

Inspection of a good school: Hardwick Primary School

Ferriston, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 1XE

Inspection dates:

6 to 7 June 2023

Outcome

Hardwick Primary School continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are overwhelmingly happy and feel safe at Hardwick Primary School. They are enthusiastic about their learning and talk with pride about their achievements. Pupils enjoy the celebrations and the collection of reward points. They know their value and are proud when this is recognised in their work. One pupil shared their award for showing 'grit and determination'.

Exceptionally high expectations are in place for all pupils from Nursery all the way through to Year 6. Leaders want the pupils to experience the best possible primary experience. They make no apologies for their highly inclusive and challenging expectations for all. Parents value the approaches taken by leaders and the support both they and their children receive from the school. The curriculum allows pupils to develop a wealth of knowledge and have a range of experiences to explore.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is excellent, and pupils clearly love learning. Pupils say bullying is extremely rare and if it were to happen it would be dealt with swiftly by teachers. Pupils know who to go to if they have worries or concerns. They say that everyone is kind at their school.

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

Leaders have introduced a highly ambitious curriculum which is exceptionally well planned and sequenced. They strive to provide the best possible experiences for all pupils in this school. There are many opportunities for enrichment within the curriculum, from learning to salsa dance to pupils creating their own carnivals.

Pupils have a broad vocabulary and knowledge which they can articulate well. For example, they could clearly explain the effect tectonic plates had on the planet. Pupils are

highly engaged and interested in learning. The same high expectations are in place for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are very well supported in the classroom and are given the resources and help needed to be successful. All pupils have learning broken down into small steps to ensure that they can achieve the desired outcomes. Staff teach the planned curriculum well and share leaders' high expectations.

Reading is a high priority for the school, as leaders and staff know its importance to future success. There is a well-implemented approach to the teaching of phonics across the school, which starts from Nursery. Teachers and support staff deliver the phonics programme with expertise. Clear systems and expectations are in place which are followed by all staff. Regular assessment is carried out by staff to ensure that no child falls behind. If they do, there are regular opportunities for pre-teaching, catch up and interventions. Pupils love reading. Year 6 pupils know a wide range of authors and can clearly articulate why they enjoy certain books. Books are everywhere. There is a clear reading spine and deliberate choice of books. These are found not just in libraries and book corners but placed with purpose in the early years learning environment. Leaders have a clear rationale as to why books have been chosen, and ensure that these reflect life in modern Britain. The deliberate thought behind the texts and reading is also clear in subjects like mathematics as well. The subtle link to number is everywhere in the early years. Children experience opportunities to count amounts and see numbers on a daily basis in all areas of the classroom.

Teachers use assessment well across the curriculum to ensure that it informs the next steps in learning for pupils. They also use it to ensure all pupils understand what they are being taught. Leaders monitor progress of pupils clearly and, as a result, can demonstrate the impact of learning over time.

Leaders are driven to ensure that the pupils receive not just a well-rounded education but also a wealth of experiences that go beyond the taught curriculum. There are a wide range of trips and visits for the pupils to experience, especially ones that are built around the science and technology of the local area. There is an ambitious relationship and health curriculum that weaves through other areas of the curriculum, such as religious education and the books pupils read.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They say leaders look after their well-being. All staff know the pupils well and can address individual needs as they arise. There is a broad training and induction offer for staff at the school. The school standards board and trust understand their responsibilities and fulfil these effectively. They are rightly proud of the school and the education provided to the pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Leaders ensure that all staff are given the necessary training. There is a clear programme throughout the year of delivering additional specific information to staff. This enables them to have a fully

rounded understanding of keeping children safe in education. All pre-employment checks are carried out appropriately. For new staff, there is an additional induction programme to complete. Record-keeping is robust and thorough.

There is a comprehensive safeguarding curriculum mapped out by leaders for staff to deliver to pupils. As a result, pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of keeping themselves safe, including when online.

The trust and governors assure themselves that safeguarding is effective through regular monitoring and audits.

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 predecessor school to be good in April 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	146810
Local authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	10268425
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	239
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Lynne O'Reilly
Headteacher	Julie Hiddleston (Executive Headteacher) Graeme Page (Headteacher)
Website	www.hardwickschool.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school reopened as an academy in 2019. The predecessor school was graded good at its latest inspection.
- The school is part of the Oxfordshire cluster of GLF schools.
- The executive headteacher oversees five schools within the cluster. The headteacher has day-to-day responsibility for running the school.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out three deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of their work.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the headteacher, assistant headteachers, the SEND coordinator and teaching and learning leaders.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documents provided by the school.
- The inspector met with the chief executive officer, representatives from the trust and the school standards board.
- The inspector met with pupils, parents and staff and also took into consideration the feedback from Ofsted questionnaires.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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