

Inspection of Hitherfield Primary School

Leigham Vale, Streatham, London SW16 2JQ

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Hitherfield Primary School is a welcoming, inclusive environment where pupils are safe and happy. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Leaders make significant efforts to work with the community. Staff are nurturing and build positive relationships by getting to know pupils and their families well. As a result, pupils thrive.

The school has high expectations of pupils' achievement. Classrooms are calm and purposeful places to learn. Pupils rise to these high expectations and achieve well. Pupils understand the importance of the school values, such as determination, creativity, risk taking and collaboration, demonstrating a real thirst for learning.

There are many opportunities to broaden pupils' horizons through whole-school visits, events, and a wide range of additional activities. For example, pupils take part in the school's outdoor learning curriculum, in which they learn how to grow food in the school garden. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, benefit from these activities. Pupils readily take on additional responsibilities, such as 'Well-being' and 'Fit for Life' champions and sports ambassadors. This helps to ensure that pupils contribute to the wider life of the school.

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

The school has designed a broad and ambitious curriculum. Leaders have thought carefully about how to organise the curriculum in a logical order. In all subjects, they have clearly identified the knowledge that pupils need to learn and when. Leaders have built in opportunities for pupils to revisit and embed knowledge to help them remember what they have learned in the long term.

Teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. They typically choose activities that support pupils to learn essential knowledge. Teachers identify and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise. In some subjects, such as in English and mathematics, leaders carefully check what pupils know and can do. However, in a few subjects, this is done less consistently. As a result, adaptations to the curriculum that would help some pupils secure their understanding more effectively are not made swiftly enough. Pupils with SEND are well supported throughout the school. Classrooms are inclusive spaces and pupils are very respectful and understanding of each other's needs.

Reading is a priority for the school. In early years, staff use songs and stories with children to excite and enhance their imagination. In the Nursery, staff support children to develop their awareness of sounds. They learn vocabulary that will support them to become confident readers later on. Children learn phonics from the start of the Reception Year. Teachers are trained to deliver the phonics curriculum expertly. Staff regularly assess pupils to ensure that they are learning well. They make sure pupils read books that match the sounds that they know. If assessments show that pupils need additional help, they receive this swiftly. The school's focus on reading continues all the way through to Year 6.

Pupils become fluent readers and achieve highly in external assessments. Pupils spoke of their love of reading and value the school and class libraries.

Pupils attend school regularly and on time. There are clear processes in place when pupils are absent. The school has ensured that pupils who need to improve their attendance receive appropriate additional support. In lessons, pupils are polite, show respect for one another and follow the school rules. This is less consistent in unstructured times and leaders are prioritising this. The school has a wide range of pastoral support in place to support pupils' emotional well-being and regulation.

The school provides an impressive range of wider opportunities for pupils to develop personally. This includes visits to places of worship, museums, and concerts. All pupils take part in these activities, and there has been careful consideration of how these experiences link to the curriculum. The carefully designed personal, social and health education curriculum helps pupils to learn important ideas. These include how to keep themselves healthy, understand what positive relationships look like and ways to stay safe online. Pupils also learn about the importance of democracy through the school council.

Staff feel extremely well supported by leaders. They are proud to work at this school. Governors understand the school's strengths and areas for development. They have taken effective steps to support both the workload and well-being of staff.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, oversight of curriculum implementation and impact is at an earlier stage of development. This means that adaptations to the curriculum that would support some pupils to learn more effectively are not made swiftly enough. The school should ensure that the implementation and impact of each subject is checked, and necessary adaptations made in a timely way.

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	131824
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10345878
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	619
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Tessa Crilly
Headteacher	Christopher Ashley-Jones
Website	www.hitherfield.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	27 and 28 June 2023, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, a new chair of governors has been appointed.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.
- The school manages its own wraparound provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 the headteacher, senior leaders, teachers, and pupils. The lead inspector met with members of the board of governors, including the chair of governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, history, design, technology, and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of their work. The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to staff.
- Inspectors also considered the curriculum in other subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, 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 took account of a range of other information, including the school's improvement plans, policies and minutes of governing body meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the views of pupils, parents and staff through discussions and their responses to Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

Sabrina Edwards, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Georgina Herry	Ofsted Inspector
Brian Simber	Ofsted Inspector
Adam Vincent	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Wright	His Majesty's Inspector

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