

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Hertford St Andrew CofE Primary School

Calton Avenue, Hertford, Hertfordshire SG14 2EP

Inspection date: 10 December 2024

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that aspects of the school's work may not be as strong as at the time of the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy attending Hertford St Andrew School. There is a calm and welcoming atmosphere. The school places a high value on everyone being included. Pupils are very well cared for by staff, and most pupils feel safe.

The school has recently made changes to the curriculum. The expectations for what pupils can learn have risen. Pupils now find learning more exciting and more interesting. This means pupils are beginning to rise to these higher expectations and achieve more. However, these changes are recent and have yet to have the impact the school intends.

The school's vision for children to be able to 'live life in all its fullness' links successfully to everything that happens at the school. Staff and pupils have created 'the HSA way'. This code guides the values and behaviours expected of everyone. Any unkindness between pupils is dealt with effectively. However, there are still too many instances of low-level disruption in class.

Pupils appreciate the range of clubs and activities they can experience. The school provides opportunities for pupils to develop a love of cultural experiences through music and the arts.

The youngest pupils begin school in a safe and well-organised environment. They experience purposeful learning and make a secure start.

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

The school has worked hard to improve the curriculum. Teachers have been well trained in how to deliver this new curriculum. In reading and mathematics, teachers are now delivering learning consistently well. In other subjects, these improvements to the delivery of the curriculum are not as well embedded. This means that the changes to the curriculum are not yet having a positive impact on what pupils know and remember in these subjects.

The school has developed new ways of checking on how well pupils are learning the curriculum. In early reading and mathematics, the checks are regular and quickly identify where pupils need more support. However, these checks are not as effective in other areas of the curriculum.

The provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is improving. The school now accurately identifies the additional help some pupils need to access the curriculum successfully. Teachers adapt their teaching and provide pupils with personalised support. This helps pupils to overcome their barriers to learning.

Children start learning the basics of reading from the moment they arrive at school. Well-trained staff teach phonics consistently well. As a result, most pupils become confident readers. Those who need more help to succeed in their reading are identified quickly. They are supported well in lessons to catch up. However, some pupils need more opportunities to practise their reading independently. This will enable them to become fluent and confident readers.

Leaders prioritise pupils' attendance. They use strategies such as providing a walking bus every morning to escort pupils safely to school. This helps pupils and families overcome barriers to attendance and punctuality. As a result, pupils' attendance continues to improve.

The school has worked with the pupils to agree and introduce a new behaviour policy. This is already having a positive impact on behaviour. Pupils respond well to behaviour expectations in their morning sessions and when moving around school. During the afternoon learning sessions, however, expectations are not as high. This leads to learning time being lost when teachers need to spend time ensuring behaviour is appropriate.

The school promotes an inclusive environment and culture. Pupils are increasingly learning how to lead healthy lives. Most pupils are polite and respectful. They understand the school's values. Leaders have plans to improve the curriculum so that pupils develop a better understanding of how British values underpin our culture.

The school provides pupils with a variety of opportunities to develop their interests beyond the curriculum. Pupils enjoy these opportunities. They can now attend different clubs such as street dance and book and biscuit. In classes, the '10 for 10' sessions introduce them to wider cultural experiences through music and art activities. This is helping pupils gain an interest in the wider cultural experiences they can enjoy in later

life.

The school has been through a challenging period since the pandemic, including changes in staffing. New leaders have quickly identified the reasons for the school's underperformance during this period. They have made changes which are in the best interests of pupils. As a result, pupils are now starting to achieve more. However, these changes need more time to embed before the positive impact is realised 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 subjects, leaders are still developing the curriculum and training staff to deliver this. This hampers pupils' learning. The school needs to ensure it makes effective refinements and improvements to all curriculum subjects. This will enable pupils to learn equally well in the other subjects as they do in English and mathematics.
- In some subjects, teachers do not check thoroughly enough what pupils have learned. As a result, some pupils are carrying misconceptions forward, and these pupils are not ready to learn new knowledge. The school should ensure that agreed approaches for checking pupils' understanding are implemented consistently during lessons.
- A small number of pupils are not given opportunities to practise their reading frequently enough. Although these youngest children are learning the necessary knowledge of phonics to decode words, they are not gaining the confidence they need to be fluent readers. The school needs to ensure that pupils are provided with regular opportunities with expertly trained teachers to develop their confidence when reading aloud.
- During some lessons, staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour. As a result, learning can slow, as teachers spend too much time ensuring a small number of pupils' behaviour is appropriate. The school needs to check more thoroughly that the high expectations of behaviour are applied consistently during the day.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness 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

Unique reference number	117397
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345203
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	138
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stuart Aldridge
Headteacher	Rebecca Sutherland Cooper
Website	www.hertfordstandrew.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.
- The school runs a Nursery, with provision for three-year-old children.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school is a Church of England school in the Diocese of St Albans. The last inspection to evaluate the distinctiveness and effectiveness of the school's denominational education and worship, under section 48 of the Education Act 2005, took place in June 2017.
- The headteacher joined the school in September 2023.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.

- The inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the leader with responsibility for the provision for pupils with SEND, and teaching and support staff. The inspectors also met with the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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 observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Rod Warsap, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Carley Holliman

Ofsted Inspector

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