

Inspection of Harold Court Primary School

Church Road, Harold Wood, Romford, Essex RM3 0SH

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Good
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What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders and staff have created a warm and nurturing environment where each individual pupil feels valued. All staff have high expectations for what pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), can and should achieve. Pupils learn well in a range of subjects. They enjoy school and are keen learners.

Pupils are polite and respectful. They feel safe and well cared for by all staff. Right from the start of early years, pupils develop positive attitudes to their learning. The 'Harold Court way', which was created together with pupils, sets the expectations for behaviour and conduct. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and focus on their learning. Classrooms are calm and orderly. Any off-task behaviour is dealt with quickly, as are any incidents of bullying. Pupils understand what bullying is and trust adults to deal with any issues that they may have.

The school's core values are woven through the curriculum and all aspects of school life. Pupils embrace the opportunities available to them to make a positive contribution to the school. For example, they are proud of being part of the school parliament, and taking on roles such as a playground leader, an eco-warrior or a librarian. Pupils' talents and interests are encouraged through a range of extra-curricular clubs and outings.

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

Leaders are ambitious about what they want pupils to learn. They provide pupils with a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders have prioritised the teaching of phonics, reading and mathematics from the early years up. This is to ensure that pupils have secure foundations for future learning. In most other subjects, the curriculum has been well sequenced, and pupils achieve well. Leaders have identified the knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn and remember. Teachers help pupils to grasp subject content securely.

However, in a few subjects, curriculum thinking does not focus on developing pupils' knowledge and understanding in as much depth. Sometimes, teachers do not have the subject expertise to deliver curriculum content in a way that helps pupils to remember and build on what they have been taught. Because leaders' curriculum thinking is still developing, checks on learning are not sharply focused on addressing misconceptions and ensuring that pupils have the knowledge they need for subsequent learning.

The teaching of reading begins as soon as children start in the early years. Pupils learn phonics through a structured programme, with knowledge introduced in a logical order. All staff are well trained and deliver phonics sessions in line with the programme's expectations. Pupils' phonics knowledge is regularly checked. Effective support is quickly put in place for any pupil at risk of falling behind. Pupils receive lots of practice to become fluent readers. They are given books that are well

matched to their phonics knowledge. Pupils become enthusiastic about reading. They enjoy the high-quality texts used in English lessons and story time sessions, as well as reading for pleasure in the school library.

Staff identify pupils' additional needs early and work closely with outside agencies to support pupils with SEND. These pupils follow the same curriculum as their peers. For pupils with more complex needs, bespoke learning support is put in place that is well matched to their needs. In many curriculum areas, teachers typically make appropriate adaptations to support these pupils to learn well. In subjects where leaders' curriculum thinking is not embedded, these adaptations are, at times, not as helpful in supporting learning.

All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand the rules and take responsibility for their behaviour and actions. In the early years, children settle in well and quickly get used to school routines. Staff help them to work and play with sustained concentration on their activities.

Pupils across the school learn about ways to help everyone feel included. Pupils enjoy sharing texts from the 'diversity box' that represent society in modern Britain. They understand that everyone has the right to be treated with respect and that there are many different types of families. Pupils are taught about British values and how these are part of their school life. For example, they know that their school parliament represents democracy in action and that the 'Harold Court way' is an example of why rules help to benefit everyone in the community. Pupils are taught about how to lead a healthy lifestyle and the choices they make which will help this. The curriculum also provides opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

The governing body is very committed to the school. It makes strategic decisions to ensure that appropriate resources are available for staff and pupils. Governors support and hold leaders to account effectively.

Staff feel valued because leaders take into account their well-being and workload when making decisions. They are proud to work here.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a robust culture of safeguarding throughout the school. All staff and governors receive regular training. They are alert to the risks that pupils face and know the signs of abuse to look out for. There are clear systems in place to report any concerns about pupils.

Pupils know they can talk to adults about any worries they have. Staff in the pastoral team work closely together to ensure that pupils and their families get support quickly. Leaders also work effectively with other agencies to provide support where necessary.

Leaders carry out appropriate background checks on staff and volunteers before they start work at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the planning and the delivery of the curriculum does not support pupils to understand and remember important knowledge. Pupils do not build up their knowledge as progressively in these subjects. Leaders need to refine their aims for the curriculum in some foundation subjects and ensure that teachers have the expertise to deliver the curriculum consistently well and check that pupils understand and recall subject content.
- Adaptations to learning for pupils with SEND are not as effective in subjects where the aims and the delivery of the curriculum are not well embedded. In a few subjects, teachers are sometimes unsure about how best to make learning the curriculum manageable for pupils with SEND. Leaders need to further develop staff expertise in making adaptations to learning for pupils with SEND so that these pupils learn and remember subject content across the curriculum.

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	102278
Local authority	Havering
Inspection number	10242009
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	388
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sarah Philpotts
Headteacher	Lynn Hogan O'Neill
Website	www.haroldcourt.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not make use of any alternative providers.

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 held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders. They met with members of the local authority and governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors did deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, physical education and music. 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. They also listened to some pupils read.

- Other subjects, such as geography, religious education and art, were also considered as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to safeguarding, attendance, personal development and behaviour. The views of parents and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's surveys.
- Inspectors considered the effectiveness of safeguarding through discussions with leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils. They looked at records relating to safeguarding, including pre-employment checks on staff.

Inspection team

Julie Wright, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Andrew Hook	Ofsted Inspector
Helena Mills	Ofsted Inspector

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