

Inspection of Holdbrook Primary School and Nursery

Longcroft Drive, Waltham Cross, Hertfordshire EN8 7QG

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 January 2022

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, polite, and welcoming to visitors at Holdbrook. They enjoy their learning and say they feel safe and looked after. Pupils describe their school as 'inspirational' and as a 'community'. Pupils understand the importance of their education. They shared their future aspirations to be marine biologists, interior designers and chefs.

Pupils say bullying is rare and name adults whom they can speak to if they have worries. They can talk about online bullying and can explain what to do if they have concerns.

Behaviour in and around the school is good. In lessons, pupils are enthusiastic learners and are supportive of each other. They listen to and respect adults in the school. They are keen to share what they know with teachers and visitors.

All pupils spoken with, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL), say they feel included in the school community. The most vulnerable pupils receive the appropriate support to be able to access the curriculum and attend school.

Parents who spoke to inspectors were very positive about what the school provides for their children. They describe the school as 'caring, nurturing, inclusive and supportive'.

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

Leaders have acted to put right issues identified at the time of the previous inspection. They have brought about secure and sustained improvements in the quality of education that they provide to pupils.

In designing their curriculum, leaders have carefully considered what pupils need to know in each subject. They have also identified any potential barriers and any negative impact of the pandemic on pupils' learning. As a result, leaders have established a curriculum that ensures pupils build and develop their knowledge and skills across subjects, including in reading, writing and mathematics. Leaders have also identified where pupils need to catch up, particularly in reading, and are taking effective action to support them. As a result, pupils, including those who have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, are receiving a good quality of education.

Children in the early years get a strong start to their education. They develop into confident and curious learners and are ready for Year 1, including in their early reading knowledge and skills. The programme for teaching early reading is structured so that all pupils learn the sounds they need to at the right time. Adults are rigorous at checking how well pupils know and apply their phonics skills. As pupils get older, most are keen readers, including those who find reading difficult. Skilled adults support pupils, including those with SEND and EAL, to become

confident and fluent readers. Pupils' work shows that most pupils are able to apply these skills securely in their writing.

Teachers check pupils' understanding routinely. They make sure pupils build on important facts and words. In many subjects, such as science and history, pupils have strong recall of key information and events. For example, in history, pupils understand the impact of key events, know when they happened and can explain key historical terms and vocabulary.

In a few subjects, leaders have not carefully considered the important and discrete knowledge pupils need. Although pupils experience and enjoy lessons, they are not developing the range and depth of knowledge and skills they need. As a result, pupils are less proficient in these few subjects.

Support for pupils with SEND is strong. Leaders are careful to consider how they can achieve the best school experience for pupils. Teachers adapt learning and provide appropriate resources where needed. Skilled support is in place for pupils to catch up and revisit aspects of learning they are unsure about.

Leaders make sure that pupils' personal development is a priority. Pupils agree that the school is inclusive. They speak positively about diversity represented in their own school community. They learn about different faiths and learn that everyone has equal rights.

Leaders are acutely aware of the challenges faced by many of the families of pupils who attend the school. Leaders work hard to engage families in their children's education. For example, they provide families, including those who speak EAL, with parent workshops and additional educational resources to help support children at home. Leaders offer a range of welfare support to vulnerable families.

Governors visit the school to meet with pupils, staff and parents routinely. They gain the knowledge they need to challenge and support school leaders appropriately. They share leaders' strong vision to ensure all pupils receive an ambitious curriculum. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about leadership, including governance. Leaders are working positively with the local authority to continue to make improvements.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture at Holdbrook. Staff are vigilant and are skilled at identifying when pupils are not okay. All staff know how to report concerns and are knowledgeable about the latest safeguarding updates. Leaders have made sure that the families get the support they need from the appropriate external agencies. The family support provides additional pastoral and mental health support. The school parent support worker and nurture provision ensure that pupils and families are listened to and are well looked after.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very few subjects, planning and teaching do not identify and deliver the subject-specific knowledge and skills well enough. This means that while pupils enjoy activities in these subjects, they do not become as proficient in their learning as they are doing elsewhere in the curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that planning and teaching identify and deliver the subject-specific knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn, so that pupils have a broad and deep understanding of these subjects.

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	117091
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10200532
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	176
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Caroline Jenkins
Headteacher	Charlotte Angeli
Website	www.holdbrook.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	29 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of disadvantaged pupils is higher than that at other schools nationally.
- The number of pupils who have SEND is higher than that at other schools nationally.
- The number of pupils with English as an additional language is higher than that at other schools. A large number of ethnic groups are represented at the school.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and teachers. The lead inspector held a meeting with three members of the local governing body, including the chair of governors.

- Inspectors took account of a wide range of information, including the school's improvement plans and records of safeguarding concerns. School policies, documents and records relating to safeguarding, including the single central record and minutes of governors' meetings, were scrutinised.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Inspectors also reviewed attendance and other information provided by school leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents expressed in three responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey and free-text facility. An inspector spoke with several parents on day 1 of the inspection. Inspectors also considered 18 responses to Ofsted's staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- The subjects covered in depth as part of this inspection were reading, mathematics, art and science. In each subject, inspectors spoke with subject leaders, teachers and pupils. Inspectors visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Cindy Impey, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Paula Masters

Ofsted Inspector

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