

# Inspection of Honiton Primary School

Clapper Lane, Honiton, Devon EX14 1QF

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Inspection dates: 7 and 8 July 2021

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
The quality of education	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since February 2013.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders are setting a clear direction and many pupils who had previously underachieved are catching up and doing much better. Children in early years get off to a great start and by the end of Year 6 pupils are ready for the next stage of their education. Nonetheless, some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. This means that pupils do not learn enough in every subject to secure a good quality of education.

The school's 'growth guide' is integral in developing pupils' strong work ethic and character. Pupils empathise, cooperate and debate successfully. They are polite and caring. Pupils are safe, enjoy school and attend well. They say that bullying does happen but that adults usually sort it out. Pupils usually behave very well.

Pupils enjoy getting outside in the school grounds. They relish climbing, den building and exploring in the school woods. Leaders prioritise everyone's physical and mental health. Pupils are proud of their sporting successes, from fun-fit activities through to county championships. Pupils extend their experiences through, for example, community work or by making food hampers during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

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

Since his appointment in September 2018, the headteacher has built a strong team. At the same time, an effective governing body has evolved. Governors' acute focus on holding leaders at all levels to account is making sure that the momentum of school improvement consistently builds. Parents and carers recognise that the school has improved in recent years. Staff's morale is high.

Leaders have needed to tackle weighty and complex whole-school issues one by one. Under the current leadership, the school is recovering well after a significant dip in its performance. Leaders' trajectory of improvement is impressive. However, the curriculum does not yet provide all pupils with the knowledge and skills that they need. The quality of education is not yet good.

In mathematics, teaching is not securely based on an understanding of what pupils know. This means that, over time, sequences of work are not adjusted and do not demand enough of pupils so that they learn everything they should. In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum does not build on the firm start children make in Reception. Conversely, leaders' work to improve the mathematics curriculum in Year 6 is having a positive impact. Here, pupils complete their programmes of study well.

Leaders responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are working systematically. They now know pupils very well. This ensures that staff understand pupils' pastoral and medical needs effectively. However,

leaders rightly identify that pupils' support plans, academic targets and sequences of work in class are not tailored precisely enough to meet these pupils' needs well.

As a result of leaders' actions, there are consistent approaches to the teaching of writing. Teachers use their checks judiciously. This means that where pupils have underachieved in the past, they are now catching up quickly. Pupils use ambitious vocabulary, complex grammar and punctuation accurately.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. In Nursery, there is a strong focus on developing children's early language. In Reception, the curriculum is well sequenced. Pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2 get lots of practice reading and spelling words in sentences accurately. Pupils in Year 3 who remain at the early stages of reading are getting precise support to catch up, and many are. Increasingly, leaders are making sure that pupils gain a solid understanding of what they read.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, pupils are proud of the work that they produce. However, the sequences of work that teachers implement do not teach pupils the fundamental knowledge that they should learn in every subject. This is the case in geography, science and art. Some subject content is superficial and so gaps in pupils' knowledge persist over time. Some teaching is not based on secure subject knowledge. Other subjects, such as computing, are well planned but are at an early stage of implementation. Conversely, pupils thrive in their physical education (PE) lessons because staff have strong subject knowledge and units of work build on what has come before.

The school's values underpin pupils' daily work and promote diversity effectively. The school is highly inclusive. Pupils usually behave well in lessons and around school. When pupils find this difficult, staff manage it effectively.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have a deep understanding of pupils' vulnerabilities, including those posed by contextual and local safeguarding risks. Strong work takes place to ensure that pupils and their families get early help. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils who are at risk of harm get support. Leaders work astutely with a wide range of external agencies and keep detailed records of their work. Counselling support helps pupils markedly. Staff's training is kept up to date. Staff's recruitment processes are secure.

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

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

- Teaching in some subjects, including mathematics, is not based on a secure assessment of what pupils already know well. In Years 1 and 2, the mathematics curriculum does not build well enough from the early years. Some pupils do not

attain as well as they could because lesson sequences are not demanding enough over time. Leaders need to ensure that staff use their checks precisely to plan pupils' work so that it builds on what pupils already know, including in mathematics.

- Individual plans for pupils with SEND do not meet their academic needs consistently well. Sequences of lessons do not help these pupils to progress through the curriculum as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that their curriculum planning supports the academic needs of pupils with SEND so that these pupils achieve their potential.
- There is a mismatch between the key knowledge found in leaders' curriculum plans and the actual subject content taught. Essential content across a range of subjects is missed and gaps in pupils' knowledge persist. Leaders need to assure themselves that the curriculum contains the full scope and depth of knowledge that pupils are expected to know.
- Beyond English and mathematics, some teaching is not based on secure subject knowledge. This means pupils do not progress through the whole curriculum gaining the fundamental knowledge that they should. Leaders need to ensure that staff develop expertise in teaching the full range of subjects effectively.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113098
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	10197798
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	425
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Dr Janet Lavelle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christopher Tribble
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.honitonprimary.co.uk">www.honitonprimary.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 and 27 February 2013

## Information about this school

- There have been significant changes of staff since the last inspection in 2013. Many staff have changed, including the headteacher. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2018.
- There have been considerable changes to the governing body, including the chair of governors. The chair of governors has been in place since spring 2019.
- The school's leadership structure has changed. There is now a full-time headteacher, a deputy headteacher, an assistant headteacher and phase leaders in place. There are subject leaders for each curriculum subject. The assistant headteacher leads pupils' personal development. There is also a pastoral leader who is the designated leader for safeguarding and school counsellor.
- There are two special educational needs and disabilities coordinators.
- The school takes pupils from age three into the Nursery.
- A new purpose-built early years unit houses the Nursery and Reception class. They share an outdoor area.
- The school is expanding in size year on year. There are 100 more pupils on roll now than compared to the time of the previous inspection.

- There is a breakfast and after-school club which are operated by the school.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND has increased since the last inspection.
- The school uses self-organisational learning experiences as its method of curriculum implementation.
- Leaders have used catch-up funding to increase the number of teaching staff to assist pupils' progress and help those pupils who have previously fallen behind catch up, including disadvantaged pupils and the lowest 20% of attainers in the year group. As a result, some year groups have three teaching groups rather than two.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and extended leadership team, including leaders responsible for SEND, pastoral development and safeguarding.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, science, geography and computing. This entailed discussions with subject leaders, visits to lessons, looking at examples of work, discussions with teachers, discussions with pupils and listening to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors also examined the curriculum in PE and personal, social and health education. They reviewed pupils' work.
- Inspectors considered a range of other school documents, such as the school improvement plan and subject plans. Inspectors reviewed records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance, exclusions and bullying.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the governing body and also talked to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. Inspectors met with the designated leader for safeguarding, reviewed a range of documentation and talked to staff and pupils. Inspectors also reviewed the school's safeguarding curriculum.
- Inspectors gathered the view of parents through the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and associated free-text comments. They also reviewed an internal parent survey. Inspectors considered the staff questionnaire as part of this inspection.
- An inspector visited the before- and after-school provision to check its safeguarding arrangements.

## Inspection team

Julie Carrington, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sue Costello

Her Majesty's Inspector

Marie Thomas

Her Majesty's Inspector

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