

# Inspection of a good school: Highfield Junior and Infant School

Highfield Road, Saltley, Birmingham, West Midlands B8 3QF

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Inspection dates: 14 and 15 May 2024

The head of school is Stephanie Davies. This school is part of the Prince Albert Community Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Phillipa Sherlock-Lewis, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Dr Paulette Osborne MBE. There is also an executive headteacher, Ashley Knibbs, who is responsible for this school and one other.

## Outcome

Highfield Junior and Infant School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Highfield Junior and Infants is a school which lives its values daily: respect, equality, inspiration, determination, honesty and friendship. Pupils enjoy learning and being at school. As one pupil, typical of many, stated to an inspector, 'You will feel so inspired and respected'. Pupils are taught to show tolerance to each other and they know that everyone is welcome at this school, regardless of background.

Pupils achieve well at Highfield thanks to the school's high ambitions for all pupils. Leaders understand that pupils often start at the school with differing levels of English, and they work extensively to ensure that all pupils are supported to achieve. The school's work in the local community and liaison with parents and external agencies show the commitment to its pupils and the absolute determination to ensure all are supported to succeed.

Pupils behave very well at Highfield as they understand the school's values, which are explicitly taught to them. They are happy at school and support each other well. When disputes arise, they are dealt with quickly and fairly. Pupils benefit from the many opportunities which the school provides for them, including clubs, trips and visitors to the school.

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

The school has worked extensively to review and redesign the curriculum across all subjects, including early reading. For example, leaders have been careful to consider the key knowledge that pupils need to learn and remember, with a significant focus on the

pupils' backgrounds to ensure the school's curriculum has a true global influence. In this way the curriculum at Highfield is broad, balanced and ambitious for all pupils. Leaders have carefully considered the background knowledge that pupils need to be successful, and have selected key texts around which they have built their curriculum. This supports pupils to learn the key vocabulary and concepts they need to be successful.

Given the highly diverse background of the pupils at Highfield, leaders have prioritised the teaching of early reading as the key to success in the curriculum. From the very start of Reception, all pupils are consistently taught how sounds correspond to letters or groups of letters. Staff are highly skilled in identifying which pupils are at risk of falling behind. These pupils are supported to rapidly catch up with same-day interventions. All of this means that pupils are able to read fluently. This includes pupils who join the school in later years.

Teachers have a strong understanding of the key knowledge that pupils need to learn, and check carefully that they have done so. This helps pupils to make good progress through the curriculum. On occasions, however, the design of the activity or checking of understanding are not as precise. This means that pupils' progress is not as sustained as it is elsewhere.

Provision for pupils in the newly established resource base is strong, as it is for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) across the school. Leaders have a secure grasp of pupils' needs which staff accurately identify. They use this information to provide effective support, and liaise with parents and external agencies as appropriate. Leaders carefully check that pupils are achieving well, whether in the resource base or in lessons with their year group. As a result, these pupils make good progress.

The school has worked extensively to instil a culture of high attendance with an impressive whole-school strategic approach. This has had a positive impact across all groups of pupils, meaning attendance levels have increased year on year.

Expectations for pupils' behaviour are consistent and well understood. Poor behaviour does not disrupt learning. When incidents do occur, careful action is taken to support pupils in making better choices. Pastoral leaders have a clear overview of incidents and work effectively to spot and address particular issues.

The school has reviewed the provision for pupils' personal development, which has included the curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities. These include visits to places of worship, a wide range of trips and visitors to the school. Pupils speak highly of these. Leaders ensure their offer is regularly reviewed to ensure it is of a high quality.

Staff report that the school engages with them constructively about workload. They appreciate the many opportunities for professional development which come through the trust. Those responsible for governance are highly committed to the school and are well informed about its progress. This means they discharge their statutory responsibilities appropriately.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, the curriculum is not as well implemented as it is elsewhere, due to a lack of precise checking of pupils' understanding or the design of the activity. On these occasions, pupils do not learn the curriculum as well as they might. The school should further enhance the consistency of curriculum implementation to ensure it is to the same high standard across and within all subjects.

## 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 January 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	142570
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10322884
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Dr Paulette Osborne MBE
<b>CEO</b>	Phillipa Sherlock-Lewis
<b>Head of School</b>	Stephanie Davies
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hifield.bham.sch.uk">www.hifield.bham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 and 17 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school is part of the Prince Albert Community Trust.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND, all of whom have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not make use of 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.
- 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.

- As a part of this inspection, the inspectors met with trustees and the chair of the local advisory committee, senior leaders, subject leaders and teaching staff, as well as other employees in the school. An inspector also talked informally to pupils to gather general information about school life.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in: early reading, mathematics, geography and design technology. For each deep dive, the 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 inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and their careers and personal development programmes with leaders and pupils.
- The inspectors reviewed the school's behaviour and attendance records with school leaders.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including leaders' plans to improve the school.
- The inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, both formally and informally, at various points in the inspection. They took account of responses to a staff survey, a pupil survey, Ofsted Parent View and the free-text responses. Inspectors also talked with parents informally.

### **Inspection team**

Andrew Madden, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Benjamin Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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