

Inspection of a good school: Hildenborough Church of England Primary School

Riding Lane, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent TN11 9HY

Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

Outcome

Hildenborough Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy. They feel valued. They share warm, respectful and trusting relationships with staff, who know them well. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons. They demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils know the importance of kindness and caring, reflecting the school's ethos. They show a genuine care for one another and form strong friendships. These behaviours are demonstrated when working and playing with their peers.

Pupils behave well. Bullying is extremely rare and any concerns about bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. Pupils feel safe. They have every confidence that staff will help them if they have a problem or concern.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Pupils rise to the challenges set by their teachers, so that they succeed in their academic and personal development. They take pride in their work and wider achievements. Pupils benefit from the school's close links with the local community. An example of this is a recent community day where pupils and their parents came together with other community members to create the school's 'Forest School'.

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

Leaders have devised an ambitious curriculum and aspire for all pupils to achieve well. Well-sequenced plans and appropriate training have supported staff to implement the curriculum. In most subjects, including English and mathematics, teachers build carefully on previous learning. This enables pupils to build their knowledge securely and remember what they have learned. However, in a few wider curriculum subjects, pupils are not building their knowledge quite as securely or deeply. This is because sometimes not enough time is given for teaching some parts of the leaders' intended curriculum.

The curriculum is adapted successfully to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders ensure that staff know how to identify pupils' additional needs and to adapt learning effectively to meet these. Pupils are supported well by staff and make secure progress through the planned curriculum. Teachers check what pupils know through careful questioning. They use this information to adapt planning, so that any gaps in learning can be addressed. Teachers give pupils frequent opportunities to revisit learning, such as through quizzes.

Leaders prioritise reading. Effective phonics teaching in Reception Year enables children to make a secure start to learning to read. Teachers ensure that reading books are carefully matched to the children's knowledge. Children experience success and enjoy reading. Pupils who need extra help or start to fall behind are quickly identified and given the help they need to catch up and become confident and fluent readers.

Children make a similarly secure start with mathematics in Reception Year. They explore numbers and how to group and represent them in a variety of ways. Purposeful activities are used to reinforce learning. Pupils build on these secure foundations as they move through the school. Lessons and activities are engaging. Staff use a wide range of resources to support pupils' learning.

In early years, the indoor and outdoor learning environments are well organised. Children choose from a range of stimulating activities and resources to help them learn through play. Adults use skilful questioning to encourage children to think independently and problem solve. They help them reflect on their behaviour from the word go. The behaviour policy is applied consistently across the school. Pupils know the behavioural expectations, and most respond accordingly. Across the school, pupils behave well.

Personal development is a strength. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural curriculum is planned and delivered effectively. Pupils develop their understanding of the world and their role in it. They are encouraged to think of others; for example, each Christmas, pupils send letters and care packages to serving military personnel through a linked PO Box. After the death of the Queen, pupils sent cards and poems to Buckingham Palace. Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular clubs. They particularly enjoy attending choir and performing in London in the Young Voices at the O2. Leaders capitalise on expertise from parents to enhance and extend the clubs on offer.

Leaders ensure that teachers' workload is manageable. They provide additional time to complete tasks which helps the teachers manage their time. Staff are happy and enjoy working at the school. They say they are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding across the school. All recognise the importance of this work. Staff and leaders are confident in identifying any safeguarding concerns. All staff receive relevant, up-to-date training and there are secure procedures in place for recording any concerns. These clear procedures are known and followed by all staff.

Leaders know who to contact for further advice and support if needed. They use external agencies effectively to help pupils and their families. Pupils feel safe and know they can speak to an adult if they have any worries.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not ensured that enough time is given to some aspects of the curriculum. This means that teachers are not able to teach all the school's planned curriculum content effectively. Consequently, pupils are not building their knowledge securely or deeply enough in a few subjects. Leaders need to review their current arrangements for the timetabling and implementation of the 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 October 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	118603
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10240743
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Kathleen Hollings
Headteacher	Ruth Ardrey
Website	www.hildenborough.kent.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	23 May 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school in the Diocese of Rochester. The school's most recent section 48 inspection took place on 6 October 2015. The next section 48 inspection will take place within eight years of the date of this inspection.
- Since the previous inspection, there has been a change of leadership at the school. The headteacher has been in post since September 2021.
- There is a breakfast and after-school club at the school which is run by an external provider.
- 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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other school leaders. She met with a representative of the diocese and held a meeting with a representative from the

local authority. The inspector also met with four members of the governing body, including the chair of governors.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- The inspector scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and documents that set out their priorities for improvement.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector met with the designated lead. She reviewed a wide range of documents and records and held discussions with staff and pupils.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times of the day.
- The views of pupils and staff were considered through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys. The inspector took account of parents' responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Debbie Bennett, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates:
<http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023