

Inspection of Northolmes Junior School, Horsham

Leith View Road, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 4ET

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and have positive attitudes to their learning. They know the school's values of 'Be kind, be respectful, be ready' and learn about these meaningfully through whole school assemblies and the strong personal, social and health education curriculum. Pupils thrive in response to thoughtful activities that support them with their well-being. For example, pupils love growing and harvesting potatoes and vegetables, cooking and eating what they have picked. Pupils value the many sports activities provided for them, including football, netball, dance and table tennis.

Pupils are responsible and respectful towards each other and staff. Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Pupils are clear about what staff expect from them. Behaviour incidents are managed swiftly and robustly. If any pupils need additional support, the school acts decisively. Most pupils attend school regularly. The school works closely with families to ensure that if pupils are at risk of poor attendance they are supported successfully.

Staff have high expectations for what pupils can achieve. Although the most recent published outcomes indicate that some pupils did not achieve as well as they could have in the past, pupils currently at the school are increasingly secure in their learning in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupil with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported effectively.

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

Reading is prioritised by the school. Staff are well trained and have developed strong phonics and reading subject knowledge. The school's systematic approach to teaching those pupils at the earliest stages of reading is embedded securely. If pupils fall behind, appropriate time and resources are given to help them develop reading fluently. Pupils have a love of books. They are engaged and motivated to read. Pupils recommend books to each other excitedly. The school promotes high quality texts and connects these to learning within the curriculum. For example, pupils read fiction linked to their study of the Egyptians and visit the British Museum to deepen their knowledge and understanding purposefully. By the end of Year 6, most pupils read confidently and are prepared well for their next stage of education.

Since the previous inspection, the curriculum has improved rapidly. The school has identified the key knowledge and skills that they want pupils to learn across all subjects. Core subjects, such as mathematics and English, have been reviewed and supported intensively. Lessons are sequenced carefully and help pupils to build their knowledge cumulatively over time. Pupils with SEND have their individual needs identified quickly. The school uses internal information, parents' views, and external expertise skilfully. In core subjects, staff check how well pupils have learned the curriculum robustly. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as effectively as where it is strongest, and staff do not check what pupils have

learned systematically. This means that a small number of pupils do not always build on their prior knowledge and learn as effectively as they could.

Pupils' broader development is at the heart of the school. Staff lead by example, inspiring pupils through a programme of musical and artistic performances including singing in the community. All pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, have the opportunity to learn musical instruments such as violin and keyboard. Visiting speakers to the school and residential trips help pupils to learn about school values such as resilience in memorable ways. Pupils talk confidently about sleeping well, eating healthily and older pupils are aware of the dangers of substance abuse such as alcohol, vaping and the dangers of addiction.

Governors know the school's strengths and areas for development accurately. They support and challenge staff effectively. The school has engaged in concentrated improvement work. Staff feel well supported and appreciate their professional development opportunities. The school has rightly prioritised training and development which already impacts positively on pupils' learning. Staff feel cared for and say that well-being is made a priority by leaders. There is a strong sense of teamwork and close working that goes across the school fully.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, some teachers do not always check pupils' understanding thoroughly and work out what pupils need to learn next. The school should ensure that teachers use assessment information effectively and help pupils build on their prior knowledge successfully.
- The school does not implement some areas of the wider curriculum as effectively as in the strongest subjects. As a result, some pupils do not learn as successfully as they could. The school should ensure that staff use training and monitoring fully effectively so that the whole curriculum is delivered extremely well.

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	125836
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10296316
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Oakley
Headteacher	Samantha Cox
Website	www.northolmes.w-sussex.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	31 January 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school is part of Greenfields Federation and shares the school leadership team and governing body with Littlehaven Infant School.

Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the staff and the members of the governing body, including the chair of governors. The inspector also met with a representative of the local authority and other leaders within the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and music. For each deep dive, the inspectors 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, where possible.
- 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 views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings, local authority visit reports and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Carl McCarthy, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Chris Toye

Ofsted Inspector

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