

# Inspection of High Down Infant School

Down Road, Portishead, Somerset BS20 6DY

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Inspection dates: 9 and 10 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
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Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
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Personal development	<b>Good</b>
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Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
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Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
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Previous inspection grade	
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Ofsted has not previously inspected High Down Infant School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection of the predecessor school

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

Pupils enjoy coming to this inclusive and welcoming school. They describe the school as a fun place to learn. Pupils understand how the school's 'learnasaurs' help them to listen, ask questions and persevere. Parents are overwhelmingly positive. One said, 'this is a lovely school where children are looked after by truly caring teachers.'

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct. Pupils are considerate and polite to others. They understand and follow the school rules, both in and outside the classroom. This starts in the early years where children listen carefully and follow instructions well.

Pupils feel safe. Parents agree. Leaders provide strong pastoral care. Pupils build trusting relationships with adults. They know that they can talk to an adult if they have a problem. Pupils say that if bullying happens, they trust adults to deal with it quickly.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer to them, such as street dance, karate and music. They are proud of the leadership opportunities they have to become lunchtime monitors or members of the 'trash mob'. Pupils say that these roles help them to look after others and improve the school environment.

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

Leaders have high expectations for what all pupils can achieve, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The executive headteacher accurately understands the school's strengths and areas to develop. Together with her staff, they have carefully considered what pupils need to know and when in the curriculum.

Leaders prioritise reading. Adults regularly read a range of stories to pupils. Pupils enjoy this. They understand that reading helps them to learn new words. Children in the early years learn phonics from the time they start school. They learn and remember new sounds well. All staff benefit from the training they receive to teach phonics effectively. Staff ensure that pupils who are at risk of falling behind receive the support they need to enable them to catch up quickly. Pupils read books with increasing accuracy and fluency as they move through the school.

In mathematics, there is a consistent approach to delivering the curriculum. Learning is broken down into smaller steps to help pupils to succeed. This starts in the early years. Children build their knowledge of early number well. They use this to confidently describe number patterns. Teachers use a range of strategies well to help pupils learn and remember important mathematical knowledge. This enables older pupils to solve more complex problems.

In most subjects, leaders make sure that the curriculum is carefully planned, starting in early years. However, in some foundation subjects, curriculum leaders are unclear about the learning that takes place in early years. This means that, in these subjects, the curriculum in key stage 1 does not build on what pupils have learned before. This slows pupils' learning.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. They make sure that effective systems are in place to identify pupils with SEND. Staff support pupils well. They have a clear understanding of pupils' individual needs. Learning is adapted well to enable all pupils to access a broad and balanced curriculum.

Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning. Low-level disruption across the school is rare. Staff quickly deal with this if it does occur. During social times, pupils play well together. The school is calm and orderly.

Pupils' personal development is well planned. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is used to develop the school's values. As a result, pupils understand the importance of tolerance and how rules keep them safe. Pupils talk confidently about different religions, such as Judaism. However, they are less confident when discussing fundamental British values, such as democracy.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel highly valued and work together well as a close team. Leaders consider the well-being of staff. They ensure staff are well trained and that expectations for their workload are manageable.

Governors, including those from the trust, have a detailed understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use the training they receive from the trust well. As a result, they hold leaders to account and ensure that systems and practices are robust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. They know their vulnerable pupils and families well. Leaders ensure staff receive specific safeguarding training. This enables them to carry out their safeguarding roles effectively. Systems for reporting and recording incidents are robust. Leaders work well with a wide range of professionals and external agencies. This ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families get the early help they need.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe through the curriculum. They know how their 'computing rules' help them to not share personal details or respond to messages from strangers.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, leaders are not clear about what children learn in early years. This means that children are not building on their prior learning as they enter key stage 1. This slows pupils' learning. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in key stage 1 builds on what pupils learn in the early years.

## 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>	143284
<b>Local authority</b>	North Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	10229017
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	299
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Adele Haysom
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andreya Cowan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.highdownschools.co.uk">www.highdownschools.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- High Down Infant School converted to become an academy school in September 2016. When its predecessor school, High Down Infant School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school is part of The Lighthouse Schools Partnership.
- The school has provision for three-year olds.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff and representatives from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- Inspectors considered how well the school protects pupils and keeps them safe. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. The lead inspector also scrutinised the school's single central record.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the staff and pupil surveys.

## Inspection team

Ben Jordan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Sean McKeown	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Marriott	Ofsted Inspector

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