

# Inspection of a good school: Kates Hill Primary School

Peel Street, Dudley, West Midlands DY2 7HP

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Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

## **Outcome**

Kates Hill Primary School continues to be a good school.

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

Pupils and staff are happy at this well-led community-minded school. It is a jolly, upbeat place with lots for pupils to see and do. Classrooms are full of bright displays that support learning and celebrate values, effort and achievement. As some pupils put it, 'the school does a ton of fun stuff'.

Reading is taught particularly well. Along with mathematics, it happens every day in every class. Other subjects are taught regularly too. However, sometimes staff try to cover too much which distracts pupils from the important things they need to remember. Outside of lessons, pupils use the school grounds to learn about nature. Beyond the school day, pupils can go on trips and join clubs.

Pupils are expected to help others. Older pupils look after younger ones outside. Pupil anti-bullying ambassadors help to spot any bullying. If it happens, they tell staff so they can stop it.

Behaviour is managed very well. There can be boisterous behaviour on the playground, but pupils usually get on well. Staff know a lot about safeguarding and keep pupils safe in school.

Leaders and staff are friendly, firm and fair. Consequently, everyone knows what to expect and the school runs smoothly.

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

The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide effective senior leadership. They build up others and make sure the school serves its community well.

Reading is a top priority. The school has a well-resourced structured phonics scheme and staff are well trained. In the Nursery, adults share rhymes and stories that widen children's knowledge of sounds and words. In Reception and key stage 1, staff run daily

reading sessions. At the same time, leaders check what is happening and give helpful steers when needed. In all classes, staff read to pupils and introduce them to many books. In short, there is a very positive culture of reading in this school.

Mathematics is also well organised. From early number work in Nursery and Reception through to Year 6, pupils get lots of meaningful teaching and practice. This helps them to build up their mathematical knowledge and understanding in a logical progression. As with reading, the school runs workshops for parents so they can support learning at home.

Leaders have drawn up plenty of guidance in other subjects too. The school week is organised so that different subjects are taught regularly. Pupils' science books, for example, are full of work that shows they learn important scientific knowledge and carry out well-chosen experiments. During this inspection, younger pupils learned about melting by looking at ice cubes. Older pupils used what they had found out about levers to lift their teacher off the ground. However, at times, staff overcomplicate lessons. This can be confusing for pupils and they do not necessarily remember the right things. This happens in several subjects, including geography, history and science. In part, this is because some cross-curricular links bring in unhelpful information, which gets in the way of the main learning focus. At other times, staff assume pupils know something when they do not. In either case, it means that some pupils do not build up secure subject knowledge as well as they might.

Pupils' stamina for writing and the quality of their handwriting have slipped during the disruption caused by the pandemic. Leaders are well aware of this and are making sure pupils get plenty of guidance and practice.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the right support. Staff take advice from specialists and support pupils to take a full part in lessons and other activities. In addition, the school's attention to mental health and well-being is notable.

Staff take pupils out and about. Pupils use the school grounds to grow vegetables and to learn about wildlife. Further afield, pupils visit museums and older pupils recently spent a weekend at a residential activity centre. These activities prompt pupils' interest in the wider world. While the pandemic halted the school's extensive programme of after-school clubs, these are now restarting.

Pastoral support is strong and staff are positive role models. On top of this, the school does a lot to promote worthwhile values that guide pupils to make healthy and constructive choices. In addition, pupils help out with jobs that make them think about others and taking responsibility.

Senior leaders support the staff. In turn, staff respect leaders and show commitment to their work. Parents say many positive things about the school. In their responses to Ofsted's survey, many praised the caring ethos and the variety of activities available at school.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well informed about local risks and the signs that indicate a child may be distressed. They teach pupils how to spot danger and are quick to act if they are worried about anyone. The police and other professionals work with school staff to reinforce safety messages and share information.

Around the school there are lots of reminders about the importance of respectful, safe behaviour. Staff teach pupils about healthy relationships and make sure they understand the difference between right and wrong.

All the required checks on adults in school are carried out and recorded properly.

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

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

- In some subjects, including science, geography and history, staff overcomplicate lessons by bringing in extra, and unnecessary, information. This is not helpful and distracts staff and pupils from the essential knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember. Leaders should revisit curriculum guidance to make sure that it supports staff to cover the right things with sufficient focus and depth.
- Occasionally, staff assume pupils know something when they do not. This means that they press on with activities when pupils do not have all the knowledge they need to manage tasks or new learning as well as they might. Leaders and staff should sharpen up their checks on what pupils need to know to make sense of new learning.

## 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 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 predecessor school, Kates Hill Community Primary School, to be good in May 2014.

## 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>	144080
<b>Local authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10212335
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	417
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Pam Garrington
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kathryn Harvey
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.kates-hill.dudley.sch.uk">www.kates-hill.dudley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- In November 2017, the school reopened as an academy with Link Learning Multi-Academy Trust (MAT).
- The school provides before- and after-school childcare on site.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation.
- During the inspection, the inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, science and geography. In these subjects, the inspector visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils and staff about the way the subjects were planned and taught. He also considered some other subjects in less detail to check how they were organised and taught.

- The inspector noted 2019 external performance data about the school and looked at school documents. These included information about behaviour, the school curriculum and improvement planning. He also checked the school's website.
- The inspector asked pupils, staff, parents, leaders and governors about the school's safeguarding arrangements. He examined the record of employment checks on school staff and looked at other school records. He also found out about safety procedures and routines at the school.
- The inspector watched pupils' behaviour in class, at lunchtime, on the playground and at other times during the day.
- During the inspection, the inspector had formal meetings with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, governors, teachers and pupils. He also met with the chair of trustees and the interim chief executive officer of Link Learning MAT.
- The inspector talked informally with pupils and staff to gather general information about school life. In addition, he took account of the responses to Ofsted's surveys of staff, pupils' and parents' views.

### **Inspection team**

Martin Pye, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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