

Inspection of a good school: The John Hampden School

Wharf Road, Wendover, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP22 6HF

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 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?

Pupils 'love to learn' at this school, fully reflecting the school's motto. They are highly motivated and behave very well. High expectations permeate every aspect of school life, and pupils flourish, both academically and socially. Pupils make many positive contributions to the lives of others. For example, lunchtime monitors help younger children to zip up their coats and walk round the school safely. Pupils care for each other well. They leave at the end of Year 2 very much ready for junior school.

The school's values, such as 'belonging', 'good manners' and 'perseverance', help pupils to understand how to become good learners exceptionally well. 'Move' lessons, which pupils proudly said stands for 'mastering our values and expectations', teach pupils to respect others. Pupils use the class 'contemplation stations' or the school's 'cosy corner' extremely well to help them manage their own behaviour. Pupils are proud to have their names read out from the 'scroll of honour' for showing the school values in their learning.

Parents are highly complimentary of the school and the impact it has on their children. As one parent described, 'It is a welcoming, nurturing environment, fuelled by passionate staff and a strong community approach.' Another wrote, 'It gets five stars from me.'

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

The love of learning starts in the early years. Children get off to an exceptional start in both their learning and their personal development. Staff do not waste a moment. They seize every opportunity to support children's communication and language development. Every learning activity is purposeful in the carefully designed, high-quality indoor and outdoor environments. Children are deeply engaged in tasks. Staff are well trained. They check children's starting points and move learning on exceptionally well.

The key stage 1 curriculum grows from this excellent foundation. It is extremely well considered. The school has mapped out precisely what pupils need to know and remember. It ensures that the curriculum gives pupils the language to talk about their learning. 'Golden threads' of key ideas that begin in early years build solidly in key stage 1. For example, children in Nursery start to learn about kings, queens and castles to prepare them for future learning about monarchy in history.

Staff deliver the curriculum very well. Their subject knowledge is strong. Lesson activities consistently support the intended learning. Teachers make thoughtful adaptations to pupils' work so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn successfully. They understand pupils' barriers well and make sure pupils' support plans identify the right provision precisely. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well. Teachers check pupils' understanding before moving on to new areas of learning carefully. Pupils easily make connections between new and previous learning. They recall their prior learning very well. Pupils' outcomes at the end of key stage 1 are extremely strong.

Staff promote reading for pleasure across the school very effectively. They immerse pupils in a love of books. Pupils adore 'Friday book club', picking their books to enjoy over the weekend. The school carefully considers the books and poems that pupils read or that staff read to them. It has identified the important vocabulary it expects pupils to know and use across all subjects, year groups and from all core books. Teachers model and discuss this chosen vocabulary explicitly. Consequently, pupils use these new words in their discussion and writing very well. Expertly trained staff deliver phonics lessons. They understand the phonics programme inside out. Any pupils who fall behind in learning to read get the support they need to catch up very quickly. Pupils learn to read swiftly and with great fluency.

The school places a very strong emphasis on pupils' wider development. The annual 'health and safety' weeks teach pupils about dangers online at an age-appropriate level. They know not to communicate with strangers over the internet. Guest speakers, such as the police and a dentist, help pupils learn about those in the community who keep them safe and healthy. Pupils love the range of clubs available to them, such as gardening and French. The current rock band initiative is very popular among pupils, teaching them to collaborate with others while enjoying making music.

Governors provide highly effective support and challenge to the school. They ensure that all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable, get everything they need to learn exceptionally well. Staff say that leaders give them any support they need to do their jobs 'at the drop of a hat'. Staff morale is high, and they are proud to work at The John Hampden School.

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 October 2013.

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	110293
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10296160
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	289
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	James Edley
Headteacher	Sue Barnes
Website	www.johnhampdenwendover.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provider.

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. 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector also heard pupils read to a member of staff.
- The inspector also looked at other aspects of the school's curriculum.

- The inspector met with leaders, staff, and pupils. She also met with nine members of the governing body, including the chair. She spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys. She took account of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments.
- 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.

Inspection team

Lea Hannam, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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