

Inspection of a good school: Haywood Grove School

St Agnell's Lane, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP2 7BG

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 February 2024

Outcome

Haywood Grove School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Haywood Grove School. Many arrive having experienced difficulties in their education before. Staff take time to get to know and understand each pupil's needs. They build positive and trusting relationships with pupils. Pupils say adults listen to them and they are well cared for. Pupils are happy and safe.

The school has high expectations for how pupils behave. All pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. At times pupils do have difficulties regulating their emotions. Staff manage these occasions well. Calm voices and consistent approaches help pupils to settle. They soon return to their work and learning.

Pupils develop an understanding of what being a good friend means. They are proud to wear well-earned coloured wristbands. Pupils recall how they have demonstrated being a 'community kid' or a 'safety superhero'. This helps to build their self-esteem and confidence.

Pupils benefit from strong links between the school and home. The school is on hand to support parents and carers with advice. This ensures that there is an effective team supporting every pupil. Parents are positive about their child's experience of school. They use words and phrases such as 'life changing' and 'phenomenal' to describe these experiences.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum for pupils. The design of the curriculum ensures that it meets pupils' social, emotional, and mental health (SEMH) needs. Most pupils arrive at school with gaps in their knowledge. The school makes careful checks to identify the starting points of each pupil. Learning plans are well matched to address any gaps in pupils' understanding. Strategies for supporting pupils' SEMH needs are woven through the curriculum. Adults make use of pupils' individual

targets to make the curriculum bespoke to their needs. This means that pupils receive the support they need to achieve their social and academic targets.

Staff make checks of learning during lessons. They use this information to adapt plans for future learning. The school gathers a range of information about how well pupils progress, academically and socially. However, this is not brought together through an in-depth and coherent evaluation. The school does not have a full knowledge about the effectiveness of every aspect of its curriculum. This means staff do not have all the information to ensure their plans are fully effective in meeting the different needs of every pupil.

Teachers select resources and activities that reflect pupils' interests. They have secure subject knowledge. This engages pupils in purposeful learning. Occasionally, teachers do not use materials successfully to stretch pupils' thinking or meet their needs. This means pupils do not always achieve as well as they are capable of.

Pupils receive effective support to help them to learn to read. Staff are well trained to deliver the school's phonics programme. Pupils who struggle receive more help to plug gaps in their knowledge. Pupils enjoy sharing books. They enjoy listening to stories which are a feature of the daily timetable. The schools ensures that pupils apply their reading skills to access learning across the curriculum.

There is a rich provision supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils have opportunity to learn about different jobs to develop their aspirations. Many attend 'holiday mentoring' sessions during the school breaks. This helps to develop talents and interests through participation in challenging activities and trips. Therapies, such as play or equine, provide bespoke development opportunities. They promote pupils' resilience and independence.

Strong links forged between the school and parents supports pupils' regular attendance. The school is quick to follow up any concerns. They address any barriers that could affect pupils attending school. Consequently, pupils benefit from the help they receive at school for improving their behaviours.

Staff welcome opportunities to work in teams. This provides opportunity for mutual support to help carry out their roles effectively. Governors are taking steps to improve their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There is more work to improve their skills and hold leaders robustly to account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's information regarding the implementation of the curriculum is not used sufficiently well. This means that staff do not fully understand how they can support

pupils' needs. The school should ensure that the evaluation of the curriculum informs staff training so that all pupils achieve as they should.

- A few staff do not have a secure understanding of making appropriate pedagogical choices when delivering the school's curriculum plans. This means that not all pupils fully benefit from what is planned for them. The school should ensure that staff receive the support they need to deliver curriculum plans well so that pupils make the strongest progress possible.
- Governors have not developed the knowledge and skills to challenge school leaders effectively in all aspects of their work. This means they do not have a deep knowledge about the impact of the curriculum. Governors should ensure they undertake the training they need to deepen their understanding so that leaders are fully challenged and held to account.

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 October 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

Unique reference number	131319
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10288479
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Julie Lannon
Headteacher	Catherine Smith
Website	www.haywoodgrove.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	26 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection the school has admitted more pupils under the direction of the local authority.
- All pupils who attend Haywood Grove School have an EHC plan for SEMH. Some pupils also have autism and other learning needs.
- The school does not 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 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 met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, assistant headteachers, curriculum leaders and teachers. The lead inspector also met with five governors,

including the chair of governors. The lead inspector also spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a range of pupil's work.
- An inspector discussed the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: reviewed the single central record, took account of the views of leaders and staff; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents through their responses to the online survey and parents' free-text comments. There were insufficient responses on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, for an analysis to be provided. The inspectors also spoke to parents on the phone. Inspectors also considered responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

Inspection team

Steve Mellors, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mary Abeyasekera

Ofsted Inspector

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