

Inspection of Hodge Hill Primary School

76 Twycross Grove, Hodge Hill, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 8LD

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
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Behaviour and attitudes	Good
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Personal development	Good
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Leadership and management	Good
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Early years provision	Good
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Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement
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What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and inclusive school. Pupils from all backgrounds are welcome. Leaders realise their vision, which places 'Pupils at the heart of all we think, say and do'. Leaders have built strong relationships with parents and the community. Parents are fulsome in their praise of the headteacher and staff. They appreciate all that the school does to support and involve them in their children's education.

Pupils enjoy school and feel safe. They trust staff to help them if they have any worries. Pupils are polite and behave well in lessons and around school. They understand precisely what bullying is and what to do if it happens. They know that it is not acceptable to be a 'bystander' but should 'do something about it'. Leaders deal effectively with any reports of bullying or inappropriate behaviour.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), have positive attitudes to their learning. They are encouraged to be resilient and independent learners. For example, if they are stuck, they try hard to work it out before seeking help from a friend or teacher. Expectations of pupils are high. The well-designed curriculum, especially in English and mathematics, ensures that pupils achieve well.

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

Leaders have taken effective action to address the areas of weakness in the last inspection. They have improved the curriculum, including in the early years. It is now designed well. Pupils build their knowledge sequentially from Reception to Year 6. The curriculum equips pupils with the essential knowledge and skills needed in all subjects for the next stage of their education.

Teachers check pupils' understanding during lessons and through tasks or quizzes at the end of topics. Leaders use the information gathered to assess and track how well pupils are achieving. In English and mathematics, pupils practise and apply their skills to embed learning into their long-term memory. However, this approach is less well established in other subjects. As a result, some pupils find it difficult to remember what they have learned over time.

Leaders are enthusiastic about reading, and determined that all pupils should learn to read and enjoy reading. Staff and pupils are excited about the imminent opening of the new library. Leaders have invested in a new approach to teaching phonics. This has been successfully introduced. Phonics is taught well, from the start of the Reception Year. Pupils who fall behind are provided with extra help. However, some books which early readers take home are not well matched to the phonics they learn in school. This slows their progress.

Leaders have effective systems in place to identify the needs of pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt how they deliver the curriculum. They provide additional resources and support to ensure these pupils access the same tasks as their peers and achieve

well. Leaders work closely with a range of agencies to provide specialist help for pupils with specific difficulties. Staff in 'The Orb' cater well for the needs of younger pupils with complex learning and behaviour needs. These pupils have bespoke timetables, but also join their peers for some lessons to ensure they are fully included in school life.

Children in the early years learn quickly how to behave well. They follow instructions, share equipment and take responsibility for putting things away. Low-level disruption in classrooms across the school is brief and infrequent. This means that staff can focus on teaching pupils and supporting their learning.

Pupils show good levels of respect and tolerance to others. They understand what fundamental British values are and how these prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils follow a planned programme of personal development that teaches them about healthy relationships and their physical and mental well-being. Exciting visits and visitors enrich the curriculum and add to pupils' experience and enjoyment of school.

Leaders have worked hard to improve attendance, with some success. They are tenacious in following up all absences. However, the number of pupils who are persistently absent remains too high, especially for some pupils with SEND.

Staff are proud to work at Hodge Hill. They feel valued and respected by leaders. They appreciate leaders' approachability and the support they receive. Leaders are considerate of staff's well-being when making decisions about policies and procedures.

The chief executive officer provides good levels of support and challenge to school leaders. Trustees are astute, knowledgeable and aware of their roles and responsibilities. They scrutinise reports received and track school improvement. External reviews and visits to school help assure trustees that information received is accurate.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders place safeguarding at the forefront of their work. They ensure that all staff are fully trained to recognise the signs of abuse and to know what actions to take to report this. Leaders act promptly on all concerns raised. Where in-school support can be provided, leaders use this as a first step. However, they also seek advice and support from the relevant authorities where incidents are more serious. Recruitment checks are robust and well organised.

Teaching pupils to stay safe is threaded across the curriculum. Pupils learn about online safety and local dangers. Events and visiting speakers help reinforce important safety messages.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the youngest early readers take home books which they cannot decode. This leads to confusion and slows their progress down. Leaders should ensure that all reading books match pupils' ability and the phonic letters and sounds they learn in school.
- Leaders' checks of what pupils know and remember are less well developed in the foundation subjects compared to English and mathematics. This means that teachers do not know where gaps exist in pupils' knowledge. Leaders should ensure that there is a consistently effective approach to assessing pupils' understanding and recall across all curriculum subjects.
- Leaders have worked hard and with some success to improve attendance. However, too many pupils, especially those with SEND, miss vital lessons and do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should continue to work with parents who do not yet see the importance of regular school attendance.

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](#)' 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	143869
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10268287
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	716
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Julian Miller
Headteacher	Clare Lucas
Website	www.hodgehillprimary.bham.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	11 and 12 September 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school makes use of one registered alternative provider.
- Create Partnership Trust appointed a new chief executive officer in September 2022.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school 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 met with the headteacher, senior leaders and the attendance support worker. Inspectors spoke to the deputy headteacher of the alternative provision used by the school. An online meeting was held with three trustees and an on-site meeting was held with the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, reading, mathematics, design and technology, history and science. Inspection activities in these subjects

included: lesson visits, discussions with staff and pupils, meeting with subject leaders and work scrutiny. The lead inspector also observed pupils reading. She also met with the curriculum champion for modern foreign languages and examined curriculum documents and pupils' work.

- The school was closed to pupils on the second day of the inspection due to a burst water main. Inspectors continued to gather inspection evidence through on-site and remote meetings. Pupils' work and school documentation were scrutinised in school.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans. Minutes of trust meetings and reports from external reviews were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors looked at records of attendance and behaviour. They observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school and talked to them informally about behaviour, bullying and welfare.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, examined school records and discussed safeguarding cases.
- The inspectors talked to parents at the start of the school day and considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and the free-text responses. They also reviewed the responses to the staff survey and gathered the views of staff and pupils through discussion.

Inspection team

Heather Simpson, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Catherine Young	His Majesty's Inspector
Janet Satchwell	Ofsted Inspector
Karen O'Keefe	Ofsted Inspector

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