

Inspection of Hyde Park Infant School

Hyde Park Road, Mutley, Plymouth, Devon PL3 4RS

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 November 2021

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education	Inadequate
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Inadequate
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Hyde Park Infant School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Hyde Park Infant School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy. From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections.

Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened in Hyde Park Infant School's effectiveness before and after it converted to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils follow a curriculum that is not well planned and has deep-rooted weaknesses. The curriculum lacks ambition and does not provide pupils with the essential knowledge they need to be successful.

Many disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not get an acceptable education. Teaching is not based on appropriate knowledge or expertise to support these pupils to learn. As a result, these pupils do not achieve well.

Pupils said that they enjoy school and feel safe. They know about the different forms of bullying and said that bullying is rare. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is mostly positive. However, in some lessons, pupils quickly lose focus and opt out of learning.

Leaders have started to reintroduce a range of activities to broaden pupils' experiences. These include after-school clubs and visits to local heritage sites. Pupils enjoy these activities.

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

Many children leave the early years not ready for key stage 1. As pupils move through the school, the gaps in pupils' knowledge widen. This is because many subjects are poorly planned, lack ambition and do not meet the needs of pupils. For example, the English curriculum is incomplete. There is no agreed curriculum in place for the teaching of writing. Furthermore, curriculum plans, including in the early years, do not identify what pupils need to learn and in what order. The curriculum does not give pupils the knowledge they need to be successful.

Children in the early years do not experience a suitable curriculum. Leaders know that children's physical development is not what it should be. Nevertheless, children do not have an appropriate and accessible outdoor area in which to learn. This is having a negative impact on children's development and learning. Furthermore, adults do not support children well enough to help them to develop their knowledge. Too often, children flit between planned activities. This all contributes to children not being ready for key stage 1.

Senior leaders' checks on the quality of education have not been as precise as they need to be. Leaders share these checks with subject leaders. However, some subject leaders do not have the necessary expertise to carry out these checks. Many members of staff have had little or no professional development. In turn, this has contributed to a weak curriculum. Senior leaders recognise this and have started to put in place appropriate training for staff. Nevertheless, this has led to weaknesses in teaching and curriculum planning. As a result, many pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND, are not learning well.

Pupils have not experienced high-quality phonics teaching. This means that in some year groups, pupils do not read as well as they should, in particular disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND. The new acting headteacher quickly recognised that the approach to phonics was not effective. There is now a structured and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. However, it is too early to see any significant impact following these changes. There is a sense of urgency from leaders to secure further improvements.

In the past, the multi-academy trust has not given enough support and challenge to make the necessary improvements. New trust leaders and the acting headteacher recognise that there is still much to do to tackle the legacy of underachievement. With support from the trust, the acting headteacher is beginning to take appropriate action to improve the standard of education.

Leaders promote modern British values well. However, a large proportion of pupils do not have an age-appropriate understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle.

The vast majority of parents are happy with the school. They are particularly positive about the changes that are being implemented.

Staff said that in the past morale has been low. They said that more recently this has improved.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have regular, up-to-date safeguarding training. They know the signs to look out for should a pupil be at risk of harm. Staff know the procedures for recording any concerns they may have. Leaders take appropriate action to ensure that pupils and their families get the support they need.

Pre-employment checks on staff are robust. Governors have a strong understanding of their roles in keeping pupils safe. Pupils know where to go if they have a worry. They trust their adults to keep them safe. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum planning is weak. Plans do not set out the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. These plans lack ambition. This leads to pupils not knowing and understanding what they should. In turn, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders must urgently improve curriculum plans. They need to ensure that they are well thought out and support pupils to know more and remember more.

- Many pupils have fallen behind with their reading, including pupils with SEND. This is because the curriculum for phonics was not well organised. Leaders have implemented a new reading curriculum. The early signs are that it is having a positive impact on pupils' ability to read. Nevertheless, leaders need to ensure that pupils who are behind catch up quickly.
- Subject leadership is weak. Staff have not had any appropriate professional development. As a result, subject leaders are unclear about how to sequence learning in order to improve pupils' knowledge. Senior leaders should ensure that curriculum leaders are well trained and understand how to improve learning in their subjects.
- Pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils do not receive the support they need. Leaders do not make the necessary checks on what pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils know and understand. Consequently, these pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that teachers use what they know about these pupils to develop their knowledge well.
- The curriculum in the early years does not enable children to gain the essential knowledge they need. This is hampered further by a lack of outdoor provision and adults' lack of knowledge of the children. Leaders need to ensure that the early years curriculum is well planned and staff are well trained, and that the environment supports children's learning. Senior leaders do not have a considered approach to checking on school improvement. This has led to an inaccurate view of the quality of the curriculum. Leaders need to develop a systematic approach to checking on the quality of education and its impact on pupils' achievement.

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

Unique reference number	146673
Local authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	10199355
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	264
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Stuart Jones
Headteacher	Denise Razey
Website	www.hydepark-inf.plymouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined Horizon Multi Academy Trust in January 2019. The chief executive of the trust started in September 2020.
- The acting headteacher started in June 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- 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 held meetings with the acting headteacher, senior leaders, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, the chief executive officer of the trust, and teaching and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning, looked at samples of pupils' work and listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance.
- Inspectors scrutinised safeguarding records, tested the staff's safeguarding knowledge and spoke with pupils. The lead inspector also met with the designated safeguarding leader.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. An inspector also met with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors also took into consideration the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Matt Middlemore, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Miller

Ofsted Inspector

Mark Lees

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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