

Inspection of a good school: Little Heath Primary School

School Road, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 1JW

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

Outcome

Little Heath Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at school. They enjoy learning and playing with their peers. Pupils live up to the school's three overarching rules requiring them to be, 'ready, respectful and safe.' They value learning and are inquisitive. Children in the early years delight in exploring the impressive indoor and outdoor learning areas.

Pupils work hard to achieve the school's high expectations. Starting in the early years, pupils sustain concentration and focus on learning without distraction. They support each other well during group tasks. During class discussions, pupils show great enthusiasm. They use sophisticated language and articulately explain their ideas. They take pride in their many academic and personal achievements. Pupils celebrate the success of others.

Pupils willingly take positions of responsibility. They play an active role in the student council. Older pupils lead mixed-age 'friendship groups' to get their peers' feedback. Pupils appreciate the way the school uses their views to make any necessary improvements.

Pupils benefit from the many opportunities to develop their interests and talents. They have fun and thrive in the wide array of clubs the school provides. This includes impressive sporting activities.

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

The school has a well-planned and ambitious curriculum in place. The curriculum is organised so that pupils learn knowledge in a sensible order. The school provides staff with clear guidance about the exact knowledge pupils must learn. Staff follow this guidance closely and typically plan effective learning activities. This includes providing pupils with opportunities to review what they know. As a result, pupils remember much of the key knowledge leaders intend. Staff routinely check what pupils have learned. They ask pupils thought-provoking questions to assess their understanding. These questions also enrich pupils' understanding and use of new vocabulary. When pupils have forgotten

or misunderstood something, staff provide timely support. This helps pupils keep up and so avoids them falling behind.

Most pupils read fluently, enjoy reading and appreciate the well-stocked library. Staff in the Nursery and Reception classes develop children's communication and literacy skills with lots of purposeful discussions. This helps them learn to listen, so they are ready to learn phonics. Along with precise phonics teaching, staff help pupils learn the necessary knowledge to understand what they read. Staff effectively help pupils that find reading difficult. These pupils become fluent readers.

The school quickly and accurately identifies the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs is particularly noteworthy. These pupils learn how to manage their emotions and maintain positive behaviour. However, the school's guidance for staff about how to support pupils with cognition and learning needs is occasionally vague or unclear. In such instances, staff do not provide the exact support pupils need. As a result, some of these pupils are not learning as well as they could.

The school's well-established ethos ensures that pupils learn in a calm and purposeful environment. Staff effectively teach the school's expectations and model the school's expected conduct. In line with the school's approach, pupils admirably make positive behaviour choices simply because it is the right thing to do rather than seeking rewards.

Pupils value their time at school, and so maintain regular attendance. The school has strong relationships with parents which means they can readily provide support when there are issues with attendance. The school has effective measures in place to ensure pupils maintain regular attendance.

The school has a well-planned programme to support pupils' wider development. Pupils' studies of the curriculum are enriched by trips to places of local, national and international interest. Staff enrich pupils' learning through visits by guest speakers. Pupils speak knowledgeably and enthusiastically about their learning, such as when they studied the Vikings. To foster pupils' independence and resilience, the school has a well-structured series of residential experiences. Pupils learn how to manage being away from home and the skills to be self-sufficient. The school ensures that pupils learn about relationships and how to live happily alongside people with different beliefs and lifestyles. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Parents, staff and pupils have confidence in the leadership of the school. Staff appreciate leaders' support to maintain a reasonable workload.

Governors have the expertise to carry out their statutory duties. They have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They hold leaders to account for the quality of the school's work.

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 guidance for staff about what some pupils with SEND require is occasionally vague or unclear. This is particularly the case for pupils with cognition and learning needs. As a result, staff do not always provide the exact support these pupils need. This leads to some of these pupils not learning as well as they could. The school must provide helpful guidance, including training, for staff to support pupils with SEND more effectively so they achieve consistently well.

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 school to be good in March 2019.

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	117567
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345213
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire Cresswell and Michelle Corneby (co-chairs)
Headteacher	Kim Custis
Website	www.littleheath.herts.sch.uk
Date(s) of previous inspection	12 and 13 March 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use any alternative providers.
- The school provides before- and after-school care.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held discussions with the co-chairs of the governing body, governors, the headteacher, members of the senior leadership team, subject leaders, teachers, members of support staff and pupils.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: history, mathematics, science and reading. 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 also discussed the wider curriculum, looked at a range of curriculum documents, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to some pupils about their learning in some other subjects.

- 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 observed behaviour of pupils in lessons and during social time.
- The inspector looked at relevant documents, considered pupils' work and held discussions with leaders, staff and pupils about the provision for pupils' wider development.
- The inspector considered the 27 staff responses, 57 pupil responses and 54 parent responses to Ofsted's online surveys.

Inspection team

Al Mistrano, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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