

Inspection of a good school: Holyoakes Field First School

Cookridge Close, Redditch, Worcestershire B97 6HF

Inspection dates:

24 and 25 October 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

The headteacher of this school is Tasnim Koser. This school is part of the Bordesley Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Adrian Ward, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Deborah Andrews.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Holyoakes Field First School. The school is calm and orderly. Learning is interesting and fun. The school's system of rewards motivates pupils to do their best. In most instances, pupils are engaged in their learning and work hard. Teachers deal with occasional incidents of poor behaviour fairly and effectively. The school works hard to make sure pupils attend regularly and on time. The majority of pupils do so.

A wide range of opportunities and experiences help pupils to live out the school motto, 'Empowering young minds to become great minds'. Trips to the beach and visits to museums and a pantomime help pupils to deepen their learning. Orienteering and clubs, such as gardening, choir and sports clubs, help pupils to acquire new talents and interests. A residential experience helps pupils to take risks and build resilience.

The school, supported by the trust, wants the very best for all pupils. However, some aspects of the school's work, such as record-keeping, have slipped. In addition, early reading is not taught well enough and some subjects need further work so that pupils achieve well.

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum in most subjects. The curriculum is

carefully sequenced with clear end points. Teachers present new learning well. They make regular checks on how well pupils are learning the curriculum. However, there is inconsistency in the delivery of some subjects. This is because staff are not confident in how to teach these subjects. In these instances, pupils do not build on their learning effectively. This means that they do not retain important knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified swiftly. The school works closely with external partners, such as speech and language therapists. This means that pupils with SEND get the help and support they need to be successful. In lessons, pupils are well supported to access the curriculum, including having additional resources, adaptations to work, or extra support from adults. Parents are very positive about this aspect of the school's work. They value the support they and their children receive.

Children in the early years settle well into school life. Staff work closely with parents to plan for the needs of the youngest children. They encourage sharing and turn-taking and promote independence. Activities such as counting and mark making are carefully planned to build on what children already know and can do. Children enjoy voting for favourite books at story times. However, early reading has not received the priority it should, particularly the teaching of phonics. The school has not ensured that all staff have the skills and knowledge they need to teach phonics effectively. This means that pupils at the early stages of reading do not learn to read as well as they could. Pupils read regularly in school. Reading sheds, a summer reading challenge, author days and poetry competitions help pupils to develop a love of reading. In addition, reading ambassadors and junior librarians promote discussions about book choices and favourite books.

Wider curriculum opportunities help pupils to broaden their interests and experiences. The school values of 'respect, responsibility and freedom' help pupils to learn about right and wrong. Online safety and road safety workshops led by the local police help pupils to keep safe when out and about. Leadership roles help pupils to take on responsibilities in school, for example as playleaders and cloakroom monitors. Pupils learn to be active citizens when fundraising for local and national charities. The work of the school council enables pupils to take on leadership roles and learn about democracy. Indian and Chinese dance workshops and a Christingle service help pupils to experience different festivals and celebrations. They learn about world religions, including Christianity, Hinduism and Islam. This helps pupils to understand and respect difference. During Black History Month, pupils learn about key sporting figures and their journey to success. This helps pupils to think about challenges and overcoming barriers in their own lives. Eco-warriors and monitors help pupils to think about and care for the environment. Pupils are well-prepared for life in modern Britain.

Leaders, governors and the trust are ambitious for all pupils. They are proud of the new school build. However, the move has hampered progress on some aspects of the school's work. Most staff are positive about the support they receive from leaders to manage their workload and support their well-being, for example recent changes to the school's marking policy.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school does not always maintain effective safeguarding records. As a result, there are some gaps in recording important checks and decisions that the school makes. However, this does not compromise pupils' safety.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers are not clear about how best to teach the curriculum in some subjects. This means that pupils do not always build on and retain important learning effectively. The school should ensure that all staff are well equipped to teach all subjects consistently well so that pupils build on their previous learning effectively.
- The school has not ensured that staff have the skills and knowledge they need to teach phonics effectively. This means that pupils do not learn to read with the fluency and accuracy required for their age. The school should ensure all staff are supported to teach phonics effectively so pupils learn to read with the accuracy and fluency required for their age.
- The school does not always maintain effective safeguarding records. As a result, although effective checks are made, there are some gaps in the way in which the school records important checks and decisions. The school should ensure that there is a full and accurate record of checks and decision-making.

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 predecessor school, Holyoakes Field First School, to be good in November 2017.

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	146719
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10290659
Type of school	First
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	318
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Deborah Andrews
CEO of the trust	Adrian Ward
Headteacher	Tasnim Koser
Website	www.holyoakes.worcs.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Holyoakes Field First School converted to become an academy school in May 2019. When its predecessor school, Holyoakes Field First School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.
- The school joined the Bordesley Multi-Academy Trust in May 2019.
- The school relocated to a new building at a different location to the previous school in September 2022.
- The school does not use 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 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 their evaluation of the school.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, computing and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of sessions, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupil's work.
- The inspector observed children reading to a familiar adult and reviewed reading resources.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documents on the school's website.
- 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 inspector observed children's behaviour in lessons and at other times during the day.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, the designated safeguarding lead, curriculum leaders and representatives of the trust.
- The inspector took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View and the pupil and staff surveys.

Inspection team

Lorraine Lord, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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