

Inspection of a good school: High Oakham Primary School

Nottingham Road, Mansfield, Nottinghamshire NG18 4SH

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 May 2022

Outcome

High Oakham Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

High Oakham is a welcoming school. Staff know the pupils and their families well. They have established clear routines and positive relationships with pupils. Pupils are polite as they move around the school.

Pupils say they enjoy school. They say they feel safe here. They know who to go to if they have worries. Staff try to ensure that pupils are happy and ready to learn. Leaders and staff have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve.

The vast majority of pupils behave well. They understand the importance of following the school rules. Staff deal with any poor behaviour promptly. Bullying is not tolerated.

The school's values help pupils know the difference between right and wrong. The school's approach that there are 'no outsiders' helps pupils to understand the lives of others that may be different to them. Pupils demonstrate high levels of respect.

The majority of parents and carers are supportive. Typically, they praise the inclusive and caring nature of the school. One parent said, 'Staff care about the children's holistic development not just attainment. It's a lovely school.'

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils. The sequencing of the curriculum content develops pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders have identified the most important knowledge that pupils must learn and remember. This gives a clear overview across the school. Some subject leaders are new to their roles and have not yet monitored the effectiveness of their subject.

Leaders have made sure that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff teach phonics well. Teachers match pupils' reading books to the sounds they are learning. Pupils have the knowledge of phonics they need to help them to read

independently. Pupils who are at risk of falling behind get the help they need. Throughout the school, teachers read with pupils every day. Pupils talk passionately and knowledgeably about their favourite books and authors. This work is encouraging pupils to become confident and fluent readers. Children in the early years get off to a good start. They receive effective daily phonics lessons. They enjoy listening to and practicing various stories and rhymes. Staff promote the importance of reading for pleasure. They share high-quality books with children through book talk and book time.

Mathematics is taught well. Leaders have given the curriculum careful consideration. Pupils build their knowledge and skills over time. Staff check pupils' learning frequently. They provide many opportunities for pupils to recap what they know. This helps them to become secure in their mathematical knowledge and understanding. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary appropriately to explain their thinking.

The religious education curriculum is taught well. Pupils learn about a range of faiths and cultures. Teachers plan interesting and creative topics linked to the curriculum. These activities are preparing pupils well for life in modern Britain.

Teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. They help pupils to access the curriculum by adapting the way they teach. They are ambitious that pupils with SEND do as well as they can. The leader works closely with teachers to make sure that pupils with SEND receive the help they need.

The curriculum for relationships and health education supports the school's positive ethos. Pupils are taught how to stay safe. Some play a part in supporting this as 'mini police' who remind pupils about road safety.

The school's work to support pupils' wider development is strong. There are a number of opportunities for pupils to explore their talents and interests. Pupils are proud of the roles and responsibilities they can hold in the school, such as eco monitors and reading ambassadors. These roles help pupils to develop their confidence and leadership skills.

Governors know the school well. They work effectively in order to support leaders and hold them to account. They understand their statutory responsibilities. Leaders are considerate of staff well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders prioritise pupils' safety. Leaders make sure that staff are well trained. This safeguarding knowledge is kept up to date. Leaders have clear systems in place to record any concerns. They follow up these concerns promptly. They work closely with external agencies to make sure that pupils and families get the help they need.

Leaders carry out appropriate checks on staff before they are allowed to work at the school. Leaders have ensured that the curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subject leaders are new to their roles. They have not yet had the time or guidance they need to be able to effectively monitor their subject. They are therefore unsure as to how well the curriculum is being implemented and the impact it is having. Leaders should ensure that the subject leaders gain the necessary knowledge and understanding to effectively measure the implementation and impact of the curriculum, therefore ensuring that all pupils achieve well.

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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2012.

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

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| Unique reference number | 133278 |
| Local authority | Nottinghamshire |
| Inspection number | 10227812 |
| 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 | 470 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Co-Chairs of governing body | Carl Banton and Lisa Vann. |
| Headteacher | Stephanie Astle |
| Website | www.higoakham.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 7 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher took up the role after the previous inspection.
- The school does not make use of 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 leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher and the leader for pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities. The inspector spoke with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- The inspector examined a range of school documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, improvement plans and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The inspector met with the designated safeguarding leads and considered the safeguarding policy, training records and examples of safeguarding concerns.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the responses to the free-text service. The inspector also considered the responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Liz Moore, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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