

Inspection of a good school: High Ham Church of England Primary School

High Ham, Langport, Somerset TA10 9BY

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2022

Outcome

High Ham Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud to attend High Ham Primary School. They thrive and feel safe in the caring and nurturing atmosphere. Leaders have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. Everyone understands the school's values of friendship, trust and respect. Staff lead by example, and pupils respond well. Pupils describe their school as 'a fun place to learn and a safe place to be'.

Pupils are eager to learn. They work hard in lessons. Around school, pupils are well-mannered. They play happily together at breaktimes. Pupils strive to be a 'house hero' or to receive a 'random act of kindness' award for making good choices.

Pupils say that they feel well looked after. They say that bullying hardly ever happens. Pupils trust staff to deal with any issues quickly. Leaders recognise the importance of pupils' well-being. Staff teach pupils how to look after their mental health, for example, by practising 'calm thoughts'.

Pupils have a wide range of experiences beyond the classroom. Staff plan trips which broaden pupils' horizons. Older pupils take on extra responsibilities, such as being digital leaders and sports leaders. Creative writing, running and country dancing are among the many clubs on offer.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for pupils. They have designed an ambitious curriculum that helps all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), achieve well.

Leaders prioritise reading. Children in the early years learn to recognise letters and sounds as soon as they start school. Younger pupils practise their reading regularly with skilled adults. Staff ensure that pupils read books that match the sounds they know. This helps pupils to develop their fluency. Staff quickly identify pupils, including older ones,

who have fallen behind in their reading. They support these pupils well to help them catch up quickly. Pupils bubble with enthusiasm about reading. They are keen to talk about their favourite books and authors. Staff motivate pupils to read for pleasure. Story times are treasured times of the school day. Younger pupils enjoy joining in with stories, rhymes and songs. Older pupils benefit from listening to carefully chosen texts. They enjoy completing reading quizzes and making book recommendations to others.

Leaders have thought carefully about the important knowledge they want pupils to learn in most subjects. Teachers build pupils' learning in a logical order from Reception to Year 6. There is a sharp focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and language. Staff have implemented the mathematics curriculum successfully. Pupils can make links and build on what they know. For example, in Reception, staff secure children's understanding of numbers to 10. This ensures they are ready for simple calculations in Year 1. Teachers explain new learning clearly. They check carefully to make sure that pupils understand what they are taught. Pupils learn and remember the curriculum well, including mathematical vocabulary.

In some wider curriculum subjects, however, some teachers do not check what pupils know and remember precisely enough. As a result, teaching does not consistently build on what pupils know and can do. Consequently, pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. For example, some pupils struggle to apply their knowledge of colour and tone when discussing techniques in art and design.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. They identify their needs accurately. Pupils receive well-planned support to help them take part in the same full curriculum as their peers. Leaders work closely with a range of external agencies to help pupils get the right support. As a result, pupils with SEND progress well.

Pupils understand the importance of behaving responsibly. They follow instructions and listen attentively. Pupils conduct themselves well. Classrooms are calm and productive. Pupils attend school regularly, reflecting their positive attitudes to learning.

Leaders provide pupils with many experiences to support their personal development. Pupils learn how to stay physically and mentally healthy. They benefit from learning a musical instrument. Pupils are proud to demonstrate the school's values, for example, by fundraising for charities. They know the importance of respecting other faiths and cultures. However, leaders' work to ensure that pupils understand fundamental British values and different forms of discrimination is less secure. As a result, some pupils have limited understanding of these important concepts.

Governors understand their roles and responsibilities. They support and challenge leaders well. Leaders are mindful of staff workload. Staff feel supported and morale is high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are well trained to recognise the signs if a pupil is at risk of harm. They are clear about how to report a concern. Leaders keep detailed safeguarding records. They are proactive to help keep vulnerable pupils safe. Leaders are tenacious in seeking external support for the pupils and families who need it. Recruitment processes and pre-employment checks are rigorous.

Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. They learn about good friendships and how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not check what pupils know and can do in some foundation subjects well enough. Therefore, teachers do not always know what pupils remember from their previous learning. As a result, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding. Leaders need to ensure that assessment in foundation subjects is effective so that pupils learn and remember the curriculum well.
- Leaders do not place enough emphasis on promoting pupils' understanding of British values and protected characteristics. Some pupils' knowledge of these concepts is underdeveloped. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum develops pupils' knowledge and understanding of equalities and British Values effectively.

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 February 2017.

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	123761
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	10227059
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Palmer
Headteacher	Jane Rosser
Website	www.highhamprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- There is currently interim leadership in place. The substantive assistant headteacher is the acting headteacher.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school is designated as having a religious character and received its section 48 inspection in April 2016, when this aspect of the school's work was graded outstanding.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the acting headteacher, senior teacher, subject leaders, the special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and groups of staff. The inspector met with representatives from the governing body, including the chair, and spoke with two representatives from the local authority.
- The inspector spoke to parents at the start of the day.

- The inspector observed pupils from Years 1, 2, 3 and 4 read to an adult.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, 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 the designated safeguarding lead and deputy designated safeguarding lead to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector considered five responses to the Ofsted online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including 32 free-text responses. The inspector also considered parental correspondence, 52 responses to the pupil survey and 18 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

Claire Mirams

Ofsted Inspector

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