

Inspection of Hempsted Church of England Primary School

St Swithun's Road, Hempsted, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL2 5LH

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy learning at this friendly, safe and welcoming school. Leaders have created a nurturing environment for pupils and families. Pupils embrace the school's vision of 'Growing together in God's love'. They show this by valuing everyone for who they are.

Leaders aim to provide a high-quality education for all pupils. They continue to review and improve the school's curriculum to provide the knowledge and skills pupils need to achieve well.

Pupils exhibit the school's values of compassion, thankfulness and friendship. Consequently, they do not worry about being bullied. Lessons are calm and purposeful. Older pupils say that disagreements and unkind remarks occasionally happen, but staff help them resolve issues.

Pupils value their roles of responsibility as school councillors, hall crew and house captains. They enjoy how staff recognise their efforts. For example, a highlight for many is receiving a postcard or house point for doing the right thing.

Pupils regularly give back to the community through tree planting, litter picking and raising money for charity. The great majority of parents comment positively on the school's work. They say that Hempsted is a place where pastoral support 'is second to none' and children 'grow as individuals'.

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

Leaders know their school and community well. Staff are proud to work here. They say leaders listen to and value their opinions. As a result, morale is high. Governors share leaders' ambitions for pupils' learning and care. They hold senior leaders to account effectively.

Reading sits at the heart of the school's work. From the start of Reception Year, children develop their phonic knowledge. They confidently read the sounds they know. This continues throughout key stage 1. Staff match pupils with the right reading books so they can practise the sounds they learn. This helps pupils develop their confidence and fluency in reading. Staff use assessment well. They provide timely support to help pupils who need to catch up. However, in Reception Year, children do not have enough opportunities to apply their phonic knowledge in their writing.

Teachers use carefully selected books to motivate pupils to read and expand their vocabulary. Pupils avidly discuss the annual 'Hempsted Kids Choice Award' and millionaire word challenge. These inspire pupils to read widely and critically review what they read. When pupils leave Year 6, they are confident and competent readers.

Leaders continue to review and improve the school's curriculum. In many subjects, they have mapped out and sequenced the important knowledge and skills pupils learn from one year group to the next. For example, the history leader has developed well-thought-out enquiry questions to drive pupils' learning. Pupils in Year 4 talked knowledgeably about how the Roman Empire influenced Gloucestershire. In Year 5, pupils spoke about using the vanishing point when learning about perspective in Van Gogh's paintings.

In mathematics, teachers break learning down into small chunks so that pupils' memory is not overloaded. They recap and check prior learning at the start of lessons to help important knowledge stick. However, leaders' curriculum thinking is still developing in a few subjects. This means that pupils do not gain the depth of understanding as they do in most other subjects. Leaders recognise this. They continue to create better sequences of learning subject by subject.

The curriculum is inclusive. Staff adapt teaching methods and resources to make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn in a way that suits them best. This helps them to achieve well. Leaders work with a range of agencies to support pupils' pastoral needs. Parents appreciate the chance to hear from guest speakers at the regular 'coffee and chat' sessions.

Relationships between staff and pupils are positive and encouraging. Consequently, behaviour in lessons and around the school is calm and orderly. If pupils struggle with their behaviour, staff step in straight away to get them back on track.

Leaders provide pupils with many experiences to develop personally and socially. A wide range of sports clubs, such as cross country and cycling, supports pupils' physical health. Pupils build confidence by singing and performing in concerts. They broaden their cultural awareness by visiting the theatre and listening to a string quartet. Leaders celebrate events, for example, Black History Month, to help pupils understand and challenge prejudice. Pupils say that Hempsted welcomes everyone, regardless of their differences.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have secure systems in place to keep pupils safe. Safeguarding leaders ensure that they train staff well. All staff know how to identify when pupils might be at risk of harm. Leaders act swiftly to secure pupils the help they need. Governors have effective oversight of safeguarding. They test out for themselves that adults who work at the school are safe to do so.

Leaders teach pupils about risks and how to keep themselves safe, such as online and road safety. Pupils know who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the important knowledge that pupils should learn and revisit. This means that pupils do not gain the depth of understanding in these subjects as well as they could. Leaders must ensure that, in all subjects, they identify essential knowledge components and check how well pupils know and remember at each stage of their learning.
- Leaders do not provide children in the early years with enough opportunities to consolidate their early writing skills. This limits the progress that children make. Leaders should ensure that they provide purposeful and regular opportunities for children to practise their writing and mark making.

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	115608
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10229002
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Ben Nash
Headteacher	Richard Waller
Website	www.hempsted.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 May 2008

Information about this school

- There have been changes in leadership since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in September 2010 as co-headteacher. He became the single headteacher in 2015.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school is in the Diocese of Gloucester. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in May 2018 under the Education Act for schools of a religious character, the school was judged to be good.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, other school staff and three members of the governing body. The lead inspector held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with leaders and looked more widely at documentation in writing.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. Inspectors talked to governors, staff and pupils about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site. They spoke with pupils and staff about typical behaviour. Inspectors asked pupils about their experiences in the school, including bullying.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of staff to discuss how leaders support their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Dale Burr, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Wendy Hanrahan

Ofsted Inspector

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