

Inspection of an outstanding school: Hartley Primary Academy

Round Ash Way, Hartley, Longfield, Kent DA3 8BT

Inspection dates:

2 and 3 February 2022

Outcome

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

What is it like to attend this school?

Hartley Primary Academy is a very happy school. Pupils, parents and carers and staff all say so. It is obvious to see that pupils love their learning. Teachers have high expectations of them. Pupils rise to the challenges that their teachers set them. They have a true thirst for knowledge. At times, in some subjects, teachers could offer even greater range and depth of learning.

Leaders have created a school where pupils feel safe. Staff make sure that pupils' needs and well-being come first. As a result, pupils say that Hartley is a kind place. They do not fear bullying because they say that it does not happen. They trust that adults in the school would stop any unkind behaviour straightaway.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Whether in class or at play, pupils show great self-control and politeness. They are respectful towards each other and adults alike.

Parents value very much the warm and welcoming culture that the school provides. One parent's comment summed up how many feel: 'I am incredibly pleased with the care and education that Hartley Primary Academy offers my children. I see how hard that all members of staff work to provide the children with exciting and interesting opportunities.'

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

Leaders have developed the curriculum significantly since the previous inspection. They have focused on encouraging pupils to use an enquiring approach. In their learning, pupils make connections across different subjects. They have developed their ability to analyse and question. However, leaders have noticed that they need now to focus more on the content that pupils learn. Leaders realise that the breadth and depth of knowledge

covered need to be greater. This is especially true in some foundation subjects, such as history and religious education. Leaders have begun this process, but it is not yet finished.

Many teachers at the school are highly skilled in their delivery of the curriculum. They have secure subject knowledge. They consider very carefully how they help pupils learn successfully. All pupils show a real interest and curiosity in their learning. Teachers have encouraged pupils to be hungry to find out more. Pupils remember what they learn well. They can speak about their learning confidently. Their work shows that they learn successfully what teachers deliver. However, sometimes the work also shows that pupils do not have a sufficient range and depth of knowledge in some subjects.

Teachers check carefully on the progress that pupils make. They know their pupils well, and tailor learning to suit individual needs. They work well with the special educational needs coordinator to consider ways in which to help remove any barriers to learning. Much of this support is effective. However, there is variation in the consistency with which staff deliver this support.

Children begin their learning to read journey in Nursery. Here, staff ensure that children listen to stories, learn rhymes and songs as well as picking up on new vocabulary. This continues seamlessly into Reception, where children then learn letters and their sounds. By the end of key stage 1, most pupils have become readers. However, a minority of pupils do not. They receive help to catch up, but this support sometimes lacks the urgency that the pupils need to become fluent readers quickly.

The school is a settled and calm environment. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary throughout the school. When they are learning, they work exceptionally well with each other and adults. Their positive attitudes and respect for each other mean that everyone can learn without impediment. Around the school, pupils demonstrate the same high standards of behaviour.

Leaders have a strong focus on the development of the whole child. They ensure that pupils have as broad and rich an experience as possible while they are at school. The pandemic halted some activities, but these have now resumed. The many sports activities have restarted, as well as other popular clubs, such as the club for musical theatre. All pupils experience outdoor learning once a week. Theatre trips, residential visits and trips to places of interest happen regularly for all ages. Pupils have many and varied opportunities for taking up responsibilities, which they relish.

The principal and her team ensure that staff workload and well-being are properly attended to. Staff appreciate their efforts and enjoy working at the school. Governors and the trust provide effective support and challenge. Leaders work well together to bring about improvements to the school.

In discussion with the headteacher, the inspector agreed that the curriculum content in the foundation subjects may usefully serve as a focus for the next inspection.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take their safeguarding duties seriously. They are diligent in their processes and procedures. They ensure that they pick up concerns quickly and take action. Leaders are tenacious in pursuing the right support for any child in need. Staff are well trained and this means that they too understand their responsibilities clearly. Governors and the trust check carefully and regularly that the leaders carry out recruitment checks for anyone who comes into the school to work. Pupils learn about how to keep themselves safe, both off- and online. Overall, there is a strong safeguarding culture in the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the scope and depth of content that pupils learn are not ambitious enough. This means that pupils do not acquire as much knowledge as they could. Leaders need to accelerate their work on building this content into their existing curriculum, so that pupils widen and deepen their understanding.
- Additional support for pupils who need it is variable at times. This means that those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are slower to become fluent readers do not always make the progress they should. Leaders need to make sure that all staff who deliver support are fully trained so that they consistently provide pupils with effective and expert guidance.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in March 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139615
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211928
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	458
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Frank Green
Principal	Nicole Galinis
Website	www.hartleyprimaryacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9 and 10 March 2016, under section 8 (also deemed section 5) of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hartley Primary Academy is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is part of the Leigh Academies Trust.
- Round Ash Nursery joined Hartley Primary Academy in 2019. It is located on the same site as the school.
- The current principal has taken up post since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding arrangements. They looked at relevant documentation, staff recruitment checks and training. They also considered how well adults in the school act on emerging concerns.

- The views of staff and pupils were gathered through their informal discussions with inspectors. Inspectors also considered 77 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, including 52 free-text comments. There were 32 responses to the staff survey and 28 replies to the pupil questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with leaders, governors and trustees, including the chair of governors, as well as an academy director and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and religious education. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, talked to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work. Inspectors also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.

Inspection team

Yasmin Maskatiya, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Heather Fearn

Her Majesty’s 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 2022