

Inspection of a good school: Hornby St Margaret's Church of England Primary School

Main Street, Hornby, Lancaster, Lancashire LA2 8JY

Inspection date:

12 July 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 are happy to come to school. They enjoy meeting their friends from across different year groups. Hornby, St Margaret's has a warm and friendly atmosphere. Pupils feel safe in school. They know that there is always someone to talk to if they are worried or concerned.

Staff are ambitious for all pupils, including children in the early years and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in some subjects, leaders have not provided teachers with clear guidance about what they want pupils to learn. In addition, some pupils are not given the support that they need to become confident and fluent readers. As a result, in some subjects, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Pupils live up to leaders' high expectations for behaviour. They are polite and courteous and move around the school in an orderly manner. Pupils share warm relationships with staff.

Pupils get along well together. They are confident that staff would deal with any incidents of bullying swiftly, should they occur.

The school is described by many staff, parents and carers and pupils as a family. Pupils get many experiences beyond the school gate. For example, all pupils regularly enjoy outdoor and adventurous activities, including caving and hill walking. Older pupils have gained qualifications in activities such as sailing and kayaking.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. In some subjects, such as mathematics, the curriculum clearly identifies the knowledge that pupils should learn and the order in which this content should be taught. However, in other subjects, the design of the curriculum is at an early stage of development. Leaders have not thought carefully enough about the essential knowledge that they want pupils to know and remember. They have also not considered the order in which this content should be taught. This hinders teachers in designing learning for pupils. It also hampers the achievement of pupils, including those with SEND, in these subjects

Teachers strive to make lessons engaging and fun. Pupils have some opportunities to work together, sharing their thoughts and ideas. In some subjects, teachers use assessment strategies well to check that pupils have understood what has been taught before moving them on to more complex learning. However, in some other subjects, teachers are not as clear about what pupils have learned as they move through the curriculum. This prevents teachers from recapping prior learning to make sure that pupils' knowledge is secure.

Pupils behave well. The mixed-age classes give pupils the chance to work with a range of other pupils and with different staff. The school is a calm and orderly environment. Pupils are keen to learn. Lessons are not disrupted by poor behaviour.

Leaders have placed reading at the heart of the curriculum. The library has been refurbished and high-quality texts have been purchased. However, there has not been a high enough priority placed on the teaching of early reading in the early years and key stage 1. Leaders have recently implemented a new phonics programme, but not all staff have been trained to deliver the new approach. This leads to an unevenness in how phonics is taught, which in turn prevents some pupils from gaining phonics knowledge as well as they should. Teachers match the books that pupils read to the sounds that they know. However, they are less skilled in using assessment strategies to check how well pupils are gaining phonics knowledge. This means that some phonics activities do not match pupils' needs or deepen their learning over time. Teachers do not spot pupils who are falling behind in reading. This means some pupils do not receive the support that they need to catch up. That said, older pupils clearly enjoy reading and are enthusiastic about the fiction and non-fiction books that they read.

Leaders have put effective systems in place to ensure that pupils with SEND, including children in the early years, are identified quickly. Leaders make sure that these pupils benefit from additional appropriate support so that they can access the full curriculum alongside their peers. However, the weaknesses that exist within certain subjects hinder the progress that pupils with SEND make through the curriculum.

Leaders' work to promote pupils' personal development is effective. Pupils learn about life in modern Britain. The school council offers pupils opportunities to develop leadership and decision-making skills. Pupils talked fondly of a recent residential trip to Edinburgh. They learn about faiths and cultures that are different to their own. Leaders also ensure that

pupils are well informed about topical issues, such as homelessness and climate change.

Governors carefully consider ways to maintain staff's well-being. The staff team work closely together and with colleagues from other schools. Teachers appreciate leaders' efforts to consider their workload.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspectors agreed that history, art and design and design and technology may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders, including governors, take their safeguarding duties seriously. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They have a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse or neglect and the procedures to follow to report concerns. Leaders ensure that if families are facing challenging circumstances, they receive the help and support that they need.

Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about healthy relationships, healthy eating and how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not given the teaching of phonics a high enough priority. Not all staff have been trained well enough to deliver the newly implemented phonics programme. Some staff do not use assessment techniques effectively to ensure that phonics activities are well matched to pupils' needs, particularly those who are struggling to read. Consequently, some children in the early years and pupils in key stage 1 do not gain the phonics knowledge that they need to become successful readers. Leaders must ensure that staff have the skill and expertise to teach the chosen phonics programme effectively so that pupils become fluent and confident readers.
- In some subjects, such as science, leaders have not identified the key knowledge that they want pupils to learn or the order in which this content should be taught. This prevents teachers from designing learning that builds pupils' knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that the curriculums in these subjects identify the important knowledge that they want all pupils, including those with SEND, to learn so that pupils know and remember more over time.
- Some teachers do not use assessment strategies well enough to identify what pupils have learned and understood before they move on to new learning. This causes gaps in pupils' knowledge. Leaders must ensure that teachers use assessment techniques effectively so that pupils can build on their prior learning.

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 2017.

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	119530
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10226092
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	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Andrea Towse
Headteacher	Kerry Stafford-Roberts
Website	www.hornby.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is a Church of England school in the Diocese of Blackburn. The last section 48 inspection took place in March 2017.
- The school operates through a collaboration with a local primary school. The headteacher has an executive headteacher role.
- Leaders do not access alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, subject leaders and staff.

- Inspectors spoke to staff about safeguarding, their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with governors. The lead inspector also spoke with an adviser from the diocese.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in meetings and around the school. They also observed pupils' behaviour as they moved around the school, in class and in the outdoor play area. Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire.
- There were no responses to Ofsted's staff or pupil questionnaires.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation about safeguarding. They spoke with staff to understand how they keep pupils safe. They reviewed the school's record of checks undertaken on newly appointed staff.

Inspection team

Emma Jackson, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Gaynor Rennie

Ofsted Inspector

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