

Inspection of an outstanding school: Hounslow School

Jacobs Gutter Lane, Totton, Southampton, Hampshire SO40 9FT

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding 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. The next inspection will therefore be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are determined to support all pupils to do their best while also maintaining positive well-being. As a result, pupils are proud to attend a school that is ambitious for their futures and inclusive. Specific initiatives, including a pupil mentoring programme and the development of 'The Hub', help pupils to develop positive attitudes towards their learning.

Most pupils meet leaders' high expectations for behaviour and conduct in school. Pupils know what their responsibilities are in keeping the school a safe and happy environment. As a result, pupils feel confident to share any concerns that they might have with a trusted adult. Most pupils are confident that any bullying in school is resolved quickly.

Leaders are equally as ambitious for pupils to pursue their wider talents and interests as they are for their academic pathways. Across the curriculum, pupils have a range of clubs and events available to them to complement what they are taught in lessons. Many parents appreciate the opportunities that pupils have at the school. As one parent said, 'Staff are kind and thoughtful. Leaders are determined to provide the right support, even when it is difficult to do so.'

Leaders are driven to provide an exceptional education for all pupils. They have accurately and clearly identified the school's current priorities to make this a reality.

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

Curriculum leaders have thought carefully about the content that pupils need to learn and when it is appropriate to teach it. In subjects, including art, for example, leaders have broken down complex skills into step-by-step stages to support all pupils to know and do more. In other subjects, including science, leaders have ensured that their curriculum

provides pupils with time to revisit important knowledge and for staff to regularly check pupils' understanding. However, while the curriculum has been carefully planned, some fluctuations in staffing within some subjects have contributed to inconsistencies with how content is taught. Across some subjects, not all pupils are benefiting from teaching approaches that build on what they show that they know and can do. This means that some pupils have clear gaps in their knowledge. Leaders are aware of the additional support required in some subject areas to gain consistency in the quality of education across the school.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are accurately identified. Staff are well supported to use clear plans to provide pupils with the support that they are entitled to in lessons. For a small number of pupils, this means that there are adaptations to their curriculum to help them to benefit from extra support.

Leaders have high expectations for behaviour and conduct in lessons and around school. As a result, pupils feel safe in school, and most pupils are confident that bullying is quickly and effectively managed. Leaders are aware of low-level disruption taking place in some classes and are taking action to ensure that staff are supported to consistently implement the behaviour policy.

Pupils' wider development is a key priority for leaders. As a result, pupils have access to a wide range of events designed to enrich their experiences in school. These include opportunities to participate in drama productions, 'languages day' and to take an active role in school decision-making as part of the school council. Trips and extra-curricular opportunities are thoughtfully provided to give additional breadth and depth to the content pupils learn about within their curriculum. Some of these activities, for example 'meet the scientist', provide pupils with opportunities to engage with the local community and enrich their understanding of career options. Further careers guidance through personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons means that pupils are well informed about their options for the future. Pupils understand the importance of their PSHE lessons, where they also learn about healthy relationships and safety.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders value their staff and take a measured approach to carefully balance the needs of staff with the needs of their roles. Staff feel well supported by leaders and within their teams. Early career teachers receive structured support to develop their practice.

Governors are passionate about the school and well informed. They work closely with leaders to assure themselves of the school's strengths and priorities. Governors' regular presence through visits has enabled them to provide bespoke support to help manage workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know their pupils well and are alert to the risks that pupils might face within their community. They know how to use the school processes if they have any concerns about

pupils. When pupils report a concern, leaders take prompt and appropriate action.

Pupils learn about ways to keep themselves safe through lessons within the curriculum, theme days and assemblies. These opportunities are carefully planned to teach important age-appropriate knowledge and respond to aspects of safety that are relevant to the local community. Pupils confidently discuss what they have been learning about and the importance of it.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum is not consistent across some subjects. This means that within some subjects, pupils are not well supported to learn the intended curriculum. As a result, some pupils have clear gaps in their knowledge. Leaders must ensure that all staff receive the training and support required to make appropriate decisions about how to teach their curriculum so that more pupils know and remember more.
- Leaders are aware that some low-level disruption in lessons interrupts learning. This is because high expectations are not yet consistent across the whole school. Leaders must ensure that they evaluate their current approaches to precisely identify and target where behaviour is not meeting their high expectations.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 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 outstanding in March 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	137229
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10256418
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,298
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alison Hixon
Headteacher	David Veal
Website	www.hounsdowndown.hants.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 to 17 March 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The headteacher was the associate headteacher at the previous inspection in 2017. He took up the substantive post as headteacher in January 2021.
- The school had a no formal designation inspection in June 2019.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school currently uses two alternative provisions.

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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, science, art, languages and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with the subject leader, observed pupils at work, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about

their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- Inspectors held meetings with leaders from across the school. The lead inspector also held meetings with members of the academy trust board and governors.
- The inspection team reviewed a range of documentation and relevant school policies, including leaders' own evaluation of the effectiveness of the school and their plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors talked to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and during social times.
- Safeguarding records were scrutinised, including the single central record, records of referrals and evidence of leaders' actions. Inspectors also spoke to many staff and pupils about this area of the school's work.
- Inspectors considered 307 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 213 free-text comments. Inspectors also took account of 96 responses to the staff survey and 231 responses to the pupil survey. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils to gather their views.

Inspection team

Hanna Miller, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Marande

Ofsted Inspector

Steve Baker

Ofsted Inspector

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