

# Inspection of Highfield Infants' School

Highfield Drive, Shortlands, Bromley, Kent BR2 0RX

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

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The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5  
of the Education Act 2005

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected since November 2007.

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

Pupils are happy and confident learners who are very proud of their school. The staff teach pupils to be safe. Pupils learn about online safety and first-aid skills.

Leaders have created a school culture based on high aspirations for all pupils. There is a clear behaviour system that is consistently applied by staff and understood by pupils. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent. Pupils are highly motivated to learn. They show commitment and resilience.

Pupils understand what bullying is. They know to tell an adult if they experience 'unkind behaviour'. Pupils agree that staff do not tolerate bullying and will make sure that it stops.

The school's values are well embedded in the school culture and curriculum. Pupils demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the values in concrete ways. Pupils show that they are determined in taking risks and trying their best, even in the face of challenges.

Leaders have developed a bespoke home learning programme that is closely linked to pupils' interests. Teachers signpost parents to organisations and clubs for pupils who show exceptional talents and skills in areas such as music and sports.

The school council has been instrumental in contributing to the wider community. Pupils take the lead in supporting a local children's hospice.

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

The curriculum is cohesive, well planned and embedded in the early years areas of learning. It is deeply engaging. Pupils make strong links across all subjects. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check what pupils think and understand. They address misconceptions well and remove barriers to what pupils need to learn and know. Pupils rightly say that teachers help them to, 'recap on things, by going over what they have learned'. As a result, pupils remember crucial information well.

Leaders place great importance on instilling a deep love for reading. They have been careful in linking what pupils read to the sounds they know, the topics studied and the school's values. There is a consistent approach to the delivery of the phonics programme in lessons. Teachers target pupils with precision. This means that pupils progress rapidly in learning and in applying their knowledge of sounds. Highly skilled staff offer opportunities to recap, revisit and rehearse sounds that are taught. Teachers promote the development of reading skills through the school's 'VIPERS' approach. Pupils understand that this stands for vocabulary, infer, predict, explain, retrieve, and sequence. They use their knowledge of sounds to spell and write with high levels of accuracy.

In mathematics, learning experiences have a well-defined focus. Instructions are clearly presented. Teachers give pupils plenty of time to practise their understanding before asking them to apply their knowledge to different contexts. Staff develop pupils' reasoning skills well by encouraging them to prove and explain what they know and understand. This begins in the early years.

Teachers model learning well. For example, staff show children how to use the role-play area in Reception by demonstrating the expectations of high-quality play and language. Staff interact and respond well to children's learning in the early years. Staff encourage high standards of talk, creativity, and the use of imagination. The learning environment is stimulating, attractive, and well organised. The outdoor spacious 'Rainbow Area' enables children to explore the mud kitchen, bug hotels and sensory play zones.

Ambitions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are high. Teachers expect pupils with SEND to achieve the same curricular end points as their peers. Staff support pupils extremely well in lessons and give instant feedback on what needs to be improved. At the end of each year, pupils are well prepared for the next stage of learning. This is because they have secured confidence and competence in reading, writing and mathematics.

Pupils are courteous, polite, and well-mannered. They relate well to each other because staff have promoted a respectful environment. Pupils are consistent in demonstrating responsibility through high levels of self-control and discipline. They discuss what they are learning with great enthusiasm and passion. Teachers make learning demanding. Pupils thrive on the opportunities given to extend and challenge their thinking. This is fostered in Reception, where staff give children 'Rainbow Challenges' to complete work in all the areas of the early years. One child described this well, as 'stretching their brain to become more intelligent'.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is a strength. Pupils learn about British Values, keeping safe, understanding emotions, and managing their feelings. In Reception, children reflect on what makes them unique. Pupils in Year 1 equate their own self-confidence to the self-belief Bessie Coleman showed, an explorer they have learned about in history.

Those responsible for governance are proud of the culture of 'no limits or barriers' they have generated. Leaders provide effective professional development to ensure staff deliver a high-quality curriculum. Staff feel well supported by leaders and workload is manageable. Parents are very positive about the school and the progress their children make.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide many opportunities through the assembly programme to teach pupils to be safe. The content of the PSHE curriculum reinforces this well. Children in Reception speak about using sharp tools safely when baking with teachers.

The trust supports the school effectively in training staff in safeguarding. Adults know and fulfil their duties and responsibilities. Leaders use the school reporting system to gather a comprehensive overview of the needs of pupils and families. Staff are tenacious in following-up cases with external agencies. Measures are in place to ensure that the site is secure and pupils well supervised.

## **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>	140082
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211851
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	269
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees and local committee
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paula Farrow
<b>Headteacher</b>	Allison Morris
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.highfield-inf.bromley.sch.uk">http://www.highfield-inf.bromley.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 and 2 March 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- This is a large infant school with three classes in each year group.
- The school is part of the Nexus Education Schools Trust. The local committee carry out some functions on behalf of the trustees, especially holding the school leaders to account.
- The headteacher of the school is also the headteacher of Highfields Junior School.
- The school does not make use of any 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.

- The inspectors met with the chief executive officer, the chair and vice chair of the local committee, the headteacher, senior leaders, a range of staff, and one member of the local committee.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science, and history. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 inspectors scrutinised a range of curriculum plans, documentations, including the school's self-evaluation of the work it does and the school improvement plan.
- The inspectors considered information provided about safeguarding arrangements. The inspectors scrutinised records and the single central record. They reviewed procedures and processes by talking to leaders and staff, and through discussions with pupils and parents.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents and staff through Ofsted's online surveys, including 77 free-text responses to Ofsted Parent View, 16 responses from members of staff and 12 responses from pupils to the surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Lascelles Haughton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Julie Wright	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Farrow	Ofsted Inspector

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