

Inspection of a good school: Hayfield Cross CofE School

Hayfield Crescent, Kettering, Northamptonshire NN15 5FJ

Inspection dates:

13 and 14 February 2024

Outcome

Hayfield Cross CofE School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a well-led school where pupils enjoy positive relationships with adults. Learning activities capture the interest of pupils. Children in early years mathematics explore length through partner discussion and practical investigation. Pupils in a key stage 1 history lesson use a range of primary sources to find out about Ernest Shackleton.

The school expects pupils to work hard and behave well. Pupils strive to meet these high expectations. They behave well in class and around the school. There is a calm atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils are friendly and courteous. They feel safe and happy. Most pupils model the school's values of 'joy, integrity and fellowship'.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access all activities. They receive effective support to achieve well in line with their peers. Parents and carers of pupils with SEND agree that this is a particular strength of the school's work.

Parents have full confidence in the school. As one parent explained: 'This school is so much more than just a teaching environment. It is a safe, happy and nurturing sanctuary with staff who really care and go over and above every day.'

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

The school has designed an ambitious curriculum to meet the needs of its pupils. Plans are well considered, and teachers deliver lessons with enthusiasm and skill. Checks on pupils' understanding are effective, helping to address any gaps in their knowledge. Pupils revisit knowledge to enable them to recall their learning. They find their learning interesting and appreciate their teachers. As one older pupil explained: 'I like history. Our teacher explains complicated stuff bit by bit to help us understand.'

Children in the early years learn in a caring and exciting environment. There are many activities to extend their imagination. For example, children enjoy making animal masks, investigating floating and learning about still life painting. This approach to making learning memorable helps children to achieve well. Interactions between adults and children are very positive. Adults provide the right balance of challenge and support.

Reading is a key priority in the early years and across the whole school. Children begin learning to read as soon as they start in the Reception Year. The school provides timely support for any pupils who need help to keep up. Staff delivering the phonics programme are knowledgeable. They work well together to ensure the success of the programme. Events such as 'Book and Biscuit' sessions encourage a love of reading. The 'Mystery Reader' initiative is also proving popular. Most pupils enjoy reading. As one pupil said: 'I like reading because it feels like you're actually there. You've gone through the portal!'

Mathematics is also prioritised. From the early years onwards, the mathematics curriculum builds up in small steps. As a result, most pupils are confident in the tasks they undertake. Pupils understand the value of mathematics. They can reflect on their learning. Pupils discuss the satisfaction of wrestling with a mathematical problem. As one pupil commented: 'I like doing the independent tasks in mathematics. They show what you can do in your own mind.'

There is a good degree of consistency in the implementation of the curriculum. This includes challenging pupils to do their best. On occasion, pupils do not move on as soon as they could in their learning, which can limit their ability to reach the highest standards of which they are capable. The school has rightly reflected, for example, on the fact that some pupils did not achieve as highly as they could in writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 in 2023. Leaders have acted quickly to ensure that current pupils learn the curriculum in a manner that helps them achieve the highest standards.

Pupils have opportunities to broaden their horizons through a range of learning experiences. They take part in a variety of sports, including archery and football. Other clubs, including drama and crochet, further develop pupils' interests. There are lots of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. They serve in different roles, including as eco-warriors and spiritual ambassadors. Inspirational visitors help to boost pupils' confidence. Most recently, these have included a wheelchair basketball player and a para canoeist. Pupils learn about people from different backgrounds. They show respect for others. Although pupils know about fundamental British values, some pupils do not understand them.

This is a school which knows itself well. Governors are regular visitors to the school. They have an accurate view of the school and a clear vision for future priorities. The local authority has provided support to help improve the school. Staff say that they are proud to work at the school. They value the work of leaders to support their well-being and workload. Morale is very high.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum does not yet consistently ensure that all pupils progress rapidly through the curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that the impact of the curriculum is seen in all pupils reaching the highest standards of which they are capable.
- The school's plans for teaching British values are not yet fully developed. As a result, some pupils do not have an age-appropriate depth of understanding of the British values they have been taught. The school should ensure that all pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of these key values.

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 July 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	142113
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10313296
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	420
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Helen Cracknell
Headteacher	Richard Albert
Website	www.hayfieldcross.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	10 and 11 July 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Diocese of Peterborough. The most recent section 48 inspection of this Church of England school, which is an inspection of the school's religious character, took place in March 2018.
- The school does not use any alternative education 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and other leaders. The inspector spoke with groups of staff and pupils. He met with members of the governing body and with representatives of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample

of lessons, spoke to teachers, looked at samples of work and spoke to pupils about their learning. The inspector listened to pupils reading aloud to a familiar adult. He also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in a range of other subjects.

- 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 observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school site.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the school gates. He also considered the responses to Ofsted's survey, Ofsted Parent View, and to Ofsted's staff survey.
- The inspector reviewed a range of documentation, including school improvement plans and minutes of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

Martyn Skinner, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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