

# Inspection of Hartest Church of England Primary School

The Row, Hartest, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP29 4DL

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 September 2021

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Inadequate**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Requires improvement**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Inadequate**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

Hartest Church of England Primary School pupils are not receiving a quality of education that ensures they are ready for the next stages of their education.

Expectations of how well pupils achieve throughout the curriculum are low. This includes for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils are happy to attend school and enjoy a broad range of additional experiences including, for example, clarinet lessons, the Suffolk Children's University and trips off site. However, not all pupils gain the skills needed to take part in all that is offered, and this then has an impact on how well they are able to access these opportunities.

Pupils say that they feel safe and can talk to any staff member if they are worried. Pupils and staff say that bullying does not happen here. Pupils are very confident that they can approach any member of staff if they have concerns, and their worries will be sorted out.

Pupils typically behave well when the learning is suited to their needs. Where the work is not challenging enough, pupils are less engaged in their learning.

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

Leaders have not ensured that the quality of education is ambitious or good enough for pupils to achieve well throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum is not well considered. Leaders have not specified clearly what pupils need to know and by when. Teachers are not clear what subject knowledge needs to be taught or what pupils know. Leaders have not provided training for teachers about how to use assessment to support pupils' learning. Consequently, pupils do not know and remember more about what they have learned. Pupils do not have sufficient knowledge throughout the curriculum to achieve well.

Similarly to the rest of the school, the curriculum in the early years is not ambitious enough. Leaders are not specific about what they want children to learn. They have not planned a curriculum that is well suited to children's early stages of development. Leaders do not ensure that children learn sounds linked to letters to help children develop their early reading skills from when they start school. This results in children not being well prepared to access the rest of the curriculum. Consequently, children are not ready for the Year 1 curriculum.

Leaders' expectations for reading are too low. Weaker readers do not get the support they need to read more fluently. Leaders do not ensure that pupils read books that link to their phonics knowledge. Leaders have planned new phonics training for all staff, but this has not started. More books have been bought, but leaders are waiting until all staff are trained before they are used. As a result, pupils

are not reading well enough by the end of key stage 1. This has an impact on how well pupils access other areas of the curriculum.

The provision for pupils with SEND is not good enough. Expectations are low and pupils do not achieve well. Leaders have not ensured that staff are trained in how to identify, assess and meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Therefore, teachers are not able to consider and adapt what they do to ensure pupils with SEND can access the curriculum in all subjects. Leaders have not checked that targets set, and support given, are improving how well pupils with SEND achieve. Consequently, pupils with SEND do not access a quality of education that helps them to achieve well, and they are not prepared for the next stages of their education.

Leaders and staff at Hartest prioritise providing a wide range of opportunities to enhance pupils' personal development. Leaders are determined that the Christian ethos of the school sits alongside the values taught to all pupils. Links are made between different faiths and pupils are taught to respect differences. While this is the case, leaders have not provided appropriate support so that all pupils can access all areas of the curriculum successfully.

Pupils' behaviour in school is typically calm. Pupils are kind to each other. However, the curriculum does not provide opportunities for pupils to develop resilience, perseverance and independence. Some pupils are overly dependent on adult attention and are not able to get on with work by themselves. Pupils are often not fully engaged in their learning because the work is not well suited to their needs. When there are concerns about pupils' behaviour, these are not always followed through and dealt with appropriately. Leaders have not ensured that staff have the skills to identify or support pupils' behaviour needs accurately.

Staff are very positive about working at the school. They said that leaders and governors considered their well-being and workload effectively.

Trustees and governors have prioritised pupils' well-being. They have not focused enough on ensuring that the quality of education, the provision for pupils with SEND and the systems in place to safeguard pupils are good enough. Trustees have not scrutinised or challenged information provided to them. This has resulted in the quality of education and expectations of staff and pupils being too low.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders are not clear about their safeguarding responsibilities. There are significant weaknesses in record-keeping.

Governors and trustees have not asked further questions to satisfy themselves that safeguarding arrangements are effective.

Leaders do not have a systematic process to check that all pupils are receiving timely support. Leaders do not always record issues or follow up on incidents reported to them with the urgency that is required.

Pupils report that they feel safe. They say that they can talk to any adult in school if they are worried or hurt. Leaders raise pupils' awareness of online safeguarding risks effectively as part of the computing curriculum.

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

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

- Leaders do not have effective safeguarding arrangements in place. While pupils feel safe, pupils who need extra support do not always get this quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that there are effective systems in place for recording concerns about pupils. They need to ensure that they monitor these concerns closely so that pupils are protected from harm and are safe.
- Leaders have not ensured that the curriculum is ambitious enough. Curriculum plans are not clear or rigorous enough. Leaders have not specified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn from the early years through to Year 6. This means that pupils are not being taught to remember and know more ready for their next stage of education. Leaders need to ensure that curriculum plans specify what pupils need to know in each year group and in all subject areas. Leaders must then check and ensure that all staff understand how to use the curriculum plans to help pupils know and remember more in the long term.
- Leaders have not provided staff with training on the school's chosen phonics programme. They have not ensured that pupils are reading books that match their phonics knowledge. This means that younger pupils are not getting off to a good start with their reading. Leaders need to train staff on how to deliver the school's chosen phonics scheme effectively. They also need to check that staff are teaching the phonics scheme consistently. This is so that all pupils learn how to read fluently and accurately according to their age.
- Leaders do not ensure that pupils with SEND have their needs accurately identified or met. This means that pupils with SEND are not remembering important skills and subject knowledge. Leaders need to ensure that staff understand how best to meet the needs of pupils with SEND in lessons. Leaders need to check that the support given is enabling pupils to benefit from a good-quality education and ensure pupils can fully participate in the school's wider curriculum.
- Leaders must ensure that staff are trained to identify and support pupils with behavioural needs. They also need to develop a system to monitor concerns and follow up where necessary to ensure that all pupils get the support they need to behave as expected.

Having considered the evidence, I strongly recommend that leaders and those responsible for governance do not seek to appoint early career teachers.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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>	144215
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	10200556
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	71
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Tom Brooke
<b>Headteacher</b>	Amanda Woolmer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hartest.suffolk.sch.uk">www.hartest.suffolk.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Hartest Church of England Primary School has undergone significant leadership changes since March 2020. The school now has an executive headteacher and a part-time interim head of school.
- The school's previous section 48 inspection took place in June 2019.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the head of school improvement for the trust and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors also met with the chief executive officer of the trust, three members of the governing body and a trustee through an online call.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with curriculum leaders, staff and pupils during the course of the inspection.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about personal, social and health education, relationships and sex education, and the provision for pupils with SEND. Inspectors visited the breakfast club and spoke to parents during the morning drop-off.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the school's single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, considered its safeguarding policy, looked at pupils' safeguarding files, and spoke to one of the designated safeguarding leads. Inspectors also spoke to pupils and staff about safety and safeguarding arrangements at the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school information, including documents on the school's website, leaders' improvements plans, their self-evaluation of the school and curriculum plans.
- We considered 10 responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff. We also considered 20 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, from this academic year, including eight free-text responses submitted during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Isabel Davis, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Simon Harbrow

Ofsted Inspector

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