

Inspection of a good school: Hextable Primary School

Rowhill Road, Hextable, Swanley, Kent BR8 7RL

Inspection dates:

26 and 27 September 2023

Outcome

Hextable Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils appreciate this large school that feels like a family. Despite significant growth in recent years, there is a strong sense of community. Leaders inspire staff, pupils and parents to be compassionate, respectful and supportive to each other. From the nurturing breakfast club to joyful cheerleading sessions at lunchtime, pupils benefit from the delightful atmosphere.

The school achieves its high ambition for pupils to be happy and to achieve well. Pupils thrive as a result of the exceptional pastoral care. The mental health and well-being team offers impressive provision. Pupils appreciate the 'lunch bunch' activities and extensive nurture spaces such as 'The Hub'.

Staff expertly support pupils to recognise and manage their emotions. As a result, behaviour is usually excellent. If pupils need extra help, the school supports them to get back on track. Pupils politely hold doors open and consistently show gratitude. Relationships are warm and pupils feel safe. They confidently talk to staff about any worries.

The school ethos is built on acceptance and kindness to all. Boys and girls are passionate about equality. Pupils proudly represent the school in events including netball, football, boccia and rugby. They enjoy keeping fit on the 'daily mile' track.

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

Children make a positive start in early years, learning phonics and mathematics in a safe and happy environment. Reading is highly valued across the whole school. Phonics teaching is well-organised in small groups. Staff accurately identify gaps in learning by frequently checking pupils' understanding. One-to-one 'keep up' sessions help pupils to self-correct with plenty of well-supported practice. The school ensures that pupils are

exposed to books that are multicultural and diverse. Pupils love non-fiction texts, stories and learning about different authors. They are excited to use the impressive library and become fluent and confident readers.

The school's curriculum is well-developed. Leaders have identified the key knowledge, skills and language they intend pupils to learn. For example, in early years, staff help children to learn essential number knowledge. As they move through the school, pupils apply their knowledge to solve increasingly challenging mathematical problems. The science curriculum engages pupils with investigations and experiences in the outdoor learning area. Staff inspire pupils to learn, and they help to bring learning to life. For example, in history, pupils enthusiastically handle real artefacts and learn important vocabulary to enhance their understanding. This means that, typically, pupils achieve well. Sometimes, the tasks that pupils complete in some foundation subjects do not precisely match the intended learning. This can slow pupils' learning.

The school provides strong support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff routinely review pupil progress to detect any concerns. Every pupil is assessed for speech and language to ensure that needs are swiftly identified. The school provides high-quality training for staff. The school works well with external consultants and supports parents using clear communication. The school ensures that provision is well-organised and effective for pupils with a range of needs. Classrooms are carefully designed to support well-being and access to learning for all.

Leaders have high expectations for behaviour. Pupils respond well and want to make staff proud. This means that pupils can focus on learning and their concentration is not disrupted.

Pupils benefit from broader development, which prepares them well for modern Britain. They learn about healthy relationships and different family types. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand cyber-security, criminal responsibility and how to manage a budget. Leadership opportunities are impressive. School councillors lead charity initiatives, and the members of the sports crew run enjoyable events for pupils. The new equality, diversity and inclusion ambassadors have proudly started their new roles. Year 6 pupils have independently planned and led a tea party for charity.

The breadth of inclusive extra-curricular options is superb. The residential trip in Year 5 helps pupils to develop resilience and team building through outdoor activities. Year 6 pupils enjoy rich learning on the Isle of Wight, learning about geographical points of interest, digging for fossils and exploring the beach. Nobody misses out on opportunities. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils, including those with SEND, are highly represented.

All leaders share high ambition for pupils. Governors fulfil their statutory duties with diligence. One parent, representing many others, described the school as 'understanding and supportive' with 'a community spirit' that 'fosters the love of learning'. Leaders inspire and provide strong support for staff, including regular opportunities for training. Well-being is a high focus and workload is well managed, including for teachers early in their careers. As a result, pupils blossom in this inclusive and caring school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The tasks pupils complete in some foundation subjects do not consistently support them to learn the intended knowledge and skills. Consequently, pupils sometimes do not learn the key content that they should learn. The school should continue its curriculum development work to ensure that all staff sharply focus on the key knowledge and skills they intend pupils to learn and remember.

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 March 2018.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium](#)

[funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	135118
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10287990
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	620
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Garry Cirillo
Headteacher	Suzie Hall
Website	www.hextable-primary.kent.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has increased from two-form entry to three-form entry since the previous inspection.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school offers a before- and after-school club, led by school staff.

Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, assistant headteachers, subject leaders, teachers (including early career teachers) and governors, including the chair of governors.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and science. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, 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 a range of pupils read. The lead inspector observed catch up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses.
- The inspectors spoke with a range of pupils to learn their views about the school. The inspector evaluated responses from the pupil questionnaire.
- The lead inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Martin Hacker

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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