

Inspection of a good school: Hook Norton Church of England Primary School

Sibford Road, Hook Norton, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX15 5JS

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 March 2023

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Hook Norton Primary is a vibrant and welcoming community. Happy pupils look forward to seeing their friends and learning new things each day. Relationships between pupils and adults are warm and respectful. Pupils feel safe and secure because dedicated adults work together as a team to care for them. Pupils are courteous and diligently follow the single school rule about consideration.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the school's values of 'live, love, care, think, learn, dare'. Pupils describe how and why they demonstrate them in their learning. Pupils feel it helps them be at their best in school. Pupils value the opportunities to explore their interests and develop character traits through clubs, activities and visits. They especially like representing the school in sports and maths competitions. Pupils voted onto the school council or eco council make a real contribution to improving the school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils' achievement and behaviour. Pupils are calm and focused so that learning is rarely disrupted by the behaviour of others. Leaders take effective action to minimise any impact and get learning quickly back on track. Bullying or unkindness is uncommon. When issues occur, staff act effectively so friendships can resume. Pupils and parents hold dedicated staff in high regard.

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

Leaders have designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Teachers know what to teach so that pupils learn the knowledge and skills needed for the next stages of learning. Teachers present information clearly, using subject-specific language. However, in a very small number of subjects, the essential content for pupils to know and remember is not as precisely laid out in a logical sequence as it is for English and mathematics. This sometimes means that misconceptions are missed or that pupils' understanding is not checked effectively.

Overall, pupils in all year groups achieve well, especially in reading and mathematics. The tasks that teachers set help pupils learn new things and practise these. This helps pupils make stronger connections between topics so that they remember their learning. Well-considered enrichment trips enable pupils to understand how the world around them links to their classroom work.

Children get off to a flying start in Nursery and Reception Year. Children particularly enjoy exploring the learning environment, which is rich with language and learning opportunities that feed their curiosity. Skilled staff capitalise on every chance to help children learn new words and develop confidence with numbers. Teachers are adept at making sure children grasp what they are learning. In turn, children feel a sense of accomplishment.

Leaders have a robust system in place to identify and meet the needs of pupils who require additional help. Teachers are also trained to adapt tasks to meet the wide range of needs for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, pupils with SEND are supported well to develop their knowledge and skills across the curriculum and encouraged to learn alongside classmates.

Leaders prioritise the teaching of reading. They seek to inspire pupils to read for pleasure. Teachers use carefully chosen, high-quality texts to teach comprehension and extend pupils' vocabulary. In the early stages of learning to read, pupils practise with books containing the sounds they know. This helps them become fluent and confident readers quickly. Pupils needing extra help are given skilful support to keep up. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the texts they are exposed to, which also helps with their ideas and in their writing.

Pupils behave well and invariably choose to do the right thing. They are keen to learn, concentrate well in lesson and show positive attitudes. In the early years, children carefully follow the well-established routines. They learn to take turns, listen carefully and cooperate with each other.

The school develops pupils' character and personal development extremely well. Pupils embrace leadership roles, fundraising initiatives and becoming 'junior citizens'. As a result, they become confident ambassadors for the school and themselves. Their strong sense of identity shines through. This gives them the determination to think deeply and change things for the better. It also helps them be ready for life in modern Britain. In addition to the wide array of clubs, residential trips help pupils develop teamwork and confidence to push themselves even further.

Governors offer leaders important support and challenge to help leaders achieve their ambitious goals. They review the work of the school and check that strategic plans are working as intended. A small minority of staff do not feel that their workload, well-being or professional development opportunities are considered well enough. However, governors are already aware of this and have the capacity to deal with issues raised.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise signs of harm, which helps them identify children who may be at risk. Leaders ensure that reported concerns are promptly followed up diligently. Leaders work well with external agencies when required to make sure pupils get the right support in a timely manner. Leaders know their pupils well, so are alert to changes in their most vulnerable families' circumstances and in the local context. Checks on adults who work in school are accurate and all aspects of safeguarding work are monitored by governors. Some minor record-keeping inaccuracies were found that leaders are now putting right.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a very small number of foundation subjects, the curriculum is not yet fully effective. Consequently, pupils do not consistently achieve as well as they could. Leaders need to refine the curriculum so that it identifies the precise, sequenced knowledge that pupils must know and remember.
- Some safeguarding and behaviour records are not fully detailed. Although no pupils are at risk because of this, it means not all relevant information is linked together as coherently as it could be. Leaders should make sure that they accurately record all actions fully and link them together clearly.

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 October 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	123097
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10256462
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	267
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Joe Williams
Headteacher	Justin Stone
Website	www.hook-norton.oxon.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hook Norton is a Church of England voluntary controlled primary school under the Diocese of Oxford. The most recent section 48 inspection took place in May 2019.
- The school provides wraparound care through a breakfast and after-school club.
- Nursery provision at the school is for three-year-old children.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- Pupils are taught in mixed-aged classes for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Years 5 and 6.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the continuing impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held a wide range of meetings with the headteacher, members of the school's wider leadership team, curriculum leaders and teaching and support staff.

- The inspector met with five governors. He also spoke with a representative from the local authority and the Diocese of Oxford.
- Deep dives were carried out in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and physical education. These included visiting a range of lessons and looking at pupils' work. The lead inspector talked with staff and pupils about how teaching in these subjects builds pupils' knowledge over time. The inspector also heard pupils read to a known adult.
- A wide range of child protection documents, including the single central record, were checked. The inspector also assessed the school's culture of safeguarding throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation, school improvement plan and relevant school policies.
- Parents' responses to the Parent View questionnaire, along with their written comments, were considered. The inspector also talked with parents on the morning of the second day of inspection.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views about their learning, what behaviour is like at the school and whether they felt safe. The inspector also talked to pupils about their views on personal development.

Inspection team

Gareth Flemington, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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