

Inspection of a good school: Highley Community Primary School

Grasmere Drive, Highley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire WV16 6EH

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

Outcome

Highley Community Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school values the community that it serves. The curriculum has been designed to focus topics on local history and local places of interest. This provides pupils with many opportunities to engage with the community. It also enables them to contribute to society. Pupils speak of these activities with enthusiasm. They enjoy joining the choir to sing at village events and they take responsibility for delivering 'bags of kindness' to local residents. Such activities contribute to pupils' personal development, which is a high priority for the school.

The school has recently adopted a new approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils understand what is expected of them and they appreciate the many ways to earn rewards. Pupils feel that behaviour in school is generally good and are certain that adults sort out any problems quickly.

The school has high expectations for all pupils. The carefully planned curriculum, along with enrichment activities, ensure that pupils develop knowledge and skills they need to be successful. This means that pupils are able to make links to other curriculum areas and can give quite detailed answers to questions. For example, in history pupils recalled important dates and made comparisons between homes and the way people lived in the past with the modern way of life and buildings they had seen on a recent geography field trip.

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

The school makes reading a priority. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they enter the Reception Year. Here, they are taught to spell and form letters as they learn new sounds. Adults quickly identify any children who are in danger of falling behind and support them to keep up. From these positive beginnings reading continues to have a high profile across the school. Pupils appreciate having access to the school's library, which is managed by enthusiastic reading ambassadors. Colourful displays encourage

pupils to broaden their reading interests, and they do. As one pupil said, they enjoy reading 'because you don't know where a book will take you.'

The school is ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt work so that pupils with SEND are able to work alongside their peers and access the curriculum. They are well supported by additional staff in lessons. However, sometimes adults do not teach pupils strategies to help them build their own independence. This means that some pupils are too reliant on adults during lessons.

Subject leaders have made significant improvements to the school's curriculum. They have clearly identified the knowledge and skills that they expect pupils to learn. Teachers use effective methods to ensure that all pupils, including children in early years, now remember this knowledge. However, some pupils have gaps in their learning because of weaknesses in the school's previous curriculum. Sometimes pupils do not use the resources available to them when they find work tricky. This means that sometimes learning time is lost, as pupils wait for an adult to help them.

Pupils behave well across the school. Lessons are calm and those who need additional support to manage their emotions are supported very well. A minority of parents express negative opinions about behaviour at the school. The school is aware of this and are continuing to embed new approaches to improve behaviour even further.

Pupils are very enthusiastic about the recently introduced outdoor project to support learning through play. The new resources are popular with both pupils and parents. These activities and the staff who engage with pupils contribute to the positive lunchtime behaviour.

The school uses a wide variety of strategies to improve attendance, including incentives for pupils and discussions with parents when their children do not attend regularly. Despite this, some parents do not send their children to school often enough. This is having a negative impact on some pupils' learning. In addition, these pupils do not benefit from the wider opportunities offered by the school.

The school's aspiration for the personal development of all pupils is summed up in the values of 'respect, resilience and relationships'. Pupils understand the need to treat everyone equally. Links with organisations representing different faiths and cultures give pupils opportunities to ask questions and find out more, directly from people with views that are different to their own. Pupils also have a variety of opportunities to take responsibility for making decisions about the school. For example, some represent their school as councillors or ambassadors. They learn about British values in lessons, in assemblies and through practical activities. For example, they learn about democracy through the voting systems to elect school councillors. Their knowledge has also been enhanced by a visit from their local councillor who explained his elected role.

Staff work together as a team. They are proud to work at Highley and benefit from the support that the school provides, including opportunities for training and development.

They appreciate leaders being approachable and feel that their workload is considered when new initiatives are adopted.

Governors share leaders' high ambition for the school. They know the school well and use their skills to support and challenge school leaders effectively.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some parents express negative views about behaviour in school. The school should further develop its work to engage with families, so they are fully informed about developments in school, for the benefit of pupils.
- Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This limits their learning. Leaders should continue to work with families, considering the most effective strategies to engage parents and to promote the importance of attendance even further, in order to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.
- Some pupils are too reliant on adults during lessons. This means they do not learn strategies to help them build their own independence. The school should develop strategies so that all pupils become increasingly independent learners.

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 October 2013.

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	123371
Local authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	10294532
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	246
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Jennifer Brown
Headteacher	Tom Plim
Website	www.highleyschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 June 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The leadership of the school has changed since the last inspection. The current headteacher was appointed shortly after the last inspection. The deputy headteacher has left the school and been replaced by two assistant headteachers.
- The school uses one registered alternative provider.

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 the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and assistant headteachers. She also met with governors and spoke to a local authority representative.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive she held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample

of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with teaching staff to talk about the curriculum, staff workload and the behaviour and personal development of pupils. She also met with pupils to talk about their learning and well-being.
- The inspector observed a selection of pupils reading to members of staff. Other pupils were heard reading during lessons.
- 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 considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and plans for improvement. Records of attendance and behaviour incidents were also checked.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour at playtime and lunchtime. She gathered pupils' views about behaviour, welfare and bullying.
- The inspector spoke to parents before school and considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Anne Potter, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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