

Inspection of Hodthorpe Primary School

Queen's Road, Hodthorpe, Worksop, Nottinghamshire S80 4UT

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 October 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Nicola Fretwell-Evans. This school is part of The Learners' Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Matt Freeston, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Steve Welsh. There is also a trust school partner, Phil Hickey, who is also responsible for this school and five others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Relationships at Hodthorpe Primary School are positive. As one pupil said: 'It's a family. We're big together.' Another added: 'We call ourselves the Hodthorpe family because we work together and look after each other.'

Staff have high expectations of pupils. These are reflected in the Hodthorpe 'family rules'. Pupils know these rules and why they are important. They do their best to live up to them. Pupils are proud to be selected as a 'star of the week' for modelling the family rules.

Pupils behave well. They are motivated by the 'yeah points' on offer. They know that positive behaviour will result in their name being moved up through the colours, from green to the ultimate high of gold. They know that being moved down to red is serious. However, this is rare. Pupils who need help to follow the schools' family rules are well supported. Outdoors, pupils know that they can use the 'buddy bench' to help them find someone to play with.

Pupils are proud of the roles that they take on. These include school councillors, sports captains and many prefect roles. Older pupils relish the opportunities they have to help out with younger children in the early years.

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

The school prioritises reading. Pupils start learning to read as soon as they start the Reception Year. The phonics programme is well ordered. Staff teach it well. Overall, the books that pupils read are closely matched to the sounds that pupils know. This means that they soon learn to read fluently. Beyond phonics, pupils learn a well-structured reading curriculum. They learn about a wide range of texts, authors and genres. Pupils enjoy sharing their 'love of reading' books at home. They are motivated by the 'yeah points' that they receive for regular reading.

The school's curriculum covers the full range of subjects. Teachers carefully teach lessons in a sequenced order. They revisit content periodically to help pupils to remember what they have learned. Teachers deliver well-planned and engaging lessons. Good use is made of the outdoor learning area. In many subjects, pupils remember what they have learned. For example, in history, pupils have an impressive recall of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking periods. They can explain when and why these periods started and ended. They know the order in which important historical events have taken place. However, in a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the most important content that pupils are expected to know and remember. In these subjects, pupils' recall of content is less secure.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported. Staff skilfully balance providing support and helping pupils to become independent. The short-term targets that the school sets for these pupils are precise and

measurable. These targets ensure that everyone knows how to provide the best support possible.

Children get off to a positive start in the early years. Staff know the children well. They take good care of them. Children respond positively to the well-established routines. They quickly learn how to play cooperatively. Children benefit from a carefully sequenced curriculum. However, in a small number of aspects, the curriculum is not clear enough. It sets out the activities that children will do without making clear the precise things that children should learn.

Pupils' benefit from a broad personal development offer. The school's personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is well structured. Pupils learn about different cultures from around the world. They learn how to stay safe in a range of situations, including online, in the community and near fire. Pupils know that everyone should be treated equally and with respect. Pupils in Year 3 know about the American civil rights movement. They know why segregation was not acceptable.

School leaders, the trust and the board of local champions know the school well. They regularly check the school's work to make sure that everything is working well. Where improvements are needed, they are quickly addressed and checked on again. Leaders, at all levels, are ambitious for all pupils. The leadership of some subjects is at an early stage of development. The trust supports school leaders well in these roles. However, some leaders do not yet have a fully rounded view of all aspects of their subject.

Pupils, staff and the majority of parents and carers hold the school in high regard. One parent summed up the views of many when they told inspectors: 'This school is a breath of fresh air. The staff couldn't be more attentive to children's needs.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, the curriculum does not make clear the most important content that pupils are expected to know and remember. In these subjects, pupils' recall of content is not as secure as it should be. The school should ensure that the curriculum, across all subjects, makes clear the most important content that pupils are expected to know and remember.
- The leadership of some subjects is at an early stage of development. Where this is the case, leaders do not yet have a fully rounded view of all aspects of their subject. The school should ensure that new leaders continue to receive the help and support that they need to be fully effective in their role.

- In some places, the early years curriculum sets out the activities that pupils will complete. It does not make clear what children are expected to know, or the skills that they are expected to master. This means that staff cannot check on how well children are learning the full breadth of the curriculum. The school should ensure that the early years curriculum, across all areas of learning, makes clear what children are expected to know, or be able to do, at each stage of their education.

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 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	147149
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10298534
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Steve Welsh
CEO of the trust	Matt Freeston
Headteacher	Nicola Fretwell-Evans
Website	www.learnerstrust.org/hps
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Learners' Trust.
- Hodthorpe Primary School converted to become an academy in September 2019. When its predecessor school, also called Hodthorpe Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to require improvement overall.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 that 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the trust’s school partner, curriculum leaders, the early years leaders, those responsible for SEND and groups of staff and pupils.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: reading, mathematics, physical education and history. To do this, they met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils’ work and met with teachers and pupils. Inspectors also spoke to leaders, looked at curriculum documentation and spoke with pupils about PSHE.
- The lead inspector met with representatives of the trust, including the chief executive officer, the chair of trustees and the chair of the local champions.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and written comments from parents. Inspectors spoke informally to parents outside the school. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff survey.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed school documents, including those relating to governance, behaviour and attendance. Inspectors scrutinised leaders’ plans for improvement and their assessment of the school’s effectiveness.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils at breaktimes, in the dining hall, on the playground and in the school’s outdoor learning area. An inspector visited the school’s breakfast club.

Inspection team

Vic Wilkinson, lead inspector

His Majesty’s Inspector

Rob Della-Spina

Ofsted Inspector

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