

Inspection of Hale Primary School

Hatchett Green, Hale, Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 2NE

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, nurturing school. Friendships across all age groups thrive. Pupils talk about how kind everyone is, with one pupil saying, 'There are no bad vibes at Hale.' Pupils love spending their summer lunchtime breaks playing on the village green with their friends. They learn how to share this space safely with the New Forest ponies. Older pupils make sure that younger children walk carefully to the village hall for lunch. Pupils love nominating each other for a 'friendship award'.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and personal growth. Pupils meet these. The 'Roots curriculum', with its six 'roots' of boundaries, respect, self-regulation, resilience, focus and independence, is central to all that the school teaches. It equips pupils with the skills they need to negotiate social situations and builds their emotional strength. Pupils know how to behave in lessons and around the school. They do this well.

Parents are highly complimentary of the school. As one parent wrote, summing up the views of many, 'My child loves this school. She leaves the house in the morning so excited to get to school and comes home so happy.'

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

The curriculum is carefully sequenced. It sets out clearly what teachers should teach and in what order from Reception to Year 6. The school has considered how pupils build on learning in the mixed-age classes carefully. Curriculum delivery is well established. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. Subject leadership, spread across the federated schools, is knowledgeable. Staff make well-judged decisions about curriculum improvements and support for pupils.

Central to the curriculum is an exceptional personal development programme. As well as laying out, with absolute clarity, what pupils need to know and remember in academic subjects, each project links key concepts and questions to promote deeper thinking extremely well. For example, while learning about Ancient Egypt, pupils in the mixed Year 5 and 6 class consider how beliefs in the modern day can drive people's actions. The school ensures that pupils learn about life beyond the rural community in which they live. Pupils care for their world with a passion. Whether it is organising their own crisp packet recycling scheme, upcycling clothes or learning about protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. The school promises all pupils that they will have access to 50 rich experiences during their time at school, such as fossil hunting and cloud watching. This is a small school with big ideas.

The school identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities quickly. Teachers ensure that all pupils have the right support to be successful learners. Pupils learn well at Hale, but they could learn even better. In some subjects, there is a long gap between projects. Whereas pupils know their current learning well, some pupils struggle to remember key learning over longer

periods of time. Sometimes pupils remember the activity rather than the concept identified in the curriculum. The school has spotted this and has recently introduced effective strategies to support pupils' recall. This approach is in its infancy and not yet showing the desired impact in helping pupils learn and remember more over time. Teachers' checks on how well pupils are learning the curriculum in English and mathematics are precise and useful. However, in a small number of foundation subjects, these checks on learning are not as effective and do not always spot gaps and misconceptions well enough. Again, the school has a clear plan for a way forward.

Staff ooze a love of reading and children's literature. This has rubbed off on the pupils brilliantly. Pupils talk about their favourite books and authors confidently with fond memories of the books teachers read to them. A pupil-led book club ensures that pupils have positive attitudes to reading. Staff teach phonics with rigour and expertise. They give pupils extra help to keep up when they need it. Children in Reception are already reading words such as 'rabbit' and 'ladder' with ease. They have got off to a flying start in their reading journey.

Governance is another strength in the school. The governing body has a wide range of skills which it uses to good effect to support and challenge the school. It makes sure pupils benefit consistently from a good education. Morale is high among staff. They appreciate the support they get with their well-being and professional development. Staff and pupils benefit greatly from working closely with other schools in the federation and sharing expertise.

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 foundation subjects, there is a large gap before pupils learn the subject again. As a result, pupils are not always able to recall the key knowledge that leaders have identified as the most important to remember. The school should continue with their plans to implement robust recall and retrieval opportunities to help pupils remember key content over time.
- In some foundation subjects, checks on pupils' learning are not fully effective in identifying gaps in knowledge. Consequently, pupils are not always as ready for future learning as they could be. The school should establish procedures for checking what pupils know in all subjects so teachers can act on these swiftly.

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	115900
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287876
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	66
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Millard
Headteacher	Tracy Allen (Interim Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.hale.forestedgelearning.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Forest Edge Learning Federation. This is a formal collaboration with two other local schools, sharing the same senior leadership team and governing body.
- The interim executive headteacher and deputy headteacher stepped up into their roles in September 2023 while governors recruit a new executive headteacher.
- The school runs its own breakfast club.
- 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.

- Inspectors held meetings with the interim executive headteacher and other school leaders, school staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector also met with nine members of the governing body, including the chair. She held a telephone call with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons in all three classes, spoke to teachers, talked to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to some pupils reading to a familiar adult. The team considered the school's curriculum in some other subjects through discussions with leaders and pupils.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the team 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 lead inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation of the school and school development plan.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour throughout the inspection. They spoke to pupils about their views on behaviour in school. Inspectors considered how the school is supporting pupils' personal development.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys. They took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. An inspector also spoke with a number of parents at the end of the school day.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Clare Vallence

Ofsted Inspector

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