

# Inspection of Helme Church of England Academy

Helme, Meltham, Holmfirth HD9 5RW

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Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

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

This is a happy school where pupils feel supported and listened to. Leaders ensure that all pupils receive a good quality of education. Leaders work with focus towards clear aims and ambitions, and staff share their vision. Parents and carers agree that the school supports their children to 'be the best they can be'.

Pupils know that staff have high expectations of them, both with their learning and behaviour. Pupils show excitement when talking about their learning. They are enthusiastic about the outdoor learning experiences they have. Pupils achieve well.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They embody the 'Helme values' of friendship and humility. Pupils feel safe. Bullying is rare, but if it did happen then pupils are confident that staff would deal with it quickly.

Pupils take full advantage of the opportunities they are given to be young leaders. They talk with confidence about their responsibilities as school councillors, digital leaders and librarians. Pupils are proud of the contribution they make to their school.

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

Leaders have ensured that subject leaders have received effective training to develop and design the curriculum. Leaders have clearly identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn. The curriculum is well planned in all subjects. In most subjects, leaders have provided clear guidance and training to develop teachers' subject knowledge. The tasks that teachers set help pupils to learn new content well. Teachers' use of assessment is effective, including in the early years. They use the information about what pupils know to set work that builds pupils' understanding. Teachers carefully check what pupils know and revisit important knowledge. Teachers strengthen and deepen pupils' knowledge well during lessons and over time.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge in most subjects. This means that subjects such as music and physical education are well taught. However, some teachers lack the expertise to deliver the languages curriculum with the same level of effectiveness. This means they do not know how to extend pupils' learning well. This hinders the progress that pupils make in languages. Leaders are taking steps to support the development of staff's subject knowledge.

Leaders have ensured that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. A well-structured programme of phonics develops pupils' knowledge of reading. Expectations are high. Staff are quick to correct any mistakes pupils make with their letter sounds. Pupils who fall behind are given extra support to help them catch up. However, at times, the books that some pupils are given to read are not matched as sharply as they could be to the sounds pupils know and need to practise. This limits the opportunities pupils have to revisit sounds they have been taught. Teachers read

to pupils every day to nurture a love of reading and to extend pupils' vocabulary and knowledge of the wider world.

Staff know pupils very well. Leaders take swift action to provide the right support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils' needs are well met. They learn confidently alongside their classmates. Staff use individual learning plans and specialist guidance to support pupils with more-complex needs. Pupils with SEND make strong progress as a result of this high-quality support.

Children thrive in the early years. They take turns and share with each other well. Children learn through well-planned opportunities and activities. Staff support children effectively to be independent and curious learners. The environment, both inside and outside, helps children to learn. Children are eager to explore it. As a result of a well-planned and well-taught curriculum, children are prepared well for next stage of their learning.

Leaders' work to support pupils' wider development is a real strength of the school. Pupils take very seriously the leadership roles they have been given. Pupils know about the differences among people in modern society. Pupils appreciate that being different is a positive thing. They show respect and tolerance. Pupils know how to keep healthy and safe, including online. Leaders and staff work hard to identify and support the needs of their pupils and families. Pupils and parents alike appreciate the help they receive.

School leaders and leaders of the multi-academy trust work well together to improve the school. They understand the school's strengths and what needs to improve. Governors support and challenge leaders effectively. They access a range of training to enable them to fulfil their responsibilities. Leaders take account of staff's workload and well-being. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Staff are well trained. They are alert to the potential signs that a pupil may be at risk. Staff understand and follow the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff report concerns promptly. Leaders take the action required to ensure that pupils and families are offered the support that they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations through the computing curriculum, assemblies and personal, social and health education sessions. Pupils know what to do if they have any worries or concerns.

Governors make regular checks that leaders are fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

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

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

- The very few pupils who need extra support to develop their reading fluency are not consistently given books which are precisely matched to the sounds they know. This limits the effectiveness of the extra sessions they receive to improve their reading. Leaders should ensure that the reading books for this group of pupils are well matched to enable them to practise the sounds they have learned more recently, as well as those that they have learned over time.
- Staff's subject knowledge in languages is not consistently secure. As a result, they are not always able to deliver the languages curriculum effectively. Some are unable to respond when pupils ask questions that go beyond the scope of the immediate topic being taught. Leaders should ensure that subject knowledge is strengthened, for both the subject leader and staff, so that the languages curriculum can be implemented effectively.

## 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>	145556
<b>Local authority</b>	Kirklees
<b>Inspection number</b>	10220316
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	123
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Gillian Hamer
<b>Principal</b>	Melanie Garlick
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.helmeschool.com">www.helmeschool.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Helme Church of England Academy converted to become an academy school in March 2018. When its predecessor school, Helme Church of England Voluntary Aided Junior and Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be inadequate.
- It is part of the Learning Accord Multi Academy Trust.
- This is a Church of England primary school. It is part of the Diocese of Leeds.
- The last section 48 Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools took place in November 2016.
- The school does not use alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

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

- 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 of the school.

- Inspectors met the headteacher, assistant headteachers, other leaders, a group of trustees, the chief executive officer from the academy trust, members of the local governing board and the academy improvement officer.
- Inspectors also spoke to a representative from the diocese.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in reading, mathematics, music, and languages. During deep dive activities, inspectors met with subject leaders, considered curriculum planning from early years through to Year 6, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors visited the early years and spoke with leaders and staff about how the curriculum is implemented.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning and heard pupils read with familiar adults.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils and staff at breaktime, during lunch and in separate focus groups.
- Documentation was reviewed, including school improvement plans, minutes of meetings of the governing body and trust board meetings, documents linked to pupils with SEND, records of behaviour and exclusions, and safeguarding records.
- Inspectors considered the Ofsted survey responses from pupils, staff and parents.
- Inspectors also spoke to parents before the start of the school day.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding leader to discuss and look at how staff log concerns and what actions leaders take when they do. Inspectors also met with a range of staff about the training that they have had in safeguarding.
- Inspectors observed pupils in their play at lunchtimes and at breaktimes.

### **Inspection team**

Asa Britton, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Graham Findlay

Her Majesty's Inspector

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