

Inspection of a good school: Hoath Primary School

School Lane, Hoath, Canterbury, Kent CT3 4LA

Inspection dates:

18 January 2022

Outcome

Hoath Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive and flourish in this stimulating and nurturing school environment. They are happy at school, where there is a family feel and a real sense of community. There are strong relationships between staff and pupils which are based on mutual respect. One parent said, 'It is more than a school, it is an extension of our family.'

Pupils enjoy learning because teachers make lessons interesting. Pupils look forward to the wide range of opportunities the school offers them, including the forest school, where, they said, 'we do some amazing things'. Pupils develop strong friendships. Older and younger pupils love working and playing together. One pupil said, 'We all know each other and we care about everyone.' Younger pupils look forward to visiting the library. At lunchtimes, they read with and are read to by the older pupils who are the librarians.

Staff have high expectations of pupils. Pupils know that teachers expect them to do their best. They work hard and use feedback to help them learn from their mistakes.

Pupils behave very well. They are friendly, sociable and polite. Pupils feel safe in school. Bullying is not tolerated. Staff deal with any unkindness between pupils quickly and fairly. Pupils know they can go to staff if they are worried or anxious.

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

The headteacher has restructured leadership. Staff from both schools in the Chislet and Hoath Federation work well together to lead curriculum subjects. Leaders have good subject knowledge and support other colleagues well. Teachers work together as a strong, supportive team. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Reading and mathematics are strengths. They have been leaders' priorities and are embedded securely across the school. Leaders are developing the curriculum in the foundation subjects to be as consistently strong.

Skilled and experienced leaders across the federation have designed an ambitious reading curriculum. All teachers are determined and committed to make sure that pupils become fluent, confident readers who love reading. Teachers are good role models because their enthusiasm and passion for reading are passed on to pupils. Pupils explore interesting and progressively challenging texts, often linked to the topics they are studying. They develop a depth of learning and understanding. They can speak confidently and with authority about their favourite authors and types of books.

Phonics teaching is well organised and well structured, and children quickly learn new sounds. Children are introduced to phonics as soon as they start in Reception. They use phonics well to help them read and write. Children enjoy listening to and joining in with stories that their teacher reads in class. They are read to many times during each day. They read books that match the sounds they are learning. Pupils who find reading more difficult, including pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported. They are taught strategies to help them read unfamiliar words. Their enjoyment of reading is key, as they want to do it and show determination and resilience to succeed.

The mathematics curriculum is skilfully taught, and pupils achieve well. The use of correct mathematical language starts in Reception. Children are encouraged to answer questions and explain their reasoning. Pupils build on this as they move through the classes and into key stage 2. Teachers use questioning well to make pupils think before they give answers. Teachers remind pupils of their previous learning and encourage pupils to remember and build on what they already know. Older pupils said that they love mathematics because 'it's fun, and okay to get it wrong'.

Staff are quick to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Effective support is provided. Suitable adjustments are made to make sure that these pupils learn the same curriculum as others, experience success and achieve their best.

Parents and pupils appreciate the wide range of opportunities for pupils to broaden their experiences and personal skills. These include a range of clubs, trips and visits. Pupils explore different cultures and communities through topics and whole-class texts, which help them develop understanding and empathy with others. Pupils enjoy their responsibilities, for example as school council members and librarians. Pupils' academic and personal skills stand them in good stead for their future learning.

Staff feel valued and supported by the headteacher, both professionally and personally. They are unanimous in their view that the school is well led and well managed, and that they are proud to work there.

Parents are very supportive of the school and its leadership. Staff know pupils and their families well. A parent commented, 'Staff are committed to instilling a love of learning in children, and they work hard to build strong, trusting relationships with children and parents.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' welfare and well-being are priorities for everyone in the school. Leaders, staff and governors are all fully trained in safeguarding, and understand their responsibilities. Staff know pupils very well, and quickly identify any signs that a child may be at risk. They know the procedures to follow, and any necessary action is taken swiftly. Leaders ensure that checks regarding the suitability of staff are carried out properly. Not only do the staff look after the pupils' safety and well-being, but the pupils look out for each other too. Pupils said that they feel safe in school, and their parents agreed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all of the foundation subjects are well sequenced and coherent. Pupils do not always learn as well as they could in these subjects, as there is not always a clear progression of knowledge from Reception to Year 6, or clear end points at each stage. Leaders need to continue to develop the curriculum so that it clearly sets out the order in which pupils should learn the essential knowledge. It is clear from leaders' actions that they are already taking steps to bring this about. For example, history and geography have just been completed, while other subjects are at an earlier stage. Leaders are developing other subjects by following the same process that they have used successfully to secure strengths in reading and mathematics. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied.

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, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in January 2017.

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	118361
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211150
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Georgina Glover
Headteacher	Anthony Sanders
Website	www.chislethoathfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	11 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change in the leadership of the school. An interim headteacher was appointed in September 2021, and leads both schools in the Chislet and Hoath Federation.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, curriculum leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and governors, and held a telephone conversation with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics 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 some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans. Some pupils were observed reading to their teaching assistants. Pupils were observed at lunch and in the playground, and the inspectors spoke informally to different groups of pupils.
- To inspect safeguarding, an inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead, looked at the record of recruitment checks and safeguarding records, and talked informally to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors considered the views of 44 parents who responded to the confidential Ofsted parental questionnaire and 42 parents who provided free-text responses. They also took account of six responses to the confidential staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clive Close

Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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