

Inspection of a good school: Herne Junior School

Love Lane, Herne Junior School, Petersfield, Hampshire GU31 4BP

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2023

Outcome

Herne Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are truly known as individuals at this school. They feel safe and nurtured. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive and respectful. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and confident communicators.

Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils to be effective global citizens and to achieve well. The school's 'Harmony Values' of motivation, honesty, independence, enjoyment, respect and collaboration are securely at the centre of the school's work. Staff and pupils have a clear, shared understanding of what these values look like in practice and why they are important.

Bullying is rare. Pupils really appreciate the 'bully box' where they can post any worries or concerns. Pupils have full confidence that adults deal with any incidents of unkind behaviour swiftly. Leaders' records and parents' comments confirm that this is the case.

Pupils value the wide range of opportunities available to them. They are proud of their success in sports competitions. The members of the Eco council passionately educate their peers about caring for our planet. A wealth of playground equipment, including an outdoor gym, ensures that pupils keep active at playtimes. Furthermore, pupils' learning is enriched within the extensive school grounds. The carefully cultivated allotment and beautifully constructed Iron Age round house enhance pupils' curriculum experience.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. They have clearly set out the knowledge that pupils must learn. Teachers know exactly what to teach and when to teach it. Pupils learn a broad range of subjects and, overall, they achieve well. In the strongest subjects, pupils in all year groups, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported well to access the effective curriculum. For example, in art and design, a carefully constructed curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to practise and reinforce previously learned skills such as drawing and shading so that they improve over

time. In stronger subjects, teachers check pupils' knowledge regularly and plan activities to deepen their understanding. This includes using effective adaptations for pupils with SEND. As a result, in subjects where the curriculum is securely and consistently embedded, pupils' achievement is strong.

However, in some subjects, pupils do not achieve as highly. In a few subjects, the curriculum has not been in place long enough to be embedded securely. In others, the work that teachers provide does not always deepen pupils' understanding as extensively. Furthermore, while leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND consistently well, the curriculum is sometimes not adapted effectively for these pupils. Occasionally, expectations of what all pupils can achieve are not high enough. For example, in some mathematics lessons, problem-solving activities which allow pupils to deepen their mathematical understanding are not routinely given to all pupils.

All staff prioritise reading. They want pupils to love reading and read with fluency and comprehension. The school's approach to supporting those pupils who are still learning to read is a real strength. Pupils learn phonics using a well-constructed programme. Highly trained staff deliver this programme with precision. Pupils read books containing the letter sounds they have been taught. This enables them to read with increasing confidence and fluency quickly.

Pupils behave well. In class, they demonstrate high levels of concentration. Pupils have highly positive attitudes to their learning and work hard. They treat one another and adults with respect. They are kind and considerate and want to do well.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of opportunities to support their broader development. Visits to museums both locally and further afield, for example to Butser Ancient Farm, London and Ironbridge, enhance the curriculum. In addition, pupils develop independence and resilience through a carefully planned programme of residential experiences.

Leaders and governors seek to ensure that staff feel valued and are supported well to manage their workload. Staff appreciate the time they are given to do important tasks that make the most difference to the pupils. Parents are also highly positive. As one parent stated, echoing the views of many, 'Herne is a joyful and nurturing school. The staff go above and beyond continually, ensuring that all children flourish.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established a strong culture of vigilance. Highly effective training ensures that all staff know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Leaders work well with external agencies to provide effective support for those at risk of harm. Leaders are resolute about getting pupils and their families the help they need swiftly. They also ensure that all appropriate checks are carried out on adults to make sure that they are safe to work in school.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including when online. They know to seek adult help if they have a worry or concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the work that teachers provide does not always allow all pupils to develop a deep understanding. This means that, across the full curriculum, pupils do not always achieve highly. Leaders need to ensure that all teachers provide all pupils, especially the most disadvantaged and pupils with SEND, with consistently demanding work which enables them to acquire deep and detailed knowledge across the whole curriculum.

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 July 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	115940
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10241926
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	478
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Mary Fair
Headteacher	Susan Sayers
Website	www.hernejunior.com
Date of previous inspection	18 July 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Herne Junior School is a larger-than-average junior school.
- The headteacher joined the school in January 2023.
- The school does not currently use any 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector also met with members of the governing body, including the chair of governors, and an officer from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning

and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also discussed planning and documentation from a range of other subjects with leaders.

- The inspector reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Sue Keeling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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