

# Inspection of a good school: Holmwood School

Saltersgill Avenue, Easterside, Holmwood School, Middlesbrough TS4 3PT

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Inspection dates:

28 and 29 September 2022

## **Outcome**

Holmwood School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

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

School leaders have ensured that Holmwood School is a place where pupils are well taught and well supported. Leaders have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Pupils experience a high-quality curriculum with reading at its heart. Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. Pupils are well prepared for their next steps. Parents and carers that spoke to inspectors speak highly of the school's work.

There is a high staff presence around the school. Staff are continually on hand to support and reassure pupils. Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. The school is calm. This ensures pupils can learn in a climate without disruption. All pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff are highly attentive to their needs and ensure that all pupils benefit from high-quality provision.

Leaders, staff and pupils create a positive environment in which bullying is not tolerated. If bullying does occur, it is swiftly and effectively resolved. Pupils' attendance at school is high as they are happy to be at Holmwood School.

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

Leaders and staff are ambitious for pupils. They provide pupils with highly effective education and care. The school is very well led and managed. Leaders are well supported by the newly formed governing body. Senior leaders have a clear presence around school and lead on many aspects of the school's work.

Leaders have prioritised reading and the teaching of phonics. Leaders have high expectations for all pupils to be able to read. All staff, including non-teaching staff, have received phonics training. Leaders ensure that the teaching of reading has enough time and emphasis each day. Opportunities for extra support are organised if gaps in pupils'

reading arise. Teachers read aloud to pupils in confident and expressive ways. This helps pupils to enjoy reading. Teachers use questions well to encourage pupils to talk about what they have read. Reading areas around the school are attractive and well used. Pupils value books and they care for them well.

Teachers adapt the curriculum effectively to meet the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers make sure that pupils experience an ambitious range of knowledge and skills. Pupils are taught well by knowledgeable staff. Pupils' work is of high quality and their work develops well as they progress through the school. This means pupils are very well prepared for their next steps in life or education.

Leaders ensure pupils' personal development is of high quality. It is threaded through the school's curriculum and extends into all aspects of school life. Pupils experience a range of learning opportunities that support their personal development. These include sporting, cultural and therapeutic activities. Leaders continually review these activities to check that they meet pupils' needs. Pupils access their physical education entitlement and participate in additional yoga lessons. To improve their swimming skills, pupils in key stage 2 have two weeks of daily swimming lessons during the summer term.

Pupils' personal, social, health and economic education covers a wide range of issues. Pupils could describe how to keep themselves safe online. They could also talk about how to avoid the risks they face in the community. They learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Staff are well trained. They access effective professional development that helps to improve their practice. Leaders provide staff with the resources to effectively do their jobs. Staff are helped to manage their workload. Early career teachers feel particularly well supported. If things get difficult, staff know there are staff available to support their well-being.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

School leaders ensure safeguarding is prioritised. Staff know their responsibilities to ensure pupils are kept safe. They understand the risks that pupils face in the community. Staff know how to report concerns about pupils' safety and receive regular safeguarding updates. They are trained to identify and report safeguarding matters promptly. There is a high ratio of staff to pupils. This ensures pupils are kept safe and are well supervised during the school day.

Pupils feel safe and are well supported by adults in the school.

## **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 an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We

do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded 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.

## **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>	111775
<b>Local authority</b>	Middlesbrough
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211433
<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	90
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Linder Pott
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dennis Ley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.holmwoodschool.org.uk">www.holmwoodschool.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Holmwood School is a special school for pupils aged between four and 11 years. Most pupils have an education, health and care plan (EHC plan). Some pupils at the school are being assessed for an EHC plan.
- The school makes provision for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs, moderate learning difficulties and autism spectrum disorder.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND that has 10 pupils in key stage 1 who are registered at other mainstream settings.

## 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 met with the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers and some non-teaching staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the school's governing body.

- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. 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. The provision for teaching English was also closely scrutinised.
- The lead inspector met with each school's designated safeguarding lead. The inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding records, relevant policies and other safeguarding documentation. The inspector also reviewed the processes leaders use to identify and help pupils who need support. In addition, the inspector scrutinised the school's records of checks carried out on adults who work at the school.
- Inspectors visited lessons across the school, as well as activities at the start of the day and lunchtimes.
- The lead inspector observed pupils reading to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, including pupils who receive support to improve their reading.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspection team spoke to staff about their workload and pupils' behaviour in the school.
- The responses to Ofsted's surveys for pupils, staff and parents were also considered.

### **Inspection team**

David Mills, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

David Penny

Ofsted Inspector

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