

Inspection of Harefield Primary School

Yeovil Chase, Southampton, Hampshire SO18 5NZ

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 March 2024

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

The headteacher of this school is Sian Carr. This school is part of Hamwic Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Robert Farmer, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Alice Wrighton.

This school was last inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 13 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between graded inspections under section 5 of the Act. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy to come to school. The school is at the centre of the community, meaning that many pupils often know each other well. They also know the importance of helping each other, as well as looking after their own well-being.

Most pupils respond positively to the school's renewed attention to ensuring high expectations of behaviour and learning. Pupils understand the clear instructions they are given about conduct, such as 'walking well'. This is helping them to focus on showing respect to one another. However, all too often, learning in classrooms and across the school can be interrupted by poor behaviour. This means that many pupils are not gaining the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for the next stage of their education.

Pupils are supported by staff who understand them well. Pupils know whom to talk to should they have concerns, and know who will help them. Pupils with the most complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive compassionate help from staff who want the very best for them.

Pupils' growing interest and excitement about their education are supported by their developing love of reading. Pupils keenly talk about what they learn in school and in lessons. They particularly value the guidance they receive about actions they can take to stay safe.

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

School leaders recognise that there has been too much variability in how well the school helps pupils to learn. Since joining, the school's new headteacher has put appropriate plans in place which are starting to address this. Staff are beginning to ensure that learning is well considered and carefully sequenced. This is to ensure pupils learn the right information at the right time in every subject.

The school has prioritised improving pupils' reading and writing skills. Teachers now have a secure understanding of what help pupils need to learn to read. Pupils' increasing confidence is also encouraging them to read more. Pupils who need extra help get support through targeted, small-group sessions. To improve pupils' writing skills, staff have received focused training. This is starting to have a positive impact. However, currently, too many pupils are unable to write well, including using appropriate spelling, grammar and accurate letter formation. Leaders remain focused on these much-needed improvements.

Where staff know and understand what they are teaching, pupils learn in lessons and can recall past learning. However, staff do not yet have the expertise required to help pupils learn well across the full curriculum. Teachers also do not consistently check what pupils know. This means they are not clear on the suitable lesson activities required to help pupils build on what they have already learned. Leaders

are aware of this, and staff are very positive about the training and support currently being offered to remedy it.

Leaders are also aware that the early years curriculum and provision need urgent improvements. The poorly planned curriculum has led to classroom and outdoor activities that do not always support children's development well enough. This leaves them unprepared for key stage 1. Focused support from the trust has recently been put in place, with the aim of quickly improving the early years provision.

Some pupils' behaviour is disruptive. This means that they and others cannot learn as much as they should. Staff's expectations of pupils' behaviour are inconsistent, which can lead, for example, to pupils being slow to settle in class. Where expectations are clear, pupils respond positively. Leaders have made improving consistency in how behaviour is supported and managed a whole-school priority.

Pupils with SEND benefit from the actions of staff to ensure individual needs are well understood. Appropriate information and the creative use of resources help to ensure pupils with SEND get the support required to meet their needs. However, as yet, these pupils do not achieve as well as they should due to the improvements required to the school's overall quality of education.

The attendance of some pupils has previously been too low. Effective and robust systems for checking and promoting good attendance are now in place, reducing the level of absence. When families need individual help, leaders are quick to offer targeted support and advice. This has particularly improved the attendance of disadvantaged pupils.

The school and the trust recognise that many of the school's pupils and their families face wider challenges in everyday life. Thoughtful strategies have been put in place to provide additional support. Different learning activities support pupils' understanding of how to stay safe, including when online. Teaching about the importance of positive relationships is helping pupils to understand viewpoints different to their own. All pupils are encouraged to participate in the recently reintroduced clubs and trips. Leaders carefully consider each trip to help to broaden pupils' life experiences.

Leaders' have an accurate view of what the school needs to do to improve. Actions taken are starting to have a positive impact, although leaders know this work needs continued focus to ensure pupils benefit from a good education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This means that they do not have the knowledge and skills needed for the next stages of their education. The school must continue its recently improved focus on implementing an effective curriculum delivered through consistent pedagogy. This is to enable pupils to achieve as well as possible.
- Staff do not consistently ensure that pupils demonstrate positive behaviour and attitudes to their education. This means that learning time is lost because of some disruptive behaviour. Additionally, pupils do not get the help they need to focus and settle to work as quickly as they should. The school must ensure that behaviour expectations and processes are consistently applied. This includes specific support for those pupils who find managing their behaviour more difficult.
- The early years curriculum is not ambitious enough to give children the knowledge and skills they need to be ready for key stage 1. In addition, the learning environment and activity choices are not sufficiently well considered. The school must strengthen the plans for improvement so that children make a strong start to their education.

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	139747
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10288036
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	412
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alice Wrighton
CEO of the trust	Robert Farmer
Headteacher	Sian Carr
Website	www.harefieldprimaryschool.net
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Harefield Primary School opened as an academy converter on 5 June 2013 as part of the Hamwic Education Trust. When its predecessor school, also called Harefield Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2011, it was judged to be outstanding.
- Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the school's leadership team and teaching staff. The current headteacher took up post in September 2023.
- The school currently uses no alternative education providers.

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.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, curriculum leaders and other staff.
- The inspectors met with trustees and the CEO.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The inspectors examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: 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 inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. They also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Mark Cole	Ofsted Inspector
Martin Smith	His Majesty's Inspector
Kathryn Moles	His Majesty's Inspector

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