

Inspection of Horsted Infant School

Barberry Avenue, Chatham, Kent ME5 9TF

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive and are truly joyful at this happy school, where teachers make sure there is something to look forward to every day. As one parent commented: 'Children stroll into reception and never look back!'

Pupils contribute eagerly to the school community as art ambassadors, sports crew and members of the green team. They carry out their class responsibilities with great pride, giving out books, looking after the lunch box trolley and tidying up the classroom. Pupils feel valued and safe, knowing their teachers will help them if they are worried about anything. They are taught to treat everyone kindly and include them in their games at lunch and playtimes.

Pupils' behaviour is consistently exemplary, reflecting the school's values. Pupils aspire to being 'STARS' - 'striving, thoughtful, ambitious, resilient, and supportive'. Pupils live out these values in their lessons as they concentrate and focus enthusiastically on their learning. Leaders are highly ambitious for pupils' achievement, acknowledging where pupils could achieve even better than they currently do. Pupils are taught to be respectful, considerate and kind to others in the community, such as senior citizens, whom they visit and exchange Christmas cards with.

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

The school has an inspiring vision that all pupils will attain highly whilst also developing their social, emotional and physical confidence. A broad and ambitious curriculum has been established, setting out the knowledge and skills pupils must learn in every subject. This is proving successful, and pupils attain well. The school is now further refining the curriculum to incorporate the 'STAR' values and local areas of interest.

The school places a strong emphasis on reading. Children in the Reception Year get off to a strong start with learning phonics. They focus well on their lessons where teachers make early reading systematic and enjoyable. Teachers pick up on any children who struggle and make sure they get the extra practice they need to keep up with their peers. Throughout key stage 1, the books pupils read match the sounds they are learning. The school encourages pupils to make reading a regular habit, for which they are rewarded with much sought-after book prizes.

The use of assessment is better established in some subjects than in others. Where used effectively, it enables teachers to plan activities which are precisely matched to pupils' needs. For example, in physical education, pupils revisit balance and agility, repeating specific movements before learning more complex choreographed dance moves. Pupils delight in learning these routines and in expressing themselves through performing them. In phonics, assessment is used well to find out precisely where pupils' knowledge gaps are, so teachers can match work accurately to their needs. This practice is still developing in some other subjects. Consequently, in

these subjects, some pupils who need to catch up do not always attain as well as they could.

Beyond phonics, children in the Reception Year are not as well prepared for the next stage of their education as they could be. This is because adults have not had the training they need to understand how younger children learn and develop.

Consequently, the activities that adults plan do not always help children to understand and remember the early years foundation stage (EYFS) curriculum.

Nevertheless, children settle into the Reception Year quickly. They behave well and play harmoniously, enjoying the many opportunities to develop physically. They take turns throwing, catching, jumping, climbing and sliding in the outdoor area. Adults read stories to children, developing their vocabulary and love of reading. The school has identified the actions needed to improve the quality of children's learning in the EYFS, but its plans are yet to be realised.

The school promotes pupils' personal development extremely well. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe on the internet, knowing not to post pictures or share personal information such as car registrations or house numbers. Pupils know how to recognise their emotions and develop ways of coping with anger and anxiety. Pupils learn about being fair and about British values such as tolerance. They are taught about different faiths such as Islam and Sikhism. Pupils have many opportunities to develop the physical skills needed to enjoy exercise and sport. There are a wide range of clubs that all pupils benefit from, and which make school even more enjoyable for them.

Governors know the school well and are clear about their roles, which they carry out effectively. They are diligent in ensuring that their statutory duties are met. They are ambassadors for the school's values, contributing significantly to the positive and open culture, where people feel heard and appreciated.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, assessment is not used well enough to identify the gaps in pupils' learning that teaching needs to address. This means that pupils, especially those needing to catch up, do not attain as well as they could. The school should ensure that assessment is used effectively across the curriculum, so that future learning matches pupils' needs precisely and enables them to learn consistently well.
- In the Reception Year, planned activities do not always help children to learn the intended EYFS curriculum. Consequently, children are not prepared well enough for key stage 1. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge to plan

and implement the EYFS curriculum successfully, focusing on the knowledge that children need to be ready for Year 1.

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	118442
Local authority	Medway
Inspection number	10287915
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Murdoch
Executive headteacher	Steve Geary
Head of school	Sarah Steer
Website	www.horstedschool.co.uk/
Dates of previous inspection	5 and 6 July 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- 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.
- 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 carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, physical education and science. 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 inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in some other subjects.

- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the executive headteacher, head of school and deputy head of school.
- The views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding through scrutinising safeguarding records and discussions with leaders, staff, and pupils. The inspectors considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- 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

Alan Derry

His Majesty's Inspector

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