

# Inspection of a good school: Hollesley Primary School

School Lane, Hollesley, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3RE

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Inspection date

6 July 2021

## Outcome

Hollesley Primary School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that one or more areas may be declining, as set out below.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Hollesley Primary is a small village school, not far from the sea. There are four classes, so everyone knows everyone. It is a friendly school that pupils enjoy coming to. The school takes advantage of what the local environment offers. For example, Hollesley Primary is a 'beach school' and pupils are given the opportunity to spend time beach-combing and exploring rockpools. The school also makes good use of its own extensive grounds. Pupils very much enjoy swimming in the school's pool during the summer months.

Classrooms at Hollesley Primary are calm and well-ordered places. Pupils are friendly and well mannered. They speak politely to each other and to adults. Pupils know the difference between bullying and friends falling out with each other. They say that bullying does not happen often and records confirm this. Allegations of bullying are investigated and incidents are sorted out promptly when it does occur.

Leaders and staff have high expectations for all pupils in the school. They want pupils to do well and they help them to do so. Pupils enjoy their learning and they try hard. The curriculum is interesting and it is getting better as it is developed further.

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

Leaders have improved the school's curriculum and they are continuing to develop it. The curriculum is well structured and ambitious. It is delivered well overall, although there is some variability between classes and subjects. Leaders have high expectations and pupils respond well to them. For example, pupils' work is presented neatly and carefully, and pupils show pride in their work.

Pupils learn about subjects step by step. They practise new skills until they can do them easily. For example, in mathematics, pupils do regular quick quizzes to test out their mental arithmetic skills. They enjoy the challenge of this, as they try to beat their

previous scores.

Leaders are interested in reading and are keen that pupils do well. They made sure that phonics sessions carried on during periods of partial closure, due to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, when the curriculum was delivered remotely to most pupils. Staff sent individual resources home to support pupils with their learning. As a result, pupils have continued to develop their phonics knowledge and their early reading. Many pupils are learning to read well.

There are weaknesses in this area of the curriculum. Staff have not had training in teaching phonics. As a result, they do not have the expert knowledge needed to teach phonics really well. This has a particular impact on the weakest readers. For example, staff do not always pick up on and address pupils' misconceptions well enough because they lack the subject knowledge to do so. In addition, reading books are not well matched to the school's chosen phonics scheme. This means that pupils are given books that include words that they are not yet able to read.

The school offers a broad range of opportunities for pupils, beyond the academic curriculum. For example, Year 6 pupils recently went on a residential visit to an outward-bound centre. Leaders have also been quick to get other visits up and going again as soon as pandemic restrictions allowed. The school is closely involved in village life and staff take advantage of the opportunities this presents to help pupils to learn about being good citizens. The school has a link with a local residential home for elderly people. The usual nativity went ahead at Christmastime, despite the pandemic. Leaders used secure technology to stream the performance both to parents and to the residents of the residential home.

Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They listen to their teachers and follow instructions well. Learning is rarely disturbed by low-level disruption. Pupils understand the school's system of sanctions and rewards. They feel that it is fair. Pupils try hard with their work and do their best.

In this small school, pupils are known well as individuals. Leaders and staff use this knowledge to help them to meet the needs of each pupil. They think carefully about the additional support pupils need, both academically and to support their social, emotional and mental health needs.

The school is currently in the process of formally federating with another school, Waldringfield Primary. Governors have a clearly thought-out rationale for this proposal. Although staff, governors and a large majority of parents are in support of the proposal, a minority are not. Some parental dissatisfaction with the school is evident as a result.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that phonics and early reading may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe at school. They know that adults will listen to them if they are worried or concerned about anything. They learn about safety through the personal, social and health education curriculum. For example, they learn about how to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

Staff receive regular training about safeguarding. They are alert to possible signs of abuse or neglect, and they report these promptly. The school's designated safeguarding leads are properly trained for their roles. The school's single central record of pre-appointment checks meets requirements.

There are weaknesses in record-keeping. Although there is clear evidence that leaders take appropriate action in response to concerns raised, these actions are not always recorded. The school moved to an online recording system in October 2020. Records of concern that pre-date this change have not been moved across to the new system.

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

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

- Staff do not have the expert subject knowledge needed to teach phonics as effectively as possible. The reading books given to pupils to practise their reading are not matched closely to the school's chosen phonics scheme. This means that misconceptions are sometimes not dealt with well enough and pupils are given books to read that include words that they are not able to decode. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the training they need to become experts in teaching phonics and early reading. They should also ensure that reading books are well matched to the school's phonics scheme.
- Records of safeguarding concerns do not always show the actions taken by leaders in response to them. Records from the school's previously used paper-based system have not been moved across, or referenced, in its new online system. This means that, although the information is held elsewhere, some safeguarding records are incomplete. Leaders should take immediate action to ensure that actions taken in response to concerns are always recorded promptly and fully. They should also ensure that all historical, paper-based records for current pupils are included in the current system so that all information can be considered effectively.
- About a third of parents who responded to Ofsted Parent View said that they would not recommend the school to others. Some parents provided free-text comments expressing their concerns about the proposed federation with Waldringfield Primary School. Governors should take further action to explain their rationale for this decision and to alleviate parents' concern, wherever possible.

## 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. 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 first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 19 to 20 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 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>	124589
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10196880
<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>	105
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Richard Jesty
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Wood
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hollesley.suffolk.sch.uk">www.hollesley.suffolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	19 to 20 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since September 2019, the school has been led by the headteacher of Waldringfield Primary School under an informal arrangement. The headteacher spends half of her working week on site at each school. She remains available to both schools throughout the week.
- A consultation about the proposal to formalise the federation arrangement closed on 4 June 2021. Governors expect the process to be finalised during the autumn term.

## 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.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other leaders, staff, governors and groups of pupils. They met with a group of governors and a representative of the local authority, via videocalls.
- The inspectors did deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. They met with subject leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils'

work, spoke with pupils and staff and listened to pupils read.

- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors met with the school's designated safeguarding leads, checked the school's single central record, looked at child protection records and spoke with pupils and staff.

### **Inspection team**

Wendy Varney, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Hannah Stoten

Her Majesty's Inspector

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