

Inspection of a good school: Helpringham School

Highgate, Helpringham, Sleaford, Lincolnshire NG34 0RD

Inspection date: 24 April 2024

Outcome

Helpringham School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend Helpringham School. It is a happy and welcoming place. The school has high expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils speak with enthusiasm and passion about their learning. They confidently explain how their teachers help them to learn well.

The school ensures that its behaviour policy is consistently applied. Pupils behave well in lessons and at social times. Children in the early years follow the adults' instructions carefully. There is a strong focus on teaching pupils to be respectful and kind. As a result, pupils are polite and courteous. Pupils feel safe. Bullying is not something they worry about. They trust adults to help and listen to their concerns.

The school ensures that all pupils, including those with SEND, benefit from a wide range of opportunities and experiences. Pupils like the trips on offer to enhance the curriculum, such as the visit to the National Space Centre in Leicester. They celebrate local, rural culture and enjoy their residential stay at a farm park.

Pupils have a voice in the school. They speak with pride about their 'Children we Feed' campaign and the donations the school has made to a local foodbank.

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

The school understands pupils' needs very well. It has thought carefully about how to help the pupils at Helpringham become successful learners. Pupils learn about themselves, their local community and the world around them.

The curriculum is ambitious and well planned. The school ensures that staff have a secure understanding of the curriculum in all subjects. Staff know which parts of the curriculum are the most important for pupils to remember. In some subjects, the school has successfully strengthened how staff check what pupils know. However, the school does not check closely enough on pupils' learning in all foundation subjects. On occasion, gaps

in pupils' knowledge are not identified and addressed. In addition, the curriculum is not always implemented as the school expects. In mathematics, for example, pupils do not consistently benefit from the use of apparatus and practical equipment to support and strengthen their understanding.

Pupils love to read. They follow a carefully thought out reading curriculum. Children begin to learn to read as soon as the start in the early years. Pupils read books that match their ability. As a result, they develop into confident readers. The school monitors pupils' reading development closely. It provides high-quality support for anyone who is struggling so they can catch up quickly. The school provides information to parents and carers so they understand how best to support their children when reading together at home. Pupils have regular opportunities to listen to staff read aloud. Pupils and staff recommend authors to each other. Pupils say this helps them to discover new books.

Children develop good communication and language skills in the early years. The early years learning environment is purposeful, with well-planned activities both indoor and outdoor. Children develop positive attitudes in the early years. They play well with one another. They take turns and they are respectful.

The school is ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. The school quickly identifies pupils' individual needs. Staff adapt their lessons successfully so that pupils with SEND learn the same curriculum as their peers. The school ensures that the needs of pupils with SEND are carefully assessed at regular points during the year so they continue to engage in their learning and succeed.

Pupils' wider development is a priority. The school ensures that pupils develop an understanding and appreciation of different cultures and religions. Outdoor education and residential trips are designed to develop pupils' character, helping them to overcome challenges and build resilience. A wide range of clubs and activities give pupils a rich variety of experiences to develop their talents and interests. The school ensures that these opportunities are open to all, for example by making use of pupil premium funding so that transportation is not a barrier to participation.

Staff feel proud to work at the school. They appreciate the consideration that is given to their well-being. Governors understand what is working well. They hold leaders to account for the quality of education. Governors share a vision for the school's continued development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school does not check closely enough on pupils' learning in all foundation subjects. Consequently, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could because gaps in their knowledge are not always identified and addressed. The school should continue to strengthen its assessment procedures so that staff can fill any gaps in pupils' learning swiftly.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2018.

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	120379
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	10313235
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	88
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sam Waite
Headteacher	Rebecca Leighton
Website	www.helpringhamschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher joined the school in September 2021.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector also listened to pupils read to an adult.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculums for science and art and design and looked at samples of pupils' work in these subjects.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the leader with responsibility for pupils with SEND, members of the staff team and the chair of the governing body.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors 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 lead inspector reviewed key documentation, including leaders' self-evaluation, school action plans, minutes of governors' meetings and safeguarding records.
- The lead inspector considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, as well as the responses to the surveys for staff and pupils.

Inspection team

Ian Toon, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Jackie Stirland

Ofsted Inspector

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