

Inspection of a good school: Holbeach Primary School

Nelgarde Road, London SE6 4TP

Inspection dates:

17 and 18 May 2023

Outcome

Holbeach Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming, warm and thoroughly inclusive place to learn. Pupils are proud to belong to the school community.

Pupils are happy and enjoy learning. Leaders use well-planned strategies to support pupils' wider development. The arts are at the heart of school life. Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to reflect, including through regular music assemblies and singing.

Pupils benefit from a range of opportunities to help them to develop a love of reading. Books are available everywhere on site, including in an inviting playground library. Leaders make sure that the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge and understanding well. Some subjects are more effective at doing this than others at the moment. Pupils work hard and want to do well in their learning. Overall, they are successfully prepared for their next steps, including moving on to secondary school.

Leaders have high expectations for pupils in all areas of their development. Pupils behave sensibly and show positive attitudes towards their learning. Pupils understand their responsibility to behave with kindness and respect. They said that bullying is not tolerated. On the rare occasions that bullying does happen, staff deal with it quickly. Pupils are kept safe and feel safe in school.

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

All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), study a curriculum that matches the breadth and scope of the national curriculum. Leaders have identified the knowledge that they want pupils to learn, including in the early years. The curriculum in most subjects is well designed. It builds in carefully planned opportunities for pupils to revisit and remember important knowledge and skills. In music, for example, pupils regularly recap prior learning. Teachers ensure that pupils, including those with SEND, have the required knowledge to tackle more complex ideas. The needs of those

pupils with SEND are identified accurately and adaptations are made to help them learn successfully.

In a few subjects, leaders have not defined precisely the building blocks of knowledge that pupils need to make progress through the curriculum. This reduces how well some pupils are supported to extend and deepen their knowledge. Leaders are taking effective steps to secure improvements in these curriculum areas. For example, they have introduced a new curriculum for mathematics in order to sharpen the way the subject is planned and taught. This means that teachers are addressing pupils' misconceptions more swiftly. Some improvements are still being embedded. Leaders are clear about how they will check that the changes made are working well in practice.

Leaders prioritise reading right from the moment children start school. The early reading curriculum is well structured and ambitious. As a result, the majority of pupils develop the phonics knowledge that they need to read confidently and accurately. Leaders make sure that books and other reading materials are carefully matched to the sounds that pupils learn. Teachers are quick to spot and support any pupils who are falling behind. Pupils enjoy reading and by the end of Year 6, they have read a rich range of books and texts. Pupils are keen to talk about the books that they enjoy. Staff use a range of ways to support parents with helping their children to read at home.

Leaders provide teachers with helpful and regular training to support them to deliver the curriculum. This enables teachers to have secure subject knowledge. Leaders have also considered how the COVID-19 pandemic affected pupils' learning. They make sure that teachers tackle any gaps or misconceptions in pupils' knowledge. Sometimes, teachers do not use what they know about pupils' learning in order to ensure that pupils build on what they have previously been taught. When this happens, it makes it harder for pupils to deepen their understanding successfully.

Staff expect pupils to behave well and to concentrate on their work. They deal with any off-task behaviour quickly and effectively. This ensures that classrooms are calm and positive places to learn.

Leaders provide a range of memorable cultural experiences to support pupils' wider development. These experiences are directly linked to the curriculum. For instance, all Reception children visit a farm as part of their topic on 'Mother Earth'. Staff offer a range of after-school activities, including sports and creative clubs. Pupils enjoy attending these. They explained how these experiences help them to explore their different talents and interests. Pupils know that staff care about their well-being. For example, when needed, leaders provide drama and art therapy to support pupils to build their social confidence.

Leaders and governors help staff to manage their workload effectively. They promote staff well-being with great thought and care. Staff said they appreciate the support provided by school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff and governors ensure that the safety and well-being of pupils are a priority. Staff receive appropriate information and training on safeguarding. They use the school's systems to raise and follow up on concerns. Pupils who may be vulnerable are identified and supported promptly. Leaders work effectively with external agencies to further understand and support pupils' needs.

Pupils learn about how they can stay safe in their day-to-day lives, including safe behaviour online. They know who they can speak to if they feel worried or have concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, leaders' curriculum thinking is at an earlier stage of development. While leaders are clear about the intended end points for pupils' learning, they have not set out precisely how pupils need to develop their knowledge in order to achieve these long-term aims. In these instances, the curriculum is not supporting pupils as well as it could to develop and deepen their understanding in a cumulative way. Subject leaders should continue to refine and adapt their curriculum thinking so that pupils acquire the necessary knowledge to work towards clearly defined curriculum goals in all subjects.
- Occasionally, teaching does not support pupils to build on what they have learned previously. This affects how well pupils are supported to deepen their knowledge over time. Leaders need to sharpen the training and support for teachers in knowing when and how to adapt the delivery of the curriculum for all pupils.

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 school to be good in November 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	100688
Local authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	10255510
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	457
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Sharon Farnley
Headteacher	Tom Bulpitt
Website	www.holbeach.lewisham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	7 and 8 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This is larger than the average-sized primary school, with a Nursery class for three-year-olds.
- On occasion, leaders make use of one registered alternative provision operated by the local authority.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders, including those responsible for safeguarding. He also met with members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. These involved discussions with curriculum leaders and teachers, visits to lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. Other subjects were also considered.

- The inspector analysed safeguarding documentation, including the single central record of pre-employment checks. He also reviewed a range of documents, including leaders' development plans and school policies.
- The inspector considered the replies to Ofsted Parent View and the online surveys for pupils and staff.

Inspection team

David Boyle, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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