

Inspection of a good school: Hornbeam Primary School

Mongeham Road, Deal, Kent CT14 9PQ

Inspection dates:

10 and 11 October 2023

Outcome

Hornbeam Primary School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Rose Cope. This school is part of Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Joanna Hygate, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Roger Walton.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy, and the majority of them attend school regularly. They are polite, respectful and confident. Pupils are eager to talk about their learning and the range of activities in which they are involved. Pupils are proud to come to this school.

Pupils are taught how to behave well, and the vast majority do so. They are keen to support each other to meet the high expectations of staff. Older pupils can often be seen working with their younger peers to help them at break- and lunchtime. Pupils know the importance of being kind and how to keep themselves and others safe. They know whom to talk to if they have anything that worries them. Pupils understand what they should and should not do when they are online.

The school has high expectations of what pupils will learn. The recent assemblies around aspirations make links between what pupils are learning in different subjects and the wider world, including future potential careers.

The school provides an extensive range of trips and visits, and there is a wide variety of clubs. Many pupils participate in these, including those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and carefully designed. The school has considered the knowledge that pupils need and how it will ensure that pupils will remember this, starting with the youngest children in Reception. The vocabulary that pupils need to know as they progress through the school has been clearly identified. Pupils return to this regularly in

their lessons over time. Pupils' work is of a good standard overall, demonstrating how much they have learned. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities get the right support to learn well too. The school quickly identifies which pupils need extra help and provides this swiftly. Teachers have the right knowledge of these pupils' needs to adapt their teaching precisely. However, some of the lesson activities for other pupils do not always match the planned curriculum closely enough. This is because staff are not always clear about what knowledge is the most important. They do not always check carefully enough what pupils know and can do and therefore cannot adapt their teaching to ensure that pupils are learning consistently well in those areas.

Pupils use accurate mathematical vocabulary to talk about their learning and make use of a range of different mathematical strategies to solve problems. They enjoy mathematics and are confident in applying their knowledge to different situations. This includes children in Reception, who learn about patterns and numbers. Pupils are given time to go back over this learning regularly before they move on.

Learning to read begins quickly in Reception, where children are taught the sounds and letters they need as soon as they arrive. The school has worked hard to ensure that all pupils read accurately. Pupils who need additional support to learn to read receive this swiftly. Reading is a regular part of the school day and is frequently celebrated, including through working with visiting authors. As a result, older pupils read confidently and fluently. They enjoy talking about the books they have read and those that have been shared in class. However, some pupils who need extra support with learning to read are not always provided with the precise activities that will help them to catch up quickly.

The wider opportunities at the school are extensive. Leaders have considered carefully how these will enrich the curriculum for all and how they will help pupils to be prepared for their next steps in life. Leaders make use of links to the local community, and pupils are involved regularly in fundraising activities. They are taught how to be effective members of the community both in school and beyond. Pupils relish the opportunities they have been given to lead in different areas of the school, whether that be through supporting their younger peers with their reading, taking a lead role in the eco-club or through the house captain system. Pupils have a clear understanding of difference and tolerance and why this is important. One pupil noted that they wanted it to be 'the most respectful school' possible.

Staff feel well supported. The trust provides significant opportunities for teachers and leaders to work together to both share effective practice and ensure that workload is manageable. Trustees and governors are also alert to how they can support and manage staff workload effectively, and do so.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The subject and pedagogical knowledge of the staff is not always secure. This means that they do not always plan activities that focus on what pupils need to be able to know and remember. Also, they do not always check carefully what pupils have learned. Pupils are therefore not making as much progress as they could. The school should ensure that all staff have the training they need to plan the right learning activities and that they regularly and carefully check what pupils have learned so that they can plan for pupils' next steps.

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, Hornbeam Primary School, to be good in March 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](#)' 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

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| Unique reference number | 147054 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10288082 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 4 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 235 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Roger Walton |
| CEO of the trust | Joanna Hygate |
| Headteacher | Rose Cope |
| Website | www.hornbeam.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school joined Deal Education Alliance for Learning Trust in April 2019.
- There have been significant changes in leadership in the last few years.
- The school runs a breakfast and an after-school club.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics and history. To do this, the inspector met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited a range of lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- The inspector discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspector also scrutinised a range of documents, including the school's and the trust's evaluations of the school and their priorities for improvement.
- The inspector met with a range of senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspector also met with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer, the chair of trustees, and a range of trustees and local governors.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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 views of pupils, parents and carers, and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Zoe Enser, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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