

Inspection of a good school: Hurst Green Infant School and Nursery

Wolfs Wood, Hurst Green, Oxted, Surrey RH8 0HJ

Inspection dates:

19 November 2019

Outcome

Hurst Green Infant School continues to be a good school.

However, inspectors have some concerns that standards may be declining, as set out below.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at school because staff look after them well. If they have a problem, pupils know they can talk to an adult and get support. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and enjoy learning.

Pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. If someone starts to misbehave, teachers deal with it effectively. Pupils say that misbehaviour does not happen regularly. A very small number of pupils sometimes behave less well and challenge teaching staff. Because staff manage this well, their classmates are not affected. Pupils know what bullying is and say that it rarely happens. If it does, they trust their teachers to deal with it.

Most pupils respond well to the school's high expectations of their attitudes and conduct. Leaders encourage pupils to try new things, concentrate well, persevere, respect and help others. 'The Wheel of Learning' helps pupils to remember the attitudes expected of them. However, staff expectations of pupils' academic learning and achievement are not high enough. This means that some pupils struggle to read well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not have the knowledge and skills they need to make a good start in their next school.

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

Although some aspects of the school have improved well since the previous inspection, others have not. Developments in subjects across the curriculum are in their early stages. Teaching of phonics and early reading is not strong and it is patchy in mathematics. Leaders have plans in place to tackle the priorities for improvement. Leaders have tried to lessen teachers' workload. However, some teachers still feel that it is high. Leaders have taken effective steps to improve pupils' behaviour and attendance.

Leaders want pupils to enjoy school and become enthusiastic learners. Pupils get off to a strong start in the nursery. Nursery staff provide enjoyable play experiences, such as going on a bear hunt. These enable pupils to develop imagination, social skills and their use of language. Leaders have recently introduced new curriculum plans, which set out subject-specific skills and knowledge in a logical order. Leaders have not yet evaluated how well staff have implemented them and whether the new curriculum deepens pupils' knowledge and skills.

Staff told inspectors that they would like more training in phonics and early reading. Leaders know they need to improve the teaching of phonics and reading. Leaders have not set out which letters and sounds pupils need to know term by term clearly enough. As a result, teachers do not have the right expectations. Pupils who are falling behind are not supported well enough to catch up. The school does not provide enough books that match pupils' phonic skills. Not enough pupils achieved the expected standard in the 2019 phonics screening check. Similarly, too few pupils achieved the expected standard in national key stage 1 reading assessments.

Teachers value the training that they have received in teaching mathematics. However, new approaches are not being implemented equally well across all year groups. Nursery staff develop children's counting skills well. New approaches are not working as well in the Reception class. In key stage 1, teaching builds on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils can confidently remember addition facts from Year 1, such as $4+3=7$. This helps them with more complex addition work in Year 2, such as $30+40=70$. Teachers and teaching assistants have secure subject knowledge, which enables them to support learning well. Staff provide effective support for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND in mathematics. This is not the case in other subjects.

Teaching assistants provide support and care for pupils with SEND. This enables them to take part in learning. Leaders have not ensured enough training for teaching assistants who deliver this support. Leaders do not check and adapt the support provided to ensure that it is effective.

Pupils generally behave well but they lose concentration when tasks do not stimulate their interest. This leads them to distract each other. Bullying is rare. Pupils know how to get support if it happens and staff act quickly when they raise concerns.

Leaders have provided extra opportunities in the curriculum to engage and enthuse pupils. The school provides many visits and trips. Outdoor learning, known as 'The Forest School', enhances pupils' self-esteem and confidence. As a result, they feel more able to learn when in class. It particularly helps disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. The school encourages disadvantaged pupils to attend the many clubs it offers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Well-trained adults supervise pupils throughout the school day. They know the pupils well and are committed to providing a caring environment for them. Pupils say that if they have a problem, they can talk to a trusted adult who will help them.

Staff fully understand and implement the school's procedures for keeping pupils safe. They know how to refer a concern if they think a pupil is at risk of harm. They do so promptly. The designated safeguarding lead takes swift action in response. She maintains robust records of actions taken and follows them up rigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not placed enough emphasis on making sure that staff are properly trained in phonics. This is because other priorities have had to be addressed, such as improving the teaching of mathematics and writing. As a result, staff do not implement the school's reading programme well enough. Leaders should make sure that teachers and teaching assistants receive effective phonics training and check how well they put it into action. Leaders need to work closely with staff so that they have a clear understanding of the advances pupils need to make in their reading term by term in order to meet expected standards. They should also ensure that pupils have enough reading books that are closely matched to their phonic knowledge and skills.
- Leaders recognise that they need to increase their capacity to lead the provision for pupils with SEND and they are taking appropriate action to bring this about. Leaders should also improve the planning and implementation of the curriculum for pupils with SEND. To achieve this, leaders need to develop and train staff, including support staff, so that pupils with SEND gain the subject-specific knowledge and skills they need. Leaders should closely monitor the impact of these changes on the learning and achievement of pupils with SEND.
- Leaders have recently introduced a new curriculum with a clear rationale. They now need to ensure that the new approaches to teaching and the curriculum are fully and consistently implemented through the early years and key stage 1, especially in mathematics. They need to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stages of their education.
- Teachers have told inspectors that they appreciate the actions leaders have taken to reduce workload, but they still regard it as high. Leaders need to consider what further actions they can take to reduce staff workload.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged Hurst Green Infant School to be good on 16–17 September 2010.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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 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	125010
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10111266
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	94
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Katherine Saunders
Headteacher	Sarah George
Website	www.hurstgreenschool.org
Date of previous inspection	20 January 2016

Information about this school

- Hurst Green Infant School is a smaller than average primary school. It has a nursery which admits pupils from the age of two. Currently there are no two-year-olds on the roll. The school plans to increase the nursery provision to 30 hours per week.

Information about this inspection

- We held meetings with the headteacher, middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo), the chair of governors and two other members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with a representative of the local authority on the telephone.
- We conducted deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and science. When focusing on these subjects, we held discussions with the subject leaders responsible for the subjects, visited lessons in several year groups, including the support provided to pupils with SEND, looked at pupils' work, and held discussions with teachers and pupils.
- We inspected safeguarding by reviewing the arrangements for pre-appointment checks carried out by the school, including the school's single central record of these checks. We spoke to staff about their training and understanding of the school's safeguarding

procedures. We held discussions with the designated safeguarding leader, and reviewed case files and records held by the school, including records of staff training.

- We held discussions with parents at the start of the school day. We considered 33 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 28 free-text comments. We considered eight responses to Ofsted’s pupil survey. We considered 16 responses to Ofsted’s staff survey and we held discussions with staff about their work.

Inspection team

Peter Wibroe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Matt Batchelor

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