

Inspection of a good school: Hale Nursery & Primary Academy

Upper Hale, Farnham, Surrey GU9 0LR

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 March 2024

Outcome

Hale Nursery & Primary Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Clare Freeman. This school is part of The Kite Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jeremy Meek, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Debbie Andrews. There is also an executive headteacher, Dee Hughes.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive in this inclusive, caring and ambitious school. Their wider development is valued highly alongside academic progress. Pupils' current achievement in reading and mathematics is much stronger than the 2023 published results. The school's 'pride' values are lived by all, underpinning the curriculum and school life. Pupils show strong understanding of equality, healthy relationships and online safety. Pupils are proud of their school, and the roles they play to make a tangible difference to school life. Leadership roles including eco warrior, sports crew, prefect, and class ambassador ensure that pupils take responsibility and support others.

Behaviour expectations were revised in September 2023. The approach is consistent, with high ambition for all, and pupils rise to meet these expectations well. However, the revised system was not initially communicated clearly to parents, which led to misconceptions about the school's approach. Pupils are happy, confident and animated during class discussions, for example, but move silently around school. This ensures calm corridors and efficient transitions between play and learning times. As a result, the school is orderly, calm and safe. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Many pupils benefit from impressive emotional and mental health support. One parent reflected the views of many when sharing, 'the school always puts the children's learning and wellbeing above all else'.

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

Children make a wonderful start in Nursery and Reception, where every opportunity is captured for meaningful learning. Caring staff model language through positive

interactions. This ensures that the well-resourced early years environment inspires children to flourish with both emotional development and learning. Phonics teaching starts well here, and continues strongly through the school. Staff show effective subject knowledge and use the scheme with complete consistency. Children read books which help them to master the sounds they are learning. Catch-up interventions target any gaps, helping pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

The curriculum has been developed across the trust, and implemented in this school since September 2023. Knowledge, skills and vocabulary are precisely planned. Activities are well designed and engaging. Mathematics teaching is a strength, and pupils are now achieving well, despite lower attainment in published tests in 2023. Every subject is valued highly, with foundation subjects often showcasing pupils' creativity. Pupils have proudly made pneumatic toys, painted in the style of Picasso, and compared creation stories to the Big Bang. Teachers routinely check what pupils know, and many pupils recall key content well, acquiring knowledge and skills with success. However, others do not remember their learning precisely across every subject.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. The school identifies needs by routinely reviewing individual pupils' strengths and gaps. Staff use adaptations and resources to help pupils with SEND to achieve well. However, the proportion of pupils with SEND in this school has risen to well above national average. The trust has increased staffing and leadership capacity to meet this greater need. However, access to external support has sometimes been delayed, and some provision has not been communicated clearly to parents. This means that families are sometimes unaware of support, or how it is helping pupils, which causes worry.

Classrooms are productive, calm and focused. Relationships are warm and positive, and learning is not disrupted. Expectations are consistent and fair across the school, and pupils love being celebrated for their efforts. The school has also achieved improvements to attendance since the pandemic, and this is now in line with the national average. Persistent absence rates are much lower in this school than nationally.

Pupils' wider development is prioritised. They love learning about different faiths and cultures, warmly greeting families new to the school from other nations. Pupils are suitably prepared for modern Britain as a result of well-considered lesson and assembly activities. For example, pupils created diagrams identifying characteristics of 'you', 'me' and 'us', showing how we are all unique, but can always find things in common. Pupils' skills and talents are celebrated and nurtured through an impressive club offer. From dodgeball to computing, there is something for everyone. The school ensures that disadvantaged pupils never miss out. Trips to farms, theatres and residential activity centres provide further enrichment. Pupils are inspired by visitors such as from an Olympic athlete, author and paramedic.

Leaders, trustees and governors share a vision for the school to be aspirational for all. Teachers benefit from excellent professional development. Collaborative planning across the trust is driving curriculum improvements. Staff are proud, happy and well-supported. Governors and trustees provide effective support and challenge. Some parents need

assurances about the school's work, but others say, 'the school have dealt with any issues we have had amazingly'.

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 has not successfully communicated details about the support for pupils with SEND with all parents. As a result, some families do not know about the support their children are having, and are concerned. The school must re-double its efforts to share information with parents about the support their children receive and the impact this is making.
- The curriculum changes introduced in September 2023 are not fully embedded. This means that some pupils do not securely remember their learning in every subject. The school must ensure that curriculum implementation continues to help all pupils securely know and remember key content across the whole curriculum.

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 predecessor school, Hale School, to be good in June 2017.

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	146975
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10296449
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	285
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Debbie Andrews
CEO of the trust	Jeremy Meek
Executive headteacher	Dee Hughes
Headteacher	Clare Freeman
Website	www.hale.kite.academy
Dates of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school offers a before- and after-school club, overseen by the trust.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provider.
- There is a Nursery for two- and three-year-old children.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 8 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.

- The lead inspector met with the headteacher, executive headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, trust staff and support staff.
- The inspector met with governors, trustees, and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: geography, early reading and mathematics. 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.
- The inspector also discussed and evaluated pupils' work across the wider curriculum.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read. He observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- 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.
- The inspector evaluated responses to the pupil survey and spoke with a range of pupils in meetings, lessons and break times.
- The inspector spoke to a range of parents by telephone, considered communication from parents via emails to Ofsted, and took account of responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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