

Inspection of a good school: Hope Brook C of E Primary School

Church Road, Longhope, Gloucestershire, GL17 0LL

Inspection date: 6 July 2021

Outcome

Hope Brook C of E Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

A culture of 'learning together and growing together' exists between staff and pupils. Leaders value pupils' happiness and well-being. They expect all pupils to work hard and achieve success. Pupils told inspectors, 'Everyone supports you and pushes you to reach your full potential.'

Pupils feel safe in school. They do not have any concerns about behaviour. Pupils know the difference between falling out and bullying. On the rare occasions when bullying occurs, pupils say that adults are 'very good at sorting it out'. High-quality relationships between staff and pupils contribute to a harmonious learning environment.

From the moment children start in pre-school, they work and play together sensibly. Pupils use the school's values of kindness and respect in their day-to-day interactions. The curriculum helps to develop pupils' awareness of acceptance. When learning about diversity in society, pupils understand the importance of 'being kind to people regardless of difference'.

A focus on mental health reduced pupils' anxiety about returning to school after the second national lockdown. Breathing techniques and 'mindful minute' activities helped pupils to relax and refocus on learning.

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

The school's approach to early reading is successful. In pre-school, there is a sharp focus on developing children's early language and communication skills. Children enjoy listening to stories and joining in with rhymes. In Reception and key stage 1, phonics is well organised. Training and support from a local English Hub are enhancing staff's subject knowledge and expertise. Extra reading and 'scoop-up' sessions are helping pupils at risk of falling behind to keep up. The school's approach to the teaching of reading ensures that pupils become confident and fluent readers. Older pupils read and understand

challenging texts. One pupil said, 'I love how the teachers encourage reading and help us to improve our use of language.'

There are many strengths to the mathematics curriculum. Pupils enjoy lessons and achieve well. In the early years, staff use songs and hands-on equipment which support children's counting and language development. Children are keen to learn and persevere when tasks become challenging, such as doubling two-digit numbers. In some of the older classes, staff use a daily 'fluent in five' session to help pupils recall number facts. Nonetheless, leaders are not complacent. They are beginning to strengthen plans further by breaking down the mathematics curriculum into smaller and more manageable steps.

The history curriculum exposes pupils to a broad range of content. Teaching in the early years and key stage 1 develops pupils' understanding of the past. Pupils know and remember the significance of important people and places, for example Queen Elizabeth II and the local church. However, as pupils progress through the school, curriculum plans do not build well enough on what they already know from prior learning. As a result, pupils do not always gain a deep understanding of some important historical concepts, such as empire and trade.

Leaders and staff include pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in all aspects of school life. Staff are skilled at meeting pupils' individual academic and pastoral needs. They often break learning down into smaller steps so that pupils experience success.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They follow school rules and disruption to lessons is rare. Pupils enjoy the range of opportunities beyond the classroom. These include cultural and sporting activities, educational visits and residentials. Pupils are complimentary about the way staff take an interest in their social and emotional well-being. The use of 'worry boxes' or a private chat with the teacher help pupils to overcome any concerns. Pupils feel well supported by their teachers.

Governors are well-informed about the school's priorities and ask challenging questions. They recognise that leading a school through a national pandemic 'has not been easy'. Governors have kept abreast of staff workload and well-being by reviewing staff questionnaires. The impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has stalled some of their work. For example, they know that some parents and carers have concerns about the communication between school and home. Governors are committed to helping leaders re-engage with the school community face-to-face when it is safe to do so.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise safeguarding training for staff and governors. Staff appreciate the focus on mental health training and support. They know who to go to if they are worried about a child. They are confident that leaders will act upon any concerns.

The curriculum supports pupils' understanding of safety within the community and online. Pupils enjoy talks by visitors, such as the police, to raise their awareness of staying safe. They know there are many trusted adults in the school they would go to if they had an issue or a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some wider curriculum subjects, it is not always clear how pupils' knowledge builds over time. This hinders pupils' ability to make connections with what they have already learned and can do. Leaders need to ensure that careful thought is given to the important knowledge pupils need for future learning in all subjects.
- While many parents are supportive of the school, a minority have concerns. Not all parents feel that staff communicate with them well enough. Leaders and governors need to improve communication further between home and school so that all parents feel listened to and supported.

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 or outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 5 and 6 May 2011.

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 [here](#).

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	133395
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10196686
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	121
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Justin Cook
Headteacher	Stephanie Severn
Website	www.hopebrook.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an on-site pre-school provision. It is managed by the governing body.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club for pupils who attend the school.
- Hope Brook C of E Primary School is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. At the most recent Section 48 inspection of the school, in June 2016, the school was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, staff, pupils and members of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. They discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including records of safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and governors about safe working practices.
- Inspectors considered 18 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 17 free-text responses, 30 responses to the pupil online survey and five responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Heather Barraclough

Her Majesty's Inspector

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