

Inspection of a good school: Hunters Hall Primary School

Alibon Road, Dagenham, Essex RM10 8DE

Inspection dates:

18 and 19 October 2023

Outcome

Hunters Hall Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a welcoming school where pupils are kind and caring. Pupils enjoy school because adults help them to learn. Pupils behave well in lessons and when moving around the school. This is because staff have taught them the importance of 'staying on green'. Pupils generally work hard and produce work of a good quality in a range of subjects.

Pupils are confident that if they have a worry, one of their five trusted adults will listen and help them. This means they feel happy and are kept safe.

There are several opportunities for pupils to take on positions of responsibility. For example, school councillors and leaders worked together to make the swimming provision even better. School councillors compared the costings of hiring the local leisure centre with the costings of a mobile pool, and now a mobile pool is in place during the summer term.

Pupils have regular opportunities to learn about and celebrate events from different cultures. Examples include Diwali, Christmas and Yom Kippur. These opportunities help pupils to understand and respect people with different beliefs and customs.

The school has a band and a choir. The members of the school choir value the opportunities they get to practise and perform together.

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

Reading is given priority here. Pupils are given opportunities to visit the school library and staff read to pupils daily. Children in the early years learn action rhymes which they perform from memory with enjoyment. These experiences develop pupils' love for reading.

Children are taught to read from the start of Reception. Leaders are determined that children should learn to read fluently and without delay. Staff are trained effectively in the

teaching of phonics. This means they teach reading well. Typically, adults check the sounds that pupils know regularly. Pupils who find reading difficult are given the help they need to catch up. Books are carefully matched to the sounds and letters that pupils know and this develops pupils' confidence and fluency.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. In most subjects, the curriculum is well structured. For example, pupils in Year 1 are able to add two numbers together because they have been taught what each number represents. However, in a few subjects the key knowledge, skills and vocabulary that pupils need to remember is not sequenced effectively year-on-year. This means that sometimes pupils do not build on previous learning and have gaps in their knowledge. Furthermore, in a small number of developing subjects the school does not have effective systems in place to check what pupils know and remember.

In most subjects, staff have the subject knowledge they need to deliver the curriculum effectively. In the early years, staff help children to remember important vocabulary. For example, adults in the Nursery reinforce language such as 'edges', 'longer' and 'shorter' when helping children to build shapes. This prepares children for learning in Reception.

Staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) effectively. The school works with external professionals, such as speech and language therapists and educational psychologists. These professionals provide effective focused training for teachers and teaching assistants. As a result, staff adapt their approaches so that pupils with SEND can access the curriculum and achieve well. This includes those pupils in the specially resourced provision.

Most pupils display positive attitudes to their learning. This is because staff have high expectations of pupils and routines are well established. Learning is not interrupted by silly behaviour. Pupils are taught how to collaborate, share and take turns. This starts in the early years. Pupils are taught how to manage their feelings. They explain how the strategies they have been taught help them to be ready for learning. In the early years, children are taught vocabulary to help them describe how they feel. Leaders take effective action to encourage good attendance.

The school aims for pupils to value diversity, respect others and contribute to society. For example, through Enterprise Week, pupils in Year 6 raise money which they put towards the Year 5 residential. The personal, social, health and economic education curriculum is well structured. Pupils are taught about consent and boundaries in an age-appropriate manner. Pupils learn about different types of families and healthy and unhealthy relationships. Through voting in school council elections, pupils practise democracy.

Lessons across the curriculum subjects help pupils understand how to identify risks both within and beyond the school. Pupils are taught how to block and report any concerns that may arise when online.

Leaders have created a caring, happy environment for both pupils and staff. Staff value the care they receive from the school to support their well-being and workload.

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 few subjects, pupils struggle to remember key knowledge, skills and vocabulary. This means that pupils have gaps in their learning. This is because in these subjects the curriculum is not sequenced as effectively as it could be. In addition, in these subjects the school does not have systems in place to check what has been taught, learned and remembered. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum is sequenced effectively and that there are processes in place to check what pupils' have learned.

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 school to be good in May 2018.

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	131844
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	10290128
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	611
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	John Allen
Headteacher	Michael Kaitell
Website	www.huntershallprimary.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school operates a breakfast club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with speech, language and communication difficulties. There are currently four pupils enrolled in this 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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the senior leadership team to discuss school development.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the local governing body. They also met with a representative from Impetus Education Solutions.

- 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 scrutinised a wide range of documents, including those related to pupils' personal development and behaviour and attendance. They also met with groups of staff and pupils to discuss these aspects of the school's work.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The views of parents, carers and staff were also considered, including through Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Deborah Walters, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alison Martin

Ofsted Inspector

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