

Inspection of a good school: Sixpenny Handley First School and Nursery

Common Road, Sixpenny Handley Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 5NJ

Inspection date:

26 April 2023

Outcome

Sixpenny Handley First School and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, staff and parents are proud of their happy and inclusive school. Supportive relationships with adults help pupils to feel safe. Pupils learn how to treat others with kindness and tolerance. They say that their school community 'accepts and helps everyone'.

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Lessons interest pupils and they work hard. Staff have established clear routines and high expectations of behaviour. Pupils respond well. They understand the school rules and enjoy earning rewards for good behaviour. Breaktimes are sociable occasions where pupils enjoy a range of activities. Bullying is rare, and pupils are confident that adults will resolve any concerns they have swiftly.

Leaders want the best for every pupil. They have designed a broad and interesting curriculum to meet the needs of pupils at Sixpenny Handley. In most subjects, pupils learn well.

Staff ensure the curriculum broadens pupils' horizons and develops their interests. All pupils learn a musical instrument. They enjoy taking part in golf lessons, residential visits and sports tournaments. Pupils make a positive contribution to school life and the wider community. They are eager to take on the various leadership responsibilities on offer. These include roles as 'Rights Respecting', eco and sports ambassadors.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum across most subjects. They have considered pupils' needs and starting points, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Leaders are clear about what they expect pupils to achieve at each stage. They ensure that each aspect of the curriculum starts in the early years. Leaders have identified the small steps of knowledge that pupils need to learn at each stage. However, in a small number of wider curriculum subjects, this is not

as clear. As a result, pupils do not build their knowledge and skills as securely as they should.

In most subjects, teachers have good subject knowledge. In mathematics, pupils learn the curriculum in a logical order. From the start in early years, children explore number through practical activities. This prepares them to learn to calculate in Year 1. Pupils revisit their previous learning, so they build on what they know. Teachers are quick to spot pupils' misconceptions or errors. Pupils of all ages apply their knowledge by reasoning and solving mathematical problems.

Leaders prioritise reading. Pupils learn to read from the start of Reception. Well-trained staff have the expertise to teach phonics effectively. Younger pupils who need extra help receive the precise support they need. Most pupils enjoy reading. Teachers select engaging and challenging books for pupils to study. They read to pupils every day. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they read in class. They can discuss their favourite authors and books. Reading club after school is popular. However, some older pupils do not practise and apply their phonics often enough. Books that these pupils read do not match the sounds they know. As a result, they are not catching up to become fluent readers quickly enough.

Pupils with SEND get the right support. Leaders use assessment well to identify what pupils need to learn next. They ensure that pupils with SEND are fully included in the curriculum and school life. Staff adapt activities to make sure pupils know and remember their learning. Leaders and staff regularly review support plans. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve well.

Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Right from the start of Nursery, children settle quickly into routines. They follow adults' instructions carefully and learn how to listen well. Children in Reception bubble with enthusiasm for learning. Pupils across the schools are eager to participate in lessons. They are clear about adults' expectations. Staff manage any lapses in pupils' behaviour and concentration swiftly. Disruption to learning is rare.

Leaders have developed a rich and effective programme for personal development. Pupils learn how to keep themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. They learn about healthy relationships in an age-appropriate way. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn to value democracy, equality and diversity. Pupils know they should treat everyone the same, regardless of any difference. Leaders bring the curriculum to life with a plentiful range of clubs, including art, dodgeball and ukulele.

Trustees and governors know the school's strengths and priorities for improvement. The local school committee use their visits to check the information that leaders share with them to see the impact of leaders' actions. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and staff know pupils and their families well. They are alert to risks to pupils' welfare. Staff have regular training and know how to report concerns. Leaders keep detailed records. They act swiftly if pupils need extra help. Leaders work together with external agencies to provide support for vulnerable pupils. They make appropriate checks on adults who work in school.

Staff teach pupils how to stay safe. This includes learning about online safety. Pupils name a range of trusted adults they can talk to if they do not feel safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of wider curriculum subjects, leaders have not identified precisely enough what pupils need to know and remember in order to achieve their curriculum goals. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum sets out the knowledge pupils should learn across all subjects.
- Some older pupils who struggle with reading do not receive the precise support they need. Books do not contain the sounds pupils have learned. As a result, pupils do not practise their phonic knowledge effectively. This hinders their reading fluency and confidence. Leaders need to make sure that weaker readers receive well-planned phonics teaching so that they catch up quickly.

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 November 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	142503
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	10268630
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	99
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Nick Musselwhite
Headteacher	Rachael Musselwhite
Website	www.sixpennyhandleschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- There is a nursery class on site.
- The school provides before-school and after-school provision on site.

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 met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, school staff, pupils, a member of the governing body and representatives of the Heath Academy Trust, including the chief executive officer and a trust lead.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics 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.

- The lead inspector listened to pupils from Years 2, 3 and 4 read to an adult.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding. They looked at the school's single central record and records of concerns and at how staff work to keep pupils safe.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunchtimes and breaktimes. They met with pupils to hear their views of behaviour.
- Inspectors considered 45 responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 43 free-text responses. They also considered 15 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Claire Mirams, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Laura Bennett

Ofsted Inspector

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