

Inspection of a good school: Holmer Green Junior School

The Common, Holmer Green, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP15 6TD

Inspection dates:

12 and 13 October 2022

Outcome

Holmer Green Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Holmer Green Junior School are happy and polite. They are keen to welcome new people. Kindness ambassadors lead the way in championing respectful relationships. Pupils say that staff are kind and good at solving problems. The care that staff provide for pupils helps them to feel happy and safe in school

Pupils relish the opportunities for leadership within the school. Pupils value being able to 'use their voice' and contribute to decision-making. Eco warriors, sports councillors, school councillors and other roles are all elected by the pupils. They wear their badges of office with pride and take their duties very seriously.

Adults have high expectations of all pupils. Pupils take pride in their work. They are enthusiastic about learning, particularly reading. Pupils know that staff give them help when it is needed.

Pupils are kind to each other and, because of this, bullying happens rarely at this school. Pupils are confident that should it happen, an adult would help them quickly to sort it out. Pupils behave well. There are clear routines and rules which are applied consistently by all staff.

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

Pupils develop a love of reading because they are introduced to a range of great books. The library is organised so that pupils can explore a range of authors on topics they find interesting. This means that their horizons are widened. Pupils enjoy the 'recommended read' activity where they read extracts of books they have enjoyed to their classmates. Staff ensure that daily phonics lessons follow the school's clear programme. This means that pupils who are not able to read fluently when they join the school can do so as quickly as possible.

School leaders have designed and implemented an ambitious curriculum. Leaders have carefully selected the important knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. This has been organised so that it builds over time. This means that pupils can make links between the work they have completed. The new curriculum in mathematics is ambitious and supported by carefully selected materials.

Teachers present information in a way that is interesting. Teachers and teaching assistants benefit from a carefully thought-out programme of training. Leaders have used educational research to determine teaching approaches that help pupils to recall prior learning. Strong relationships between adults and pupils mean that the classrooms are happy and positive working environments.

During lessons, teachers are adept at working out what pupils have learned and what they have found tricky. They use this information to reshape their teaching so that all pupils can understand. However, in some subjects, teachers are not as clear about what pupils have learned and remembered over time.

Leaders help teachers to identify if a pupil may have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They do this quickly, guiding teachers on how to help pupils. Leaders ensure that support is effective, even when there are delays in the statutory assessment process. Pupils with SEND are supported well in their learning and make progress against their individual targets. They access the full curriculum alongside their friends.

After a period of turbulence, governors are taking action to strengthen their strategic leadership of the school. They are using the recommendations from the recent review of governance to guide their work. The new governing body includes members with appropriate skills and experience. The interim leadership team and the governing body are working closely together. Staff feel their workload is considered carefully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that all staff receive safeguarding training and regular updates. They make sure that staff who work with pupils with particular needs have specialist safeguarding training. Staff take their responsibilities very seriously and know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. Leaders act on all concerns raised by staff about pupils' welfare. Leaders work with other organisations when it is appropriate to do so. Pupils learn how to keep safe through their personal, social and health education learning. They understand how to stay safe when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Until recently, governors' strategic leadership and oversight of the school has not been strong enough. This means that they have not had the knowledge they need to hold

leaders fully to account. Governors need to implement their plans to strengthen their strategic role, including their oversight of the school, so that they have an accurate understanding of the quality of education for all pupils.

- In some subjects, teachers do not have a secure understanding of what pupils have learned and remembered over time. This means that they are not able to adjust lesson content to reflect any gaps in pupils' previous learning. Leaders need to provide training for staff so that teachers have a stronger understanding of pupils' previous 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 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 September 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

Unique reference number	110300
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10241974
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Hammond
Headteacher	Grishma Sutaria-Cassidy (Interim Headteacher)
Website	www.hgjs.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has undergone significant changes to leadership since the last inspection. The interim headteacher took up her role in September 2022.
- The school does not currently use alternative provision.

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 carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with curriculum 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 held meetings with members of the governing body and leaders of provision for SEND, behaviour and attendance and personal development. The inspector also observed lunchtimes and breaktimes.

- The inspector explored the school’s safeguarding culture by considering safeguarding records and procedures, meeting with a range of pupils and staff and talking to safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector spoke to a representative from the local authority on the telephone.
- The inspector considered the 70 responses and 32 free-text responses made by parents to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered the 24 responses to Ofsted’s online staff survey and 102 responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey.

Inspection team

Lizzie Jeanes, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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