

Inspection of Hardwicke Parochial Academy

Poplar Way, Hardwicke, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL2 4QG

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 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	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at Hardwicke Parochial Academy feel safe and happy. This is an inclusive school. Leaders have designed a curriculum that supports pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), to learn well.

Leaders encourage pupils to 'SHINE': strive for excellence, help others, inspire, never give up and empathise. Pupils know these rules well and are fond of the 'SHINE awards' they receive when demonstrating these values.

Pupils are friendly and eager to learn. They value the warm relationships with staff and the care they receive. Most pupils behave well. Children in Reception Year settle into school routines quickly. Leaders give additional support to the minority of pupils who struggle to manage their own behaviour. Pupils say that if bullying happens, staff deal with it swiftly and effectively.

Pupils talk eagerly about the opportunities on offer to widen their interests. They develop character and responsibility through roles as house captains and librarians. Pupils get involved with fundraising in the community. For example, they made and sold bracelets for a local charity. Pupils broaden their talents through textiles, choir and musical theatre clubs. They are well rounded and enjoy school.

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

Leaders have put curriculum development at the forefront of their work. They provide pupils with a broad curriculum to learn. Subject leaders have carefully planned what they want pupils to know and in what order. Leaders have made clear how they intend staff to teach the curriculum.

Staff review prior learning in many subjects. This helps pupils to learn and remember their learning well. For example, in mathematics, pupils used their prior knowledge of times tables to change improper fractions to mixed numbers. In some subjects, however, pupils find it difficult to remember what they have learned. This is because systems to assess their knowledge are not well developed. Teachers do not address gaps in the learning of some pupils quickly enough.

Staff have had the appropriate training to teach early reading. Staff follow the phonics programme precisely. They assess pupils' knowledge of sounds and use this information to address any gaps quickly. Staff offer additional support to those who need it. This means pupils keep up with the school's programme. Pupils read books that match the sounds they have learned. They read with increasing fluency.

Staff frequently read to pupils throughout the school. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the different genres of books they like to read. Mystery stories are a firm favourite for many. Children in Reception Year enjoy looking at books and learning new words. Many use ambitious vocabulary such as 'palaeontologist' and 'brachiosaurus' when discussing their learning about dinosaurs.

Leaders have created a culture of acceptance and belonging for all. Pupils celebrate differences and know why it is important to treat everyone fairly. They discuss conflicting ideas respectfully. Pupils know that diet and exercise are important. They say that talking about their emotions helps them to keep mentally well. Through assemblies, pupils develop a firm understanding of what tolerance and democracy mean.

Pupils walk sensibly around the school. They relish playing together at breaktimes. Pupils forge strong relationships while playing with the great variety of equipment available to them. Children in the early years know how to take turns. This respectful behaviour builds from there so that pupils throughout the school value their learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Many parents comment that Hardwicke has a positive and nurturing environment and that staff are passionate. However, some express concerns about frequent changes in leadership in recent years. Parents feel that communication between home and school could be improved. This is particularly the case for many parents of pupils with SEND.

Although this is so, pupils with SEND learn from an ambitious and broad curriculum. Leaders train staff so that they have the expertise to help pupils with SEND effectively. Leaders liaise regularly with external agencies to secure additional support for pupils when necessary. Consequently, pupils with SEND achieve well from their starting points.

Trust leaders and governors acted swiftly to steady the school during the recent leadership changes. They know what is working well and what needs to improve. Governors and trust leaders hold leaders to account effectively.

Staff feel well supported at this school. There are high levels of camaraderie. Subject leaders appreciate the training that trust leaders have provided to help them develop. Staff are proud to work at Hardwicke Parochial Academy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders check the suitability of all staff to work with children. The culture here is that everyone is responsible for safeguarding. All staff and governors regularly attend safeguarding training. They identify pupils who might need extra help. Leaders are tenacious in getting pupils the support they need, for example from outside agencies. Trust leaders check the impact of leaders' work to keep pupils safe.

Pupils have a well-developed understanding of how to stay safe, including online. They talk to staff about their worries and know that staff will help them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not use assessment information well enough to identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Because of this, some pupils do not retain knowledge over time. Leaders should ensure that they put processes in place to identify accurately gaps in pupils' knowledge and use this information to inform planning so that pupils know and remember more.
- Some parents say that communication from leaders is not effective. As a result, parents, particularly those of children with SEND, do not always feel well informed about their child's education. Leaders must work more effectively with these parents so that they are aware of the work the school is doing to support their child.

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	141575
Local authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	10256678
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	383
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	The Venerable Hilary Dawson
Headteacher	Lisa Harford
Website	www.hardwicke.gloucs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hardwicke Parochial Academy is part of the Diocese and Gloucester Academies Trust, a multi-academy trust of primary schools in Gloucestershire.
- There have been several changes at leadership level since the previous inspection. The current headteacher took up post in September 2022.
- The school uses two registered alternative providers and one unregistered alternative provision.
- The school is in the Diocese of Gloucester. At the most recent section 48 inspection of the school, carried out in November 2017, 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the school leaders, school staff, pupils, governors, a representative from the diocese and the deputy chief executive officer from the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history and French. 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 1, 2 and 3 read to a known 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. The inspectors talked to pupils, staff, governors and trust leaders about safeguarding practices.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school, including at lunch and break times. In addition, they met with pupils formally and informally to hear their views.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They looked at responses to the pupil survey and responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Lakmini Harkus, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Andrew Evans

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Griffiths

Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023