

# Inspection of Jotmans Hall Primary School

High Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5RG

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Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2024

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Good**

Personal development

**Good**

Leadership and management

**Requires improvement**

Early years provision

**Requires improvement**

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Sarah Warnes. This school is a single-academy trust. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Hodges.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

The school's emphasis on regular attendance, happiness and safety creates a positive environment for learning. So, many pupils enjoy coming to school. But pupils' ability to demonstrate what they know through discussion and their schoolwork varies. This is because the explanations, instructions and feedback they receive are not always clear. Also, the opportunities for revision are not working well enough to help pupils to remember content.

Pupils base their conduct on the 'E.R.I.C' values: effort, respect, independence and communication. Pupils, for example, show respect in how they kindly discuss the ways people may differ. It shows too in how they invite others to play at break and lunchtimes. Pupils make the most of their social time by chatting and playing in a productive manner. They balance on tyres, exercise on gym equipment and explore the nature trail.

There are many opportunities that broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils and their parents appreciate the range of extra-curricular clubs. These include choir, dodgeball and tennis. Pupils can form bands, learn to play instruments and perform for an audience. School trips also enhance learning. For example, Reception-age children visited the theatre. They watched a production of a book they had been studying. These experiences create happy memories and foster pupils' positive attitude towards education.

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

The school is making significant improvements. However, some issues still hinder all pupils from receiving a consistent, high-quality education. The recent required restructure was a challenge. Leaders rightly avoided overwhelming staff with too many additional changes at once. Staff support the considered, gradual changes that are being implemented. However, many of these are still new and require further work to become consistent and effective.

The school continues to fine-tune its curriculum, including in the early years. This includes adopting or adapting high-quality schemes of work. Work is underway to extract and present the precise words, concepts and skills pupils should learn from Reception through to Year 6. The aim is to make this clear for staff so they know what to teach, but also what to check pupils know and can do. Because this work is incomplete, staff cannot effectively check pupils' understanding to inform their teaching and help more pupils keep up with the learning.

Curriculum leaders do not consistently check how staff present information. They also do not check how staff arrange activities and give feedback to pupils. As a result, some pupils get unclear teaching. This leads to confusion and difficulty in learning. Pupils' workbooks vary in quality. Some show pride and thorough work,

while others lack it. This means some pupils miss out on practise, especially in writing, which affects their achievement. While leaders are aware of this and have a plan to address it, they have not yet had sufficient time to put the plan into action.

Since the last inspection, the school has made positive strides to strengthen the phonics and reading programmes. For example, daily paired reading sessions involve dedicated staff helping pupils read aloud to improve their fluency. The school also collaborates with external experts to continually improve provision for reading. However, as in other subjects, staff are not consistently receiving feedback on how to enhance their teaching. Consequently, the teaching and additional support for pupils is sometimes lacking, leading to guesswork that hinders some pupils' confidence and progress.

The school takes a proactive approach to inclusion. Initiatives like the 'Jolly Jotmans' lunchtime club create a supportive environment, where pupils feel valued. Leaders developed a comprehensive checklist for identifying the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The results guide staff on adjustments to support pupils' behaviour and learning. While this process generally works well, there are occasional lapses in communication with parents. It leaves some of them unsure about their child's additional support and how they can help from home.

The school successfully improves pupil attendance by tracking absences promptly and clearly communicating absence reporting expectations to parents. It balances support and challenge for parents of frequently absent pupils, with trustees backing leaders for necessary actions. The school also collaborates with external agencies to provide pupils with mental health and well-being support.

The personal development programme works in tandem with the school behaviour policy to create pupils who are typically confident and kind. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities. They serve as anti-bullying ambassadors, digital leaders or school councillors. Pupils feel proud when people outside of school recognise their efforts. For instance, the eco-council's work to improve the school's environmental impact.

Trustees actively encourage and create networking opportunities with external experts and local schools. They understand that being outward facing helps the school showcase its strengths and learn from the best practices of others.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum refinement from Reception through to Year 6 is incomplete. As a result, staff struggle to effectively check pupils' understanding, impacting their ability to ensure all pupils keep up with learning. Leaders should expedite the

refinement process and establish clear methods for staff to assess pupils' learning to closely inform their teaching.

- Staff do not consistently receive feedback on improving their teaching in subjects, like phonics and reading. This creates gaps in teaching quality and additional support, hindering some pupils' progress. Leaders should receive training, time and support to effectively monitor teaching and provide staff with the necessary guidance to teach the curriculum, including early reading, confidently and effectively.
- There are occasional lapses in communication with parents of pupils with SEND about their child's support and how they can help at home. As a result, some parents feel dissatisfied and unaware of the school's efforts. To address this, the school should maintain consistent communication, informing parents about their child's progress, offering guidance on supporting their child at home and providing specific timeframes for follow-up actions.

## 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>	137247
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10323706
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	315
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Paul Hodges
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Warnes
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.jotmanshall.co.uk">www.jotmanshall.co.uk</a>
<b>Dates of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 May 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The published admissions number is 45. Because of this, some pupils are in single-year classes, while others are in mixed-year classes.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

## 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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with leaders, including the headteacher, two assistant headteachers, special educational needs coordinator, five trustees and a representative working on behalf of the local authority.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to staff, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to a sample of pupils read to a familiar adult.
- To further inspect the curriculum, inspectors explored provision in the early years, support for pupils with SEND and a selection of pupils' workbooks from across the curriculum.
- 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.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, including policies, the school development plan, reports from a school improvement consultant, minutes from meetings of the trust board, and a report from a school resource management adviser working for the Education and Skills Funding Agency.
- Inspectors considered the responses to surveys. These included 40 responses to the pupil survey, 22 responses to the staff survey and 34 responses, including 26 free-text responses, to Ofsted Parent View. Inspectors also held separate discussions with pupils, parents and staff.

## Inspection team

Daniel Short, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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