their knowledge of primary colours to make Mondrian-style collages. In a Year 5 art lesson, pupils were confidently applying their knowledge of primary and secondary colours

to mix colours and paint in the style of Van Gogh. The key stage 1 curriculum plans in English and mathematics build on what has been taught in early years. However, this is not the case in other subjects.

Reading is taught well. Phonics lessons build on pupils' previous learning. Teachers ensure that pupils experience high-quality texts. This helps them to engage with and enjoy stories. Pupils are keen to recommend their favourite books to others. Leaders keep a close check on pupils' progress. Extra support is provided so that pupils catch up quickly if they begin to fall behind.

During lessons, teachers make sure no time is wasted when pupils move from one activity to another. Only gentle reminders are needed when pupils take too long to settle down.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively. Staff plan learning carefully so that the pupils make good progress from their various starting points.

The provision for disadvantaged pupils has improved since the previous inspection. Leaders make sure that the pupils play a full part in school life. Disadvantaged pupils achieve well in English and mathematics because teachers quickly identify any gaps in their knowledge and understanding and make sure they get the right support to catch up. Leaders know this support needs to take place in other subjects so that disadvantaged pupils make strong progress across all subjects.

In the Reception classes children learn and play happily together. Children enjoy learning about others and the world around them. Staff help children to be independent and keep themselves safe. For example, I saw children enthusiastically setting up resources for their 'strictly dancing' role play and sorting out their own fruit snacks. Staff assess children well and support any who might be falling behind. Most children leave the Reception classes well prepared for Year 1.

There are many opportunities that help pupils to be responsible and active citizens. For instance, pupils increase their global awareness through the weekly 'news assemblies' where they discuss and debate current world events. The 'nature citizens' take responsibility for washing up reusable cups every day to stop the use of milk cartons and plastic straws in school.

Leaders have created a happy and united school community. Leaders take care of staff. Staff feel valued and are well supported. They are committed to the vision and values of the school. Leaders, governors and staff are keen to improve further. They work with other schools to share best practice.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All the correct checks are made on staff who join the school. Governors carefully monitor and review safeguarding practice.

Staff are clear that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. The headteacher regularly reinforces the importance of safeguarding through training so staff know what to look out for and how to act on any concerns. Leaders are quick to follow up when a worry is raised. Leaders' records of safeguarding concerns are thorough, professional and held securely. Pupils report that they feel safe. They know the adults in the school will look after them.

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

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

- The school's curriculum is generally well planned. Across subjects, leaders have set out what pupils need to learn and in what order. However, in subjects other than English and mathematics leaders do not have a clear understanding of the knowledge and skills children acquire in early years. They need to make sure that key stage 1 curriculum plans, for all subjects, build on what children already know and understand.
- In subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics, tasks and experiences are not routinely adapted to meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. There are some gaps in pupils' learning. Any gaps in their knowledge and understanding need to be addressed quickly so that disadvantaged pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

## **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 Hartsfield Junior Mixed and Infant School to be good on 14–15 June 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 the school and 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>	117376
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10121499
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	414
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Drew Campbell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philippa Smith
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hartsfield.herts.sch.uk">www.hartsfield.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14–15 June 2016

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below the national average.
- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2016.

## Information about this inspection

- As part of this inspection, I held meetings with the headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding leader, and the two assistant headteachers, one of whom is the special educational needs coordinator and the pupil premium leader. I also met with the English, mathematics, geography and art leaders, the office administrator and a group of staff to discuss the impact of the support they receive from leaders.
- I met with the chair of the governing body, the vice-chair and four other governors. Additionally, I had a meeting with a local authority adviser to discuss their work with the school.
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, geography and art. I spoke

to curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at a range of pupils' work and met with teachers and pupils. I also observed some pupils reading to staff and talked to pupils about their reading habits.

- I spoke to pupils informally in class and around the school at breaktimes to seek their views about the school.
- I scrutinised the school's website and a range of school documents, including the school's own evaluation, improvement plans, curriculum plans and records about safeguarding children.
- I considered the 162 responses made by parents to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, the 162 responses to Ofsted's free-text system and emails received from parents. I also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Additionally, I took account of the 44 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and the 179 responses to Ofsted's online pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Fiona Webb, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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