

Inspection of a good school: Hilmarton Primary School

Compton Road, Hilmarton, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8SG

Inspection date:

6 December 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. Inspectors are recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to Hilmarton Primary School. They say that everyone is kind, friendly and caring. New pupils speak highly of the support they receive and how this helps them to fit in quickly.

Despite this, there are inconsistencies in the implementation of the school's curriculum, including in early reading. Many curriculum changes are new. As a result, pupils are not yet developing the depth of knowledge that they should. This hampers the progress they make.

Leaders have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive. Staff reward good behaviour and manners. Pupils are polite and courteous. Most follow the school rules of 'ready, respectful, safe'. Pupils feel safe. They say that bullying is rare. If it were to happen, they are confident that adults would deal with it.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs on offer to them, such as crochet, gardening and taekwondo. They are proud to be members of the school council. They say that this helps them grow in confidence and to make positive changes to the school.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders have ensured that the curriculum makes clear the knowledge pupils must learn. However, teachers are only just beginning to implement this. It is too early to see the impact on pupils' learning.

Leaders prioritise reading. They have begun a new phonics programme. This sets out the letters and sounds that pupils learn. Most pupils who fall behind in reading have the help they need to catch up. However, although staff have had training, the implementation of the reading programme is inconsistent. Teachers do not always check what sounds and words pupils know. Some pupils do not read books that help them to practise the sounds they have learned. They find these books too difficult. This hinders their ability to read confidently and fluently.

The mathematics curriculum is well-planned and sequenced. In the early years, children can describe shapes and explain why a rectangle is different to a square. Older pupils build on this. They use their knowledge of number well to complete more complex problems.

Leaders have begun to improve the curriculum in some wider subjects. In geography, for example, leaders have identified the important knowledge that pupils need to learn. This is beginning to make a difference. For example, pupils can locate places and talk about their features. However, the new curriculum has only recently been put in place. There are aspects, such as fieldwork, that have yet to be fully developed. This prevents pupils from developing the depth of knowledge and skills they need. Across the curriculum, there has been a review of subject leadership. Leaders have taken on new roles. They have had limited opportunities to check on their subjects. As a result, they do not yet accurately understand how well pupils learn the intended curriculum.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils with SEND achieve. They work well with a range of external agencies and specialists to provide pupils with the support they need. Pupils with SEND play a full role in the wider life of the school. Despite this, some parents who responded to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, comment negatively about the way in which the school supports pupils with SEND.

Most pupils show positive attitudes towards their learning. However, on occasions, some pupils struggle to focus. There is a calm and orderly atmosphere, both in and outside the classroom. Pupils play well together. Older pupils enjoy the opportunities they have to help and care for the younger pupils during social times.

Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. The curriculum reflects the school's values. Pupils learn about healthy relationships. They know that friends are loyal and trustworthy. Pupils talk confidently about different cultures and understand why equality is important.

Governors understand what the school does well and where it needs to improve. They hold leaders to account. Staff enjoy working at the school and say they work well as a team. They feel valued and appreciate the way in which leaders consider their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a clear safeguarding culture across the school. Leaders work well with a range of professionals. This ensures that vulnerable pupils and their families get the early help they need. Staff are well trained. They understand how to spot signs that a pupil might be at risk. They record these concerns in a timely manner. Leaders carry out appropriate checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils.

Pupils know how to stay safe in the real and online world. For example, they understand the importance of not sharing personal details with strangers online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that the new phonics programme is implemented consistently well. Staff do not routinely check pupils' understanding and the books that pupils read are sometimes too hard. As a result, some pupils struggle with reading and are not as fluent as they could be. Leaders need to ensure that the phonics programme is implemented consistently well for all pupils.
- Leaders work to develop the curriculum in some foundation subjects is new. It is not yet implemented as leaders intend. Consequently, pupils have not yet gained the depth of knowledge that they should. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum for foundation subjects is fully and effectively implemented so that pupils build the knowledge they need.
- Subject leadership is not yet fully developed. As a result, leaders do not have a well-informed view of their subjects or know what impact the intended curriculum is having. Senior leaders must develop subject leaders' expertise to ensure that subject leaders have precise information about how effectively the curriculum is taught and how well pupils learn.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in September 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.

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	126198
Local authority	Wiltshire
Inspection number	10256768
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	109
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Simon Purtell
Headteacher	Sam Churchill
Website	www.hilmarton.wilts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Leaders do not use any 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 met with the headteacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs coordinator, groups of staff, the governing body and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. 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.
- The lead inspector spoke with pupils and leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 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

Marcia Northeast

Ofsted Inspector

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