

Inspection of Handford Hall Primary School

57 Gatacre Road, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 2LQ

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Handford Hall Primary School is a diverse, inclusive community where everyone is valued and welcomed. Pupils are very proud to attend the school and are highly respectful of each other and of the adults in the school. They are polite and courteous.

Pupils demonstrate the positive attitudes to their learning that leaders expect. They listen carefully in lessons and are eager to learn. Pupils behave exceptionally well. This results in pupils making progress in their learning. Bullying rarely happens in the school but when it does, pupils trust adults to deal with it quickly. Pupils are safe in this school. It is a happy place to be.

Pupils engage highly with the excellent range of clubs and activities on offer. These make significant contributions to their personal development. The physical education curriculum develops pupils' skills in a range of sports, such as gymnastics, and water sports, such as kayaking. Weekly music assemblies encourage all pupils to develop a love for singing and music. A large number of pupils are members of the school choir. During the inspection, pupils were preparing to perform at a Young Voices concert at the O2 Arena in London.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The curriculum, which begins in early years, clearly identifies the important information that pupils will learn and when they will learn it. In early reading and mathematics, staff have expert subject knowledge. This helps them to teach effective lessons.

Most pupils remember the key information that they have been taught. In some subjects, such as mathematics, leaders build in opportunities for pupils to revisit and build on past learning. This helps pupils to build a secure knowledge over time. However, in a few foundation subjects, information is not always revisited as frequently. As a result, there are a small number of pupils who are unable to fluently recall what they have previously learned.

Leaders have prioritised reading in the school. Staff are well trained to support the teaching of phonics. As soon as children start in Reception, they learn to recognise letters and learn the sounds that they represent. Staff identify pupils who struggle to make progress with their reading. Pupils receive the support that they need to catch up quickly. They read books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. Pupils develop a love of reading and talk about reading with enthusiasm. Pupils are often found in the reading club during their lunch breaks. Pupils enjoy the books that they read and that their teachers read to them. They explain how some books help them understand different cultures.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify and support pupils with SEND. This includes those pupils who join the school partway through the academic year. Pupils' individual plans identify their needs accurately. Staff use these plans to inform their teaching. Staff know their pupils well and this, along with the support that is in place, helps pupils with SEND to make good progress.

Children get off to a positive start in Reception. There are clear routines and expectations that children follow. For example, during a music activity, children skilfully tapped out the rhythms they heard. When the activity finished, they sat back down calmly and placed their instruments in front of them. The curriculum provides children with a broad range of well-taught activities which help them to practise their learning.

Leaders promote the importance of attendance. However, leaders do not communicate their expectations around punctuality clearly enough. Many pupils do not arrive in school promptly to start the day. As a result, these pupils miss out on some of their daily learning experiences to practise their skills and revisit the knowledge they are learning.

Leaders have put a highly effective programme of personal development in place in the school. They review the programme regularly to meet the needs of the changing demographic of the school. All pupils experience a wide range of activities to help them prepare for life in modern Britain. Opportunities and trips, such as a visit to Ipswich Court, help to develop pupils' cultural understanding. Pupils in this diverse school identify and celebrate their own cultural backgrounds. The school is an inclusive environment. Pupils contribute to the school community through their leadership roles; for example, school prefects act as exemplary role models to younger pupils.

Trustees and governors understand the vision of the school. They support and challenge leaders equally as well. Staff morale in the school is high. They feel well supported. This is a result of the consideration that leaders give to their well-being and workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have developed positive relationships with parents and carers. This helps leaders to provide support to vulnerable pupils and their families.

Staff receive regular training. They understand their responsibilities in keeping children safe. They use the system that leaders have put in place to report any concerns that they have. Leaders respond quickly and appropriately to any concerns. When required, leaders work effectively with a range of external agencies.

Leaders carry out thorough pre-employment checks when new staff join the school.

Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe. For example, pupils know not to share personal information when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few areas of the curriculum, a small number of pupils do not fluently recall their prior learning. Leaders need to continue to evaluate and review their curriculum to support all pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding to secure the best possible outcomes.
- Too many pupils do not get to school in a timely manner at the start of the day. This means that they miss important learning that leaders have put in place. Leaders need to ensure that they continue to monitor attendance and punctuality and communicate the importance of this with parents so that vital learning is not missed.

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	144212
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10255021
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	378
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Carter
Headteacher	Katarzyna Blake
Website	www.handfordhall.omat.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 February 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Handford Hall Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- This is the first graded inspection of the school since it joined the Orwell Multi Academy Trust in April 2017.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is significantly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND who attend the school is above average.
- The stability of the pupil population is well below the national average.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, French and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of work.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also spoke to some parents.
- The lead inspector met with members of the local governing committee and trustees.
- During the inspection, meetings were held with leaders who have responsibility for SEND, behaviour and attendance, personal, social and health education and early years provision.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding. They met with the designated safeguarding lead and scrutinised the single central record. Other safeguarding documents and records were also checked.
- The lead inspector considered the 20 responses and 12 free-text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The lead inspector also reviewed the 26 responses to Ofsted's staff survey and the 65 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Wayne Jarvis, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Adam Dabin	Ofsted Inspector
Hayley O'Dea	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