

# Inspection of a good school: Houghton-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School

Main Street, Houghton-on-the-Hill, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE7 9GD

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Inspection dates:

4 and 5 October 2022

## Outcome

Houghton-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love coming to this school. They are proud of their welcoming school, where anyone new soon feels they belong. Pupils respect their helpful teachers.

Pupils enjoy residential trips and visits from experts. Pupils appreciate the opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and play different sports. They learn to respect the natural world in outdoor activities. They care about the world and aim to be 'courageous advocates' to help others. They fundraise for charities. Older pupils are responsible helpers around the school.

Pupils behave well. They model the school's values. Acts of kindness towards each other are commonplace. Pupils enjoy receiving rewards. They say that bullying is rare and teachers deal with it quickly when it occurs. Pupils feel safe. They trust staff to help them resolve any worries fairly.

Pupils are keen to learn and achieve. Pupils work together as learning partners. They help each other to improve. Pupils use the complex vocabulary they learn to discuss interesting ideas. They enjoy reading a variety of books. They are confident solving problems in mathematics. They learn and remember more in many subjects.

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

All leaders and staff strive to give every pupil a good education. Leaders have created an environment in which learning can take place effectively. Leaders have identified the most important concepts that pupils need to know in all subjects. Leaders provide detailed guidance on the exact knowledge needed to understand these concepts in some subjects. This helps teachers ensure that pupils know and remember more in these subjects.

Curriculum leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects. However, leaders have not yet ensured that all curriculum leaders have the training and time they need. As a result, not all subject leaders support teachers to teach the curriculum consistently well. Leaders want pupils to be able to answer 'big questions' about the subjects they study. In history pupils learn and remember a lot of interesting facts. For instance, Year 6 pupils recall some of the ancient Greek gods and their characteristics. They can talk about the impact of invasion and trade.

Leaders make sure that reading is a priority in the curriculum. They make sure that teachers teach phonics well from the start of Reception. Pupils read books that match their reading abilities. Teachers select increasingly demanding books to study, including poetry, stories, non-fiction, and books that link to topics. They read to pupils every day. Teachers explain the meaning of complex language that pupils encounter in books. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the books they choose to read. Pupils develop a love of reading.

Teachers help pupils to build their mathematical knowledge securely. They explain new ideas clearly, step by step. They check that pupils understand concepts before moving on. Teachers identify any mathematical knowledge that pupils need to revisit. All pupils have regular opportunities to apply their knowledge. Teachers use practical resources well to help pupils solve problems.

Leaders place high importance on building pupils' confidence in using vocabulary across all subjects. Pupils are thoughtful about their choice of words when explaining new ideas or summarising their learning.

Leaders and staff are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as other pupils. Teachers ensure that pupils receive appropriate support.

Staff ensure that children are safe and happy in the early years. Children settle in well and quickly learn the routines of school life. Staff prioritise children's language development. Children enjoy the interesting activities that staff prepare. Children make a secure start that prepares them for Year 1 and beyond.

Leaders prioritise pupils' mental and physical well-being. Pupils learn about different beliefs and family structures. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong.

Parents hold the school in high regard. Staff are proud to work here. There is a strong team ethos. Staff feel that leaders treat them fairly and with respect. Leaders continue to find ways to streamline workload. Staff say that they are well supported by the trust, leaders and colleagues.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils' well-being underpins everything at Houghton-on-the-Hill Church of England Primary School. Well-trained staff know how to share even the smallest of concerns with leaders. Staff know pupils well.

Safeguarding records are robust and actions are appropriate. Leaders work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils receive the support that they need. Leaders make appropriate checks on all adults working in the school.

Pupils feel safe. Pupils say that they trust adults in school to listen and help with any worries. They know how to stay safe online. They learn about respectful relationships and personal space.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In some subjects, leaders have not ensured that the curriculum sets out the precise knowledge that pupils should gain over time. Pupils do not consistently know and remember more in these subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum sets out what pupils should know, and when, in all subjects.
- In some subjects, curriculum leaders have not received the training they need. They are not yet able to provide clear guidance on how to improve the teaching of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that all subject leaders have the skills and expertise they need so that they can lead their subjects and support teachers 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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, of the same name, to be good in April 2011.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	145974
<b>Local authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240414
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	205
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	David Williams
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jan Knox (Executive Headteacher) Ali Woollerson (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.houghton.leics.sch.uk">www.houghton.leics.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 February 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school joined The Vines Academy Trust on 1 July 2018.
- The executive headteacher is also the chief executive officer (CEO) of The Vines Academy Trust.
- The head of school took up her substantive position in September 2020.
- A new special educational needs co-ordinator was appointed in April 2022.
- The school is a Church of England school. A section 48 inspection of the school's religious character took place in May 2016.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

## 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 school leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, the assistant headteacher and other leaders. An online meeting was held with representatives of The Vines Academy Trust and of the school's local governing body.
- The inspector considered a range of documents, including school policies.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and history. This included meeting with subject leaders, visiting lessons and speaking with teachers and pupils. The inspector listened to pupils reading to adults, considered leaders' curriculum plans and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector also met with other subject leaders and looked at curriculum documentation for some other subjects.
- The inspector met with groups of pupils. The inspector visited the lunch hall and playground.
- The single central record was scrutinised as part of the inspection of safeguarding. The inspector met with safeguarding leaders, spoke with a range of staff and pupils, and considered safeguarding records.
- The inspector spoke with parents at the end of the school day. Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

## **Inspection team**

Mandy Wilding, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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