

Inspection of a good school: East Huntspill Primary Academy

New Road, East Huntspill, Highbridge, Somerset TA9 3PT

Inspection date:

26 April 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good 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?

Pupils are proud to attend this small, caring school. They know leaders have high ambitions for them. Pupils enjoy the celebration of their work and recognition when they go 'over and above'. Some pupils join the school at different points in their education. They say the school is welcoming and friendly.

Leaders have recently raised the expectations in behaviour. Older pupils take leadership roles, such as play leaders. This is bringing more structure to breaktime. However, in lessons, the expectations are not always consistently applied. This means some pupils behave in a way that hinders the learning of others.

Pupils like and understand the new three school rules to 'respect yourself, each other and the environment'. Older pupils say the school has improved with these rules. Pupils learn about kindness and tolerance. Pupils are respectful towards one another. Older pupils help younger pupils to navigate friendships.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils to have a wide range of experiences. To support learning, leaders plan visitors and trips. Staff run a range of after-school clubs, such as arts and crafts, boxercise or coding. They change activities regularly and offer a variety of interests. Pupils enjoy the clubs. They are well attended.

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

Working across three schools, leaders have developed a broad and ambitious curriculum. In mathematics, for example, leaders sequence the learning so pupils build on what they know. Teachers are developing their understanding of the curriculum. Even so, in some subjects, teachers have less clarity about the exact knowledge to concentrate on. They sometimes plan activities that do not support or match the planned learning. This means there is a lack of precision about what pupils learn.

Teachers check how well pupils understand and what they can remember. They model to help pupils recall what they have learned. However, teachers do not always identify where pupils have gaps in their learning.

In nursery, leaders structure activities well. They focus on interactions with children to develop language. Leaders have planned the curriculum separately from Reception. Leaders are addressing this to support children more as they move through their early stages of development.

Leaders have introduced a clear approach to managing behaviour in lessons. Pupils know and understand these expectations. Most pupils focus on their learning. They enjoy talking about what they know. However, some pupils behave in a way that distracts others. Staff do not deal with these behaviours in a consistent way.

Leaders make sure that all staff know how to teach phonics systematically. This means that pupils who are in the early stages of learning to read follow a well-planned programme. Pupils learn phonics in small groups depending on what they need next. This means that all pupils have the support they need to develop their reading skills. Leaders check carefully and provide catch-up for pupils when they need it. Pupils read books matched to the sounds they are learning. As pupils become more confident in reading, they follow a programme that encourages a broad range of texts. Teachers check this so they can encourage pupils to read widely. Leaders prioritise reading. All pupils stop and read with their teacher at the end of each day. Parents join a regular reading café, where they sit and read with their children. For children in the nursery, parents borrow books from a box by the gate to take home.

The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator (SENDCo) makes sure that staff have the information they need to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers feel well informed to provide support or to identify need early in children. Pupils who need adaptation to manage the classroom environment are well supported. As a result, all pupils learn the curriculum.

Leaders have planned a well-mapped curriculum for personal, social and health education. Pupils learn about keeping safe, risks in the community, different families and growing up in a timely and sensitive way. Pupils contribute to shaping the school as members of the school parliament. For example, they have focused on environmental issues and how to save energy. Pupils feel that leaders listen to their contributions.

Leaders, including governors, are clear about the school priorities. They focus on the next steps to improvement. They feel well supported by the trust to make changes. Staff are proud to work at the school. They feel well supported. Networking and planning across the federation have helped staff to manage their workload and to develop their subject knowledge. They say that leaders are considerate of the well-being of all members of the school community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that there are clear protocols in place for reporting safeguarding concerns. Staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are vigilant and confident to report concerns. Staff know the pupils and their families well. They support pupils and their families when seeking support from external partnerships.

Leaders check recruitment processes efficiently. They make sure there are appropriate checks on adults working at or visiting the school.

Pupils learn about safeguarding risks. They know how to keep themselves safe online, and what actions they should take. Pupils are confident to speak to a trusted adult if they have concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not always build on their prior learning. This means they have some gaps in their knowledge. Teachers do not fully identify these gaps. As a result, pupils continue without securing the knowledge they need. Leaders need to ensure that teachers are confident about what precisely pupils need to know.
- In some subjects, curriculum activities do not help pupils to remember or embed the learning. This means pupils do not recall or understand their learning effectively. Leaders need to make sure that the learning activities planned are high in expectation and build on the important knowledge pupils are learning.
- Teachers do not consistently apply the expectations of the behaviour policy. As a result, some pupils continue to lack concentration. This distracts other pupils from their learning. Leaders need to ensure that the newly introduced behaviour expectations are well understood and applied consistently by all staff.

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 predecessor school, East Huntspill School, to be good in February 2016.

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	148023
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10287380
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Katie Dominy
Principal	Emma Barker
Website	www.huntspillfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in April 2021. It is part of The Priory Learning Trust.
- The principal came into post in September 2022.
- The school works closely with West Huntspill Primary Academy and Pawlett Primary School Academy. The principal leads across all three schools.
- The school uses one alternative provider.
- The school has an on-site nursery provision managed by school leaders.
- There is a breakfast club for pupils who attend the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this ungraded inspection under section 8 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the principal, school staff, trustees, the chief executive officer of the trust, governors and the SENDCo.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. 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' works.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases. They spoke with pupils and staff about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the view of staff and pupils in Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Rachel Hesketh, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jonathan Gower

Ofsted Inspector

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