

Inspection of a good school: Harston and Newton Community Primary School

High Street, Harston, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire CB22 7PX

Inspection date:

4 May 2023

Outcome

Harston and Newton Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Harston and Newton Community Primary School. Their schooldays are happy and full of enjoyment. They live out the school values, show respect and are encouraged to always do their best. Pupils rise to the high expectations adults have of them. They learn well, and develop into responsible young people by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.

Pupils know, and get on well with, one another. There is little bullying, but if it does happen, pupils know whom to turn to for help. This is also true if they fall out with a friend. They trust that adults will help them work through their problems.

Opportunities for pupils to take part in activities to develop their interests and talents are in abundance. The school is awash with music. Tunes from recorders, steel drums, ukuleles and violins are around every corner. Pupils take pride in learning an instrument, and relish the opportunity to show their musical talents through regular performances.

The extensive school grounds provide pupils with the chance to play and explore, especially in the school's forest area. The youngest children love spending time in the forest, where they are encouraged and supported to take well-considered risks.

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

Pupils learn well because leaders have designed a curriculum that sets out the important knowledge and skills pupils need to know in different subjects. The curriculum has been designed with a view to helping all pupils in the school's mixed-age classes acquire new knowledge in a sensible order. This ensures that learning builds on what pupils already know.

The pre-school class provides a safe and nurturing environment for the youngest children, including those who are two years old. Adults take every opportunity to talk to children about their learning, helping children develop their spoken language. Children are

immersed in stories, rhymes and songs. This helps them learn and use more words when they speak with adults and each other. Reading sits firmly at the heart of the curriculum. When they start learning to read, pupils quickly become confident and fluent readers. Adults are skilled at teaching the school's chosen phonics programme. They have expert subject knowledge and spot quickly if a pupil is finding anything tricky. The small number of pupils who require additional help are supported to catch up quickly. Older pupils love to have adults read to them. This helps widen their experience of different types of books, some of which they choose to read for themselves.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They explain new information to pupils clearly. However, although the curriculum is well designed, in practice teaching does not always meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. At times, activities are not suitably adapted for pupils of different ages, which means some do not learn as well as they could.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same curriculum as their peers. Activities are usually adapted to take account of these pupils' needs. This means that most pupils with SEND learn the curriculum, but in a slightly different way. The support plans for some pupils with SEND do not clearly set out what pupils need to know, remember or be able to do with sufficient clarity. This means they do not always receive the precise support they need.

The clear and consistent behaviour strategy means that pupils know what is expected of them. Pupils behave extremely well. Consequently, lessons are rarely disturbed, and pupils concentrate on their work.

Pupils are offered many and varied opportunities to widen their experiences. These include clubs such as hockey, dodgeball and athletics. Pupils are proud to participate in local competitions, including the recent inter-school swimming gala. Members of the school council have responsibility to help improve the school and local communities. They arrange events such as the local litter pick and are proud to serve in these roles.

Governors hold an accurate view of the school. They receive much useful information from leaders about how well certain aspects are doing. They do not just take leaders word for it but make regular checks to see for themselves.

Staff are proud to work at Harston and Newton Community Primary School. They value the support they receive from senior leaders. When ways of working change, senior leaders make sure staff understand the reason for this. Any changes are always made with the best interests of pupils at heart.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Adults are well trained to know the signs to look for that might indicate a pupil is at risk of harm. They report concerns they have clearly and in detail. Leaders follow up concerns

quickly. They work with outside agencies if needed to make sure pupils receive the support they need.

Before any adult starts work in school, leaders carry out all of the required checks. Governors speak to pupils and staff regularly to make sure the culture of safeguarding remains strong.

Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, both in the local area and when they are using the internet.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have put in place an ambitious curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of pupils in the mixed-age classes. In a small number of subjects, teachers do not implement this curriculum as well as they could. This means that some pupils do not always learn as much as they are capable of. Leaders should ensure they provide further training for teachers to help them implement the curriculum effectively in these few subjects, so that all pupils in mixed-age classes learn well.
- Support for some pupils with SEND lacks precision. This is because support plans do not set out clearly enough what these pupils need to know, learn and remember. As a result, the additional support some pupils receive is not always tightly focused. Leaders should ensure that staff put in place specific, measurable and time-focused support to ensure that these pupils achieve well.

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 March 2014.

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	110612
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10286237
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	120
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alastair Oatey
Headteacher	Siobhan Rouse
Website	www.harstonnewton.cambs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has a pre-school, which has provision for two-year-olds.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 1, 2 and 3 read to an adult.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with members of governing board and a representative of the local authority.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record of staff personnel checks and reviewed safeguarding paperwork and systems. Inspectors spoke with leaders, teachers, support staff, members of the governing body and pupils to evaluate the culture of safeguarding in school.
- Inspectors considered the 80 responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and spoke to several parents and carers informally during the inspection. There were no responses to the questionnaires for staff or pupils.

Inspection team

Nathan Lowe, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Helen Jones

Ofsted Inspector

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