

# Inspection of a good school: Hawes Down Primary School

The Mead, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0BA

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Inspection dates:

18 and 19 July 2023

## Outcome

Hawes Down Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy the kindness, respect and care of this school. They are happy, safe and well supported by adults who have high expectations of their work and their conduct. Pupils behave well and achieve well.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils' academic success. They have recently renewed their focus on further developing the curriculum and on broadening the offer for enrichment, including introducing a popular choir.

The school's values of achievement, bravery and compassion are a thread that runs through school life. Pupils gain confidence through trying new activities. For example, pupils in Year 5 had a go at orienteering and rock climbing during a residential visit to an outdoor centre. Leaders celebrate pupils' successes in weekly assemblies, where selected pupils enjoy being awarded 'star of the week'.

Leaders provide a fulsome range of sporting and musical opportunities. All pupils learn to play the pBuzz, recorder and djembe drums and take part in performances. Pupils compete in sporting activities, including cross country and football. Leaders make good use of partnerships with local secondary schools to offer special experiences in art and science. Pupils take up roles of responsibility widely, including as house captains, members of the eco team, school council and head boy or girl.

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

The curriculum is broad and ambitious. Leaders have set out the key knowledge that pupils need to acquire as they progress through the school. In art, for example, children in the early years practise sculpting plasticine. They go on to use crosshatching and slipping to layer clay in Years 1 and 2. This lays the foundation for more complex sculpting in Year 4 when pupils make pinch pots using a twisting method. In mathematics, pupils rehearse making numbers to 10 in the early years and multiplication tables in Years 3 and 4. They draw on this knowledge later to help them solve a range of

problems. In history, pupils place important events within a historical timeline to understand how the past has shaped the modern world. However, a few subjects have been more recently reviewed and leaders are still in the process of defining the order in which concepts should be taught. Consequently, pupils' knowledge develops more securely in some subjects than others.

Teachers use their subject knowledge to explain new content clearly and check pupils' understanding. Leaders provide training to support teachers in developing knowledge of the curriculum, including early reading. Lately, this has included a focus on ensuring that teachers are familiar with the highly ambitious vocabulary that pupils need to learn across the curriculum. However, this work is new. Teaching does not presently ensure that pupils are routinely exposed to subject-specific language and use it in discussions and written work.

Reading is strongly promoted. Leaders ensure that everyone knows its importance. Pupils get plenty of practice. They enjoy daily story times. They access the library and well-resourced book corners regularly. Many pupils read individually in the mornings with 'early bird' volunteer readers.

Staff have excellent subject knowledge for teaching phonics. Teachers and other adults check pupils' phonic knowledge very closely, make adjustments in order to close gaps, and address misconceptions swiftly and effectively. Across the curriculum, teachers help pupils to use the sounds they know to help them read unfamiliar words. This reinforces pupils' phonic knowledge, which develops securely over time.

Leaders understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), including those in the additionally resourced provision. They carefully identify small steps to help pupils learn the curriculum and develop the interpersonal skills, confidence and independence they need to thrive. Teachers make thoughtful adaptations to teaching and resources to support pupils with SEND. Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND have access to a range of wider experiences.

Pupils are courteous and respectful. They listen attentively and participate keenly during lessons. Pupils learn the curriculum in safe, orderly and calm classrooms. Leaders ensure that pupils attend school regularly. They support families to improve attendance where this is not the case.

Pupils are taught about relationships, health and the wider world in an age-appropriate way. Leaders have developed a detailed curriculum that aims to help pupils learn about different cultures and beliefs and the importance of tolerance of others' perspectives.

Staff express their confidence in leaders and their appreciation of the steps that leaders have taken to reduce their workload and provide training and support. Those responsible for governance have secure oversight of the school's work and offer effective support and challenge. Leaders ensure that expertise and support are shared between the school and the trust.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide all staff with thorough safeguarding training, which is regularly updated, including through weekly staff briefings. Staff are vigilant, reporting all concerns promptly.

Leaders regularly review records to spot any signs that there may be a concern about a pupil. They act swiftly to ensure that pupils receive the help they need and make referrals to external agencies when appropriate to do so. They communicate professionally and in a timely manner with parents and carers, building productive working relationships with them.

Pupils are taught what they need to know to keep themselves safe, including online. They know who to talk to if they have any concerns.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Not all areas of the curriculum are equally well developed. As a result, pupils' knowledge develops in more detail in some areas of the curriculum than in others. The school should follow through on their work to make clear the key concepts all pupils should learn and the order in which they should do so.
- The school does not routinely ensure that pupils use subject-specific language. As a result, pupils do not talk as precisely as they might about what they have learned. Leaders should ensure that pupils are routinely exposed to the key terminology they need and that pupils remember and use it in their work.

## **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, Hawes Down Infant School, to be good in January 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141784
<b>Local authority</b>	Bromley
<b>Inspection number</b>	10269016
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	458
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	John Phillipson and Kieran Osborne (Co-chairs)
<b>Headteacher</b>	Helen Bretherick
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hdps.org.uk">www.hdps.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	6 February 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the IMPACT Multi Academy Trust. The school joined the trust in 2015.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school has an additionally resourced provision for pupils with severe learning difficulties.
- The school has a proportion of pupils with SEND that is much higher than the national average.

## 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders,

visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at curriculum information in some other subjects.
- The inspector considered the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and supporting pupils' health and safety as well as their welfare and well-being. This included looking at case studies and reviewing the school's record of pre-employment checks.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The inspector also met with leaders with responsibility for SEND, early years, behaviour, attendance and pupils' personal development.
- The inspector met with members of the local governing body and trust representatives.
- The inspector considered responses to Ofsted's online surveys for parents, staff and pupils and spoke to some parents at the school gate.

### **Inspection team**

Rebecca Iles-Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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