

Inspection of a good school: West Hoathly CofE Primary School

North Lane, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4QG

Inspection date:

15 June 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy knowing everyone in this small, caring school. They learn to get on well with other people. Staff help them to know and understand the school values of love, hope and forgiveness. As one pupil commented, 'The values provide a guide to help us live our lives.'

Staff help pupils to follow the five golden behaviour rules. This supports pupils to know how to behave. Most pupils play well together on the well-resourced and spacious playground. They have a good understanding of what bullying is. They say that bullying happens rarely, but when it does happen staff are quick to resolve issues. Pupils feel safe because they know the adults in school care about them.

Leaders organise different trips for pupils to complement their learning in class. They visit the local Priest House in West Hoathly and travel further afield to the Weald and Downland Museum. These particular experiences strengthen pupils' learning in history.

Staff are determined for pupils to achieve well and to develop as well-rounded individuals. Pupils usually work hard in lessons. However, they do not achieve as well as they could across all subjects as leaders have not fully developed the curriculum.

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

Leaders and staff have worked as a cohesive team to prioritise pupils' personal development and early reading skills. Work to improve other subjects has been slower, partly due to the pandemic. Leaders have plans to address this.

Leaders provide a rich variety of wider development opportunities. Pupils appreciate the range of experiences they receive. This involves different clubs such as gardening and

choir. Pupils make use of this learning in the wider community to enter garden competitions and sing at the O2 arena. Leaders arrange for speakers to inspire pupils. Recent visitors have included an Olympic athlete and a chef from a Michelin-starred restaurant. These opportunities help to develop pupils' ambition and respect for other people. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and caring. Older pupils love being buddies to younger children. They enjoy being positive role models.

Pupils develop a strong love of reading. From the start of Reception, pupils listen with enthusiasm to their teachers who routinely read a wide selection of books and poems. One pupil reflected, 'Reading stories makes me a better person as I learn from each character.'

The teaching of early reading is effective. Leaders have introduced a well-sequenced phonics programme. Staff receive high-quality training so that they are equipped with expert knowledge to teach early reading. They follow the phonics programme closely. Staff notice when pupils are in danger of falling behind and intervene straight away to help them to keep up. Pupils read books that are carefully matched to the sounds they have learned. Leaders acknowledge that the reading curriculum for fluent readers is at an early stage of development.

Leaders have provided a coherent curriculum to help staff order their mathematics lessons. Staff routinely recap previous learning at the start of every session. This helps to build pupils' confidence and accuracy. Pupils are supported to develop a strong fluency with number. For example, children in Reception learn to double numbers with a teacher. They practise this knowledge independently in the outside area. Pupils are not, however, given enough opportunities to apply their knowledge of number to solve problems and to explain their reasoning.

In subjects other than mathematics and English, leaders have mapped out a series of lessons. However, staff in different year groups sometimes teach similar lessons. Leaders have not identified the key knowledge and skills they want pupils in each year group to learn and remember. This means that staff do not emphasise the most important content and check that pupils have remembered it. Consequently, pupils are not always helped to build learning over time and make links to what they have learned before. While pupils usually concentrate well, when the work is too easy or too difficult this can lead to pupils becoming disengaged.

The new special educational needs co-ordinator helps staff to swiftly identify pupils' needs. The support for pupils with social and emotional needs is effective. Staff do not adapt their teaching as consistently well to help pupils with their learning. This means that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not always learn as well as they could.

Governors know the school well. They have a strong knowledge of how well pupils are learning in early reading and mathematics. Their understanding about other subjects is at an earlier stage of development

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide effective training to help staff know their safeguarding responsibilities. They also routinely check staff understanding and provide regular briefings to keep staff knowledge up to date. Staff know the signs to be alert to that may indicate a child is at risk. They report concerns promptly, but there are minor weaknesses in the safeguarding records. These do not leave pupils at risk of harm.

Pupils develop a strong knowledge of how to keep themselves safe, including online. Year 2 pupils learn to not share personal information. Year 6 pupils learn about trustworthy websites and how to spot fraudulent emails and links.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There are minor weaknesses in safeguarding record-keeping. These do not leave pupils at risk of harm. Leaders should ensure that records contain sufficient detail about incidents, actions taken and outcomes.
- The reading curriculum beyond phonics is at an early stage of development. Leaders should make sure they sequence the reading skills and knowledge they want pupils to learn and ensure that staff are well trained to deliver the planned curriculum.
- Curriculum planning in wider subjects does not always set out the key content for pupils to learn. Consequently, staff do not know what knowledge and skills they should check that pupils have learned. Leaders should ensure that all subject plans from Reception to Year 6 are coherently planned so that teachers know what pupils should learn and remember over time.
- Staff do not always adapt their teaching effectively for pupils with SEND. Leaders should ensure that staff have the training and support to help these pupils to learn well in all subjects.

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 February 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

Unique reference number	126012
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10211261
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Louisa Houghton
Headteacher	Rachel Townshend
Website	www.westhoathlyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher started in her post in September 2018.
- About half of the staff are new to the school since the last inspection.
- The chair of governors started in her post in September 2018. Most governors have joined since the previous inspection.
- The governing body manages before-school childcare provision on site.
- This school is a voluntary controlled Church of England school in the Diocese of Chichester. Its last section 48 inspection took place in September 2016.
- The school uses two unregistered providers of alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher and other school staff.

- The lead inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, spoke to a representative from the local authority and met with a representative from the diocese.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors also looked at curriculum planning and spoke to leaders about some other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to review their knowledge, records and actions and also reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff.
- Inspectors spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups and observed behaviour in classrooms and at lunchtime.
- The views of staff and pupils, including responses to Ofsted's online staff and pupil survey, were considered.
- The responses to Ofsted's Parent View, including written responses and one email, were also taken into account

Inspection team

Laurie Anderson, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lorraine Greco

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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