

# Inspection of a good school: Highworth Combined School and Nursery

Highworth Close, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire HP13 7PH

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Inspection dates:

7 and 8 February 2024

## 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 be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## What is it like to attend this school?

The school is passionate that all pupils will achieve highly. Pupils respond positively to the encouragement and high expectations of staff. They develop an understanding of the school's values of 'Curiosity, Achievement, Resilience and Relationships'. Pupils reflect these through being keen to learn, trying their best and working well with others. Pupils are proud to have their efforts recognised through 'House Points' and 'Green Cards'.

Pupils happily support new arrivals to make friends; this is a warm school community where pupils like to help each other. At playtime, Year 5 'Peer Mentors' are available for pupils to talk to them if they need support. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work with different year groups. For example, pupils in Years 4 to 6 enthusiastically read to younger children in 'Reading Swap' events. Pupils across the years play together safely and sensibly.

Pupils enjoy getting involved in the wide range of opportunities available. They eagerly compete in sporting events and take pride in their collective efforts to fundraise for charities. The progress of each 'House' is tracked closely by pupils in the annual inter-house competition. They value additional experiences like the residential trips describing the fun activities and life experiences they gained through these.

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

The school's curriculum is ambitious and broad. The school considers how well pupils learn through the curriculum and makes changes which further strengthen the achievement of all. This approach supports all pupils to develop secure subject knowledge. The detailed curriculum thinking enables teachers to draw on pupils' knowledge from previous learning across subjects. As a result, pupils develop a broader understanding of the big ideas within each subject.

Throughout the school, teachers draw on their strong subject knowledge to give clear explanations. They check pupils' understanding carefully and address any inaccuracies. This means that pupils can confidently complete activities to a high standard. For example, in Year 4 mathematics, pupils accurately explain their approach to adding fractions together as they complete practice examples. A sharp focus on vocabulary means pupils convey their knowledge clearly when writing explanations. Previous learning is regularly re-visited, so that pupils remember important knowledge. As a result, pupils talk richly about their learning. For example, in history, Year 6 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), explain how trade supported the Ancient Egyptians and Romans to become powerful.

Reading is woven through the curriculum. Across all years, pupils enjoy daily story time. In reading lessons, they study a diverse range of texts, which develop their views about characters, storylines and themes. The school prioritises early reading with a purposeful approach to phonics. Children start to learn phonics from the start of Reception. Their progress is closely tracked with rapid intervention for struggling pupils, who catch up quickly.

There is a sharp focus on identifying pupils with SEND and ensuring they achieve well. Teachers use appropriate adaptations to enable pupils to access the same demanding work as others. This includes pupils with more complex SEND who receive high-quality targeted support. For example, pupils who attend the specially resourced provision develop essential skills and how to transfer them, so that they can learn in mainstream lessons effectively.

Pupils are keen to learn. They arrive punctually for lessons and settle quickly. Pupils focus on completing the carefully selected activities. For example, in early years, play activities include aspects of the mathematics they are learning. Across classes, behaviour is impeccable with pupils following instructions promptly and applying new learning swiftly. Around school, behaviour is courteous and considerate. During wet playtime when all pupils are indoors, they calmly and responsibly play games or talk quietly. Their attitudes reflect the strong ethos for positive behaviour across the school.

A carefully considered, high-quality approach to pupils' wider development prepares them thoroughly for life beyond Highworth. Pupils learn about the different cultures within their diverse school community. For example, they learn about why some pupils participate in fasting. They have positive attitudes towards difference and show empathy because they understand how life can be more challenging for some groups of people. They engage fully in opportunities to contribute to the school through votes, discussions or leadership positions. Pupils can explore new areas of interest through participating in sports, choir, drama and music performances.

The school has a thoughtful approach to further refining their work and staff value the consideration of how these will affect their workload. They appreciate the schools' well-being measures and well-planned curriculum because these support them to focus on teaching. Governors have strong knowledge of the school and use this to provide appropriate support and challenge.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2014.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	110403
<b>Local authority</b>	Buckinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296166
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	458
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Co-Chairs of governing body</b>	Saima Ibrahim and Sanam Khan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Clare Pankhania
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.highworth.bucks.sch.uk">www.highworth.bucks.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school provides additionally resourced provision for pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities. This is for up to 12 pupils with hearing impairment.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This is 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteachers, leaders and teachers. The inspector also met with governors, including the co-chairs of the governing body, and spoke to the local authority school improvement advisor.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. The inspector further explored assessment in science and geography.

- The inspector observed playtime activities.
- 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 considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school. They looked at the schools' self-evaluation documents and school improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. This included speaking to parents at the gate.

### **Inspection team**

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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