

Inspection of a good school: Howard Primary School

Dering Place, Croydon, Surrey CR0 1DT

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2022

Outcome

Howard Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school are caring, respectful and eloquent. They are proud members of the school community and represent it with pride. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Pupils look out for each other, reporting concerns about their peers to appropriate adults. Although bullying happens, it is rare. Pupils give examples of incidents where adults have intervened, and the bullying behaviour has stopped.

Staff have high ambitions for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils appreciate that their teachers never let them give up. Instead, they provide them with the tools to succeed.

Pupils interact with each other with care and respect, and have positive relationships with staff. They are happy and safe here. They enjoy learning about other cultures and beliefs. Older pupils learn Spanish, recently taking part in a Hispanic Day which included activities linked to Spanish-speaking countries. The Spanish theatre production was particularly popular.

Music and physical education (PE) have a high profile. Pupils not only enjoy weekly lessons but also clubs, competitions and performances. Musicians look forward to their upcoming performance at the nearby Fairfield Halls.

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

Leaders have carefully designed a curriculum based on research and the local context. All pupils have access to a broad and ambitious curriculum, including those with SEND. The key knowledge and skills that pupils should acquire as they move up the school are clearly identified. Subject leaders have excellent subject knowledge in their areas. They regularly research the best ways to deliver their subject. Curriculum training is provided for all staff, along with feedback and help throughout the year.

In the early years, the curriculum is well planned and ambitious. In each area of learning, leaders and staff are clear about what children need to learn. Typically, children revisit and practise this knowledge regularly. They enjoy doing so, both independently and guided by adults. Staff select activities purposefully. The focus is on increasing children's understanding step by step. In the outdoor area, however, this is not working as well. Sometimes, staff set up activities without being clear about how these will contribute to children's learning.

Leaders have made appropriate changes in the mathematics curriculum to address any gaps due to COVID-19. All staff have received appropriate training so that they can adapt lessons. Their subject knowledge is good. Early years staff make sure that terminology and methods are used which align with the rest of the school. Expectations are high. Because of this, children are well prepared for their transition to Year 1. Older pupils confidently choose the most efficient methods to complete calculations. They fluently explain their reasoning. In Year 3, pupils can explain the difference between the 12-hour clock and the 24-hour clock.

Most classes receive specialist PE teaching once a week, with class teachers leading a second session. A carefully chosen scheme is used to help plan and deliver the curriculum. It is helping to build teacher confidence. In Years 5 and 6, pupils practise for a local athletics competition. They refer to previous learning and explain what they need to do to improve; for example, understanding that 50% of their energy should be used when running long distance and 100% when sprinting.

Leaders have prioritised reading. All staff in the school, including those in key stage 2, have had appropriate training to deliver the new phonics programme. Most staff have secure subject knowledge in phonics. Books match pupils' decoding levels. Pupils use the appropriate strategies to decode unknown words. Adults help appropriately, and as a result pupils make rapid progress. Despite this, a few adults' delivery of phonics teaching is not as strong. More refresher training is required to make delivery of the programme more consistent and ensure that all pupils have sounds modelled to them correctly. Nonetheless, pupils love reading, saying that their teachers make reading enjoyable. They enthusiastically name their favourite books and authors.

Pupils are confident and reflective. They learn about life in modern Britain, understanding democracy and its importance. They know how unfair it was that women could not vote in the past. They respect each other's differences.

Staff provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils outside the classroom. Pupils take part in art club, netball and the choir. They enjoy their local trips, visitors to the school and themed weeks.

Staff are proud members of the school community. Leaders value the work they do and look out for their well-being. Workload is manageable, and staff are given enough time to complete tasks.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff and governors receive regular training. They confidently notice and report concerns to the safeguarding team. Clear systems are in place for recording and analysing concerns. Leaders refer cases to social care and do not hesitate to escalate them if necessary. They do whatever they can to best support families.

Governors understand their statutory duties. They are involved in the safer recruitment of new staff.

Pupils are safe in all areas of the school. They know about how to keep safe online and how to report any abuse.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In the early years outdoor environment, the delivery of the curriculum does not reflect leaders' ambitious curriculum goals. At times, the activities provided do not enable children to apply and extend key knowledge and skills. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well in all aspects of the early years provision.
- A few adults do not deliver their phonics sessions to a high standard. Consequently, pupils in their groups are not always having sounds modelled to them correctly. Leaders must arrange for these members of staff to have refresher training. They must then carefully monitor the delivery of the phonics programme to make sure that every pupil experiences correctly modelled phonics.
- For the majority of subjects, leaders have planned and deliver a well sequenced curriculum. They have identified the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to know and build on over time. However, in a minority of subjects, this detailed curriculum thinking has only started recently. This means that pupils have a variable experience in these subjects. Leaders must continue to monitor the implementation of these newer curriculum plans.

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 December 2011.

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	101725
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10204486
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	401
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs of the governing body	Paul Smith, John Robinson
Headteacher	Jackie De Saulles
Website	www.howard.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 December 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- No relevant changes since the previous inspection.

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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with all senior leaders, a number of teaching staff and support staff, governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical 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 looked at curriculum plans for history and music.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for school improvement.

- The inspector looked at the effectiveness of the school's work on safeguarding by reviewing the record of pre-employment checks for staff, speaking to staff, governors and pupils and meeting with the safeguarding team.
- The inspector took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff, as gathered through discussions and Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Aliki Constantopoulou, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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