

Inspection of West Hoathly CofE Primary School

North Lane, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 4QG

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this small village school, where they feel cared for and secure. They know the school values of love, hope and forgiveness by heart. Pupils are highly enthusiastic about their responsibilities within the school community. They act as house captains, leading assemblies and keeping a tally of house points. Older pupils demonstrate the school values by acting as buddies for children in Reception, helping them to settle into school and practise their reading. One parent commented that: 'Children feel supported and get to know each other across all the year groups.'

The school is ambitious that all pupils will be successful. However, pupils do not achieve as well as they could because teaching is not consistently adapted to meet their needs. Pupils frequently lose concentration in lessons because the work is too easy or too difficult. When this happens, teachers do not re-engage them in learning quickly enough. The school's expectations for pupils to be 'resilient, reflective, resourceful and reciprocating learners' are not realised in practice.

Pupils behave calmly around the school. They treat each other kindly and play harmoniously at social times. They are respectful towards their teachers, who they trust to help resolve any problems.

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

The school has been through a period of significant change. Leaders and staff want the very best for the pupils in their care. They are working hard to raise standards towards their own high expectations. Their roadmap for improvement balances urgency of improvement carefully against staff well-being.

Through effective support from the local authority and the Diocese of Chichester, there is now a broad and coherent curriculum in place for all subjects. It has been developed right from Reception to the end of key stage 2 and builds in a logical order. In most subjects, the knowledge and skills that must be taught in each year group have been identified. The school knows what must now be done to achieve its ambitious vision for pupils. However, this vision is not currently a reality.

Assessment is used inconsistently. As a result, gaps in pupils' learning are not always identified accurately. Pupils then struggle to connect new learning with what they should have learned before and the bigger 'key ideas' that underpin the curriculum. The work pupils are given is frequently too easy or too hard for them. As a result, and despite their best efforts, pupils lose interest in their learning. In some subjects, such as mathematics, teachers regularly provide opportunities for pupils to recap past learning. However, this practice is not applied to other subjects, and pupils do not remember the curriculum well.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified early, and the school has set out the additional support they need. However, this support is not routinely in place across the school. As a result, pupils with SEND do not

consistently receive the support they need to access the same curriculum as their peers.

The school has not taken swift enough action to ensure that the teaching of early reading is prioritised. Staff lack the subject knowledge needed to teach the phonics curriculum systematically and rigorously. Assessment information is not used well enough to pinpoint precisely which sounds pupils need to practise. As a result, those struggling at the early stages of reading do not read books matched closely enough to the sounds they are learning. As pupils get older, some struggle to access the key stage 2 reading curriculum because they are not yet fluent readers. Despite wanting to learn to read and trying their best, these pupils do not get the support they need to catch up quickly.

Pupils are taught about the protected characteristics and equality. They say that 'life would be boring if we were all the same'. They know how to keep safe, especially online. Pupils learn how to keep healthy in body, mind and spirit. They know that exercise and a balanced diet are good for their health, and they know how to recognise their emotions. They reflect on the school values by writing in their spiritual journals. Pupils are taught about different faiths and viewpoints. They experience the awe and wonder of religious festivals such as Christmas and harvest in the village church.

The governing body lacks clarity about its strategic role. Its work does not focus well enough on the quality of education that pupils receive. This limits the extent to which the governing body is able to hold leaders to account for the impact of its work to raise standards.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment is not used effectively. As a result, gaps in pupils' knowledge are not identified quickly enough, impacting negatively on their future learning. The school should ensure that assessment is used consistently well to promptly identify gaps in pupils' learning so that teachers can address them through adaptations to future teaching.
- Phonics is not taught consistently and systematically. Consequently, pupils at the early stages of reading do not get the help they need to become fluent readers. The school should ensure that the teaching of phonics directly addresses identified gaps in pupils' phonics knowledge so that they can quickly catch up with their peers.
- The governing body is not fully effective in its strategic role. It does not provide sufficient challenge to leaders about the quality of education provided by the

school. The governing body should ensure it has the knowledge and confidence to fulfil its duties and hold leaders successfully to account for the impact of their work.

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	126012
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10287968
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	114
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sophie Abbott
Headteacher	Annabelle Fox (acting)
Website	www.westhoathlyschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15 June 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The acting headteacher took up post in May 2023.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- 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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, history, and music. For each deep dive, they 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 inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the headteacher and assistant headteacher.
- Views of pupils and staff were gathered through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour, and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Oliver Allen

Ofsted Inspector

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