Inspection of a school judged outstanding for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Hawkinge Primary School

Canterbury Road, Hawkinge, Folkestone, Kent CT18 7BN

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2025

Outcome

Hawkinge Primary School has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders, pupils, staff and parents are very proud of their exceptional school. Pupils love coming to this inspiring school where everyone is welcomed and valued. Pupils thrive and grow as well-rounded, confident individuals. All pupils are challenged and supported to meet the very high expectations the school sets for them, academically and personally.

Pupils' well-being is given the highest priority. There is a very strong culture of care and kindness, and pupils flourish socially and emotionally. There is an extremely calm and purposeful atmosphere with a buzz of learning and excitement and very happy pupils in every class. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They achieve highly. They love the 'launch pads' that introduce a theme and the 'landing pads' that give them the opportunity to demonstrate what they have learned.

There are extremely positive and trusting relationships between staff and pupils. Consequently, pupils feel very safe and well cared for. Pupils are respectful, considerate, thoughtful and always willing to help each other out. Pupils are enthusiastic about the many trips they make, which, as they say, 'Bring learning to life.'

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

Highly effective, inspiring leadership means there is no complacency in this school. There is a steely determination and commitment to improve this excellent school even further. Leaders, including governors, are resolute that all decisions they make are always in the very best interests of the pupils. Staff are tremendously positive and proud to be part of a creative, strong, supportive team. They feel highly valued.

The school has created an extremely well-designed, engaging and ambitious curriculum. Highly skilled teachers deliver it through interesting, exciting activities. The skills and knowledge that pupils should learn are clearly set out from the early years to Year 6. Children get an exceptional start in Reception. They develop strong foundations on which to build future learning. Children benefit from excellent opportunities to develop their character, independence and resilience. This continues throughout the school.

The curriculum is as ambitious for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities as it is for all others. Staff challenge and support all pupils effectively so everyone has access to the full curriculum. Teachers carefully check on pupils' learning. They use this information to intervene so that no one falls behind. Teaching approaches and resources are effectively adapted to ensure success for pupils. The school sees any barriers to learning as a challenge to overcome. Leaders draw on high-quality research in their successful work to ensure that everyone achieves their very best.

Reading has a high priority across the school. In Reception, children learn to enjoy stories, rhymes and songs. Staff teach phonics very well. Children quickly learn the sounds that letters make. They use their skills to help their early reading and writing. Pupils who may be struggling are quickly identified and supported. The school successfully promotes a love of reading. Pupils read increasingly challenging, high-quality texts. Pupils read widely and often. They develop as confident, fluent readers.

Attendance is above the national average. The school is a place where children want to be. Consequently, they attend regularly and often. Pupils' excellent attitudes are constantly evident at work and play. Pupils work together extremely well, demonstrating the rule of 'be kind, learn well, be safe'. Pupils accept and respect differences in others' faiths and backgrounds. They understand that some pupils learn in different ways.

Provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. The school excels at providing pupils with a wide range of activities. These include sports, art, music and cookery, as well as clubs, visits and visitors to school. These experiences, including many leadership opportunities, further enrich pupils' lives. Pupils' excellent personal skills, as well as their academic achievements, mean they are exceedingly well prepared for the future as mature, thoughtful and caring citizens.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and its leadership. Reflecting the views of very many, one commented, 'The school creates such a positive, inclusive environment where children feel safe, valued and excited to learn. It is clear that high expectations, strong leadership and a warm sense of community are at the heart of everything they do.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 outstanding 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 outstanding for overall effectiveness in June 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	118385
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10341486
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	393
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Claire March-Mallinson
Headteacher	Aly Ward
Website	hawkingeprimaryschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 June 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is one of two schools that are part of the Vicus Cooperative Learning Trust. This is a collaborative group with no governance or leadership responsibility for this school. The school has its own governing body that takes all governance responsibilities.
- The school provides breakfast and after-school provision.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of the 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 their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher and deputy headteacher, other senior leaders, curriculum leaders and teaching assistants.

- The inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspector met with the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspector spoke with pupils in lessons and in formal and informal groups.
- 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.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including its evaluation of its performance and its development plan.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including free-text comments, and met with some parents on the gate at the beginning of the day. She also took into consideration the responses to the staff and pupil surveys, as well as speaking to staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: http://eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025