

Inspection of a good school: Hodge Clough Primary School

Conduit Street, Moorside, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL1 4JX

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to belong to this warm and friendly school. They form strong bonds with staff which help them to feel well cared for. Pupils believe that the kindness they show to one another contributes to their happiness at school.

Starting in the early years, children learn how to behave with consideration for others. Across the school, most pupils are attentive to staff. Lessons are calm. The emphasis that the school places on celebrating positive conduct motivates pupils to behave well. For instance, they strive to achieve the 'star award' for being a positive role model to others.

Pupils embrace opportunities to take on responsibilities. Year 5 pupils delight in supporting the play and learning of their 'buddy' in Year 1. These positive relationships help the younger pupils to settle quickly when they move between school sites at the start of Year 2.

The school wants the best for its pupils. In most subjects, the curriculum enables pupils' learning to build from the Nursery class to Year 6. However, too often, pupils' experiences in lessons do not support them in learning what the school intends. Consequently, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

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

The school provides a curriculum that is ambitious for pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, the school has carefully defined the important knowledge that pupils should learn. Pupils benefit from a range of trips and visits that help to bring their learning to life.

In some subjects, staff design activities that help pupils to follow the curriculum well. Staff check that pupils know and remember what they have learned. Pupils typically develop a secure body of knowledge in these subjects. However, in other subjects, staff do not ensure that pupils have the opportunity to learn all that they should. At times, learning activities do not emphasise the knowledge that pupils should acquire. Furthermore, in these subjects, staff do not check that pupils have learned the intended curriculum content. As a result, some pupils, including some pupils with SEND, develop gaps in their knowledge which staff do not address.

Pupils enjoy reading. They eagerly anticipate each instalment of their class novel. Children in the Nursery class experience a wealth of activities that help them to recognise sounds and letters. This helps to get them ready to learn phonics from the start of the Reception Year. In the main, staff deliver the phonics programme well. They quickly identify those pupils who need help to keep up. However, at times, the support for these pupils is not as effective as it should be. In addition, some pupils do not read books that are closely matched to the sounds that they know. This hinders how quickly some pupils develop into accurate and fluent readers.

The school has strengthened its systems for identifying any additional needs that pupils may have. Staff receive detailed information about how to help these pupils to follow the curriculum successfully and they make good use of this. However, pupils with SEND experience the same weaknesses in the delivery of the curriculum as their peers. At times, this hinders how well they learn.

The school's approach to supporting pupils' personal development is woven through all aspects of school life. For instance, voting for members of the student council reinforces pupils' learning about democracy. Pupils spoke positively about the actions that the student council has taken to improve their school experience, such as providing the buckets of equipment that are available at breaktimes. Pupils develop a strong understanding of how they can make a positive contribution to their community. They relish opportunities to do so, for example by litter picking in the school grounds.

Pupils conduct themselves sensibly around the school. They are polite and respectful. On those occasions when a small number of pupils struggle to behave well, the school helps them to learn to regulate their own behaviour.

Most pupils attend school frequently. Some disruption to staffing has affected the extent to which the school has been able to monitor and analyse pupils' attendance. However, the school has recently resolved this issue. It has begun to implement its plans to increase pupils' attendance further.

Many new governors have recently joined the governing body. They have begun to improve the oversight that they have of the school, for example by developing the role of governors linked to subjects. This is helping them to support and challenge the school more effectively. Staff are appreciative of the way that the school takes account of their workload. For instance, they are given time to develop their subject curriculums.

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 subjects, teachers do not deliver the curriculum sufficiently well. This means that pupils do not learn what the school intends. The school should ensure that teachers have a strong, shared understanding of subject curriculums so that they can design learning activities that emphasise the important knowledge that pupils should learn.
- In some subjects, teachers do not have a secure understanding of how well pupils are learning curriculum content. Some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge without teachers realising. The school should ensure that staff match assessment strategies well to the intended curriculum so that they can accurately identify and then address any learning that pupils have missed.
- Some staff do not use the most effective strategies to support pupils who struggle to read. In addition, they do not give some of these pupils books that are well matched to the sounds that they know. This means that some pupils do not develop their phonics knowledge as quickly as they should. The school should ensure that staff receive the training and guidance that they need to help pupils to learn to read 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2015.

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 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	136223
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10348262
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	452
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Emily Edwards
Headteacher	Neil Cavanagh
Website	www.hodgecloughprimary.oldham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	8 and 9 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is based at two sites. The Nursery, Reception and Year 1 classes are located at Wilkes Street, Moorside, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL1 4JX.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision for pupils.

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 her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector spoke with the headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. She met with subject leaders, visited lessons, reviewed some samples of pupils' work and spoke with staff and pupils. The inspector also looked at the curriculum in other subjects.

- The inspector observed some pupils from Years 1 to 3 read to a familiar member of staff. She spoke with some pupils about reading.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at breaktimes.
- The inspector met with pupils to ask about their experiences of school. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for pupils.
- The inspector met with several groups of staff. She also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey for staff.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- The inspector met with representatives of the governing body, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation documents.
- 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.

Inspection team

Sally Rix, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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