

Inspection of a good school: Hollingbourne Primary School

Eyhorne Street, Hollingbourne, Maidstone, Kent ME17 1UA

Inspection date: 1 March 2022

Outcome

Hollingbourne Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils work hard at this happy school. They feel safe and are well looked after. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They care for each other and the adults who look after them. Pupils enjoy playing together at breaktimes and working in groups during lessons. Pupils say that staff help them if they have problems. They are confident that if bullying were to occur, staff would sort it out.

Pupils' academic and personal successes are celebrated at every opportunity. Each week, a pupil from each class is chosen to be a 'Hollingbourne Hero' for meeting one of the school's values. In addition to this, pupils are proud to be rewarded for their academic achievements. Pupils enjoy the range of clubs, trips and school events that are usually available. Some of these have continued despite the COVID-19 pandemic, and others are restarting now.

Staff have high expectations and pupils are enthusiastic about their learning. Leaders and teachers want pupils to learn well in every subject. The curriculum has been improved and pupils achieve well in English and mathematics. Parents and carers are supportive of the school, but some would like to know more about what their children are learning and how well they are doing.

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

Leaders, including governors, have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are committed to ensuring that pupils make strong academic progress and grow into citizens who make a positive contribution to their communities.

Leaders have made improvements to the approaches used to teach phonics. They have made sure that staff are well trained and know how to help pupils learn to read. Children in Reception Year make a strong start because staff make learning to read a top priority. Teachers check that pupils are keeping up with the pace of the phonics programme.

Pupils who need extra help receive well-targeted support. Leaders have made sure that the school has a wide range of interesting books. Pupils enjoy having these read to them and taking them home to read themselves. Older pupils speak confidently about their favourite authors and genres.

The mathematics curriculum is well designed and well taught. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum helps to build pupils' knowledge over time. Teachers are well trained and know how to teach mathematics well. They introduce new ideas clearly and check to make sure that pupils understand before moving on. Pupils are encouraged to use what they have already learned to help them if they find things difficult. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), receive the support they need to achieve well in mathematics.

Leaders have prioritised improving the wider curriculum. They have ensured that there is a broad range of subjects in place for all pupils and have worked to improve the whole curriculum. Leaders have identified some of the knowledge and skills that pupils should learn, but this is not clear enough in all subjects. As a result, teachers do not always know the order in which these knowledge and skills should be taught, and pupils are not learning everything that they should.

All pupils are encouraged to take on leadership roles and responsibilities. These include those of peer mentors, eco-warriors, playground buddies and assembly monitors. Pupils have opportunities to become a 'values champion, inspired learner and problem-solver', or 'Hollingbourne VIP' for short. All of these activities support pupils' personal development. Pupils show maturity and empathy. They understand the importance of treating people equally and say, 'It's ok to be different – we're all the same inside.'

Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They enjoy learning and are keen to do their best. Teachers help pupils who need extra support to stay focused. As a result, classrooms are calm, purposeful places for pupils to learn in.

Staff want all pupils to achieve as much as they can. They understand the needs of pupils with SEND well. Leaders make sure that pupils' needs are identified correctly. This begins in early years. Leaders carefully consider the additional support that pupils with SEND may need to be successful and make sure that they receive it. Staff work well with external agencies to support pupils whose needs are complex.

Leaders and governors think carefully about staff well-being. They have created a strong team ethos in the school and staff support each other well. Staff are proud to work at Hollingbourne and feel well looked after by leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Staff are well trained and know how to recognise the signs of abuse or neglect. Records of concerns and actions

taken to support children and their families are kept meticulously. Leaders work well with external agencies to make sure that children are safe.

The curriculum helps pupils learn how to stay safe. For example, pupils know the risks posed when using the internet and how to do so safely. Pupils have good relationships with adults and trust them to help keep them safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the foundation subjects, leaders have not clearly defined all of the knowledge and skills they want pupils to learn. This means that teachers are not always clear about precisely what should be taught and in what order. As a result, pupils do not learn all that they should in the foundation subjects. Leaders should continue their work to improve the curriculum. They should specify the knowledge that is really important and the sequence in which pupils should learn it. 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 a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second 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	118292
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211258
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	101
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Howell
Headteacher	Helen Bradley-Wyatt
Website	www.hollingbourne.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in September 2017.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. Inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator and other school staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.

- Inspectors considered 32 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, and parents’ free-text responses. Inspectors also spoke with some parents at the end of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the views of staff during meetings with them. Inspectors also took into account pupils’ views through meetings with them.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Katherine Russell

Ofsted Inspector

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