

Inspection of Holtspur School & Pre-School

Cherry Tree Road, Holtspur, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire HP9 1BH

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff know pupils well and put them at the heart of everything they do. As a result, pupils are happy and enjoy coming to school. Pupils know the school values of 'ready, respectful, safe, kind and unique' and try their best to demonstrate them. Pupils celebrate difference and diversity. Leaders strive to create an inclusive environment.

Leaders have set out clear and ambitious expectations for pupils in the school. In lessons, pupils behave well and are engaged in their learning. However, some pupils use unacceptable language around the school. Pupils say that bullying is rare but, if it were to happen, they know leaders would deal with it quickly.

Leaders have ensured that pupils can take part in a wide range of clubs and experiences. Through the nurture provision, 'Flourish', leaders and staff ensure that pupils' emotional needs are met and cared for. Parents and pupils value this provision, which supports all pupils and demonstrates the school's commitment to well-being. Pupils trust adults to address any concerns or worries that they report.

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

The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Leaders have ensured that there is clear purpose and intent to what pupils are taught. Leaders monitor their subject areas well because they are trained and supported to do so. In some subjects, pupils do not always remember key knowledge as well as they should. Methods for checking what pupils have learned have recently changed and are not yet fully embedded. As a result, adults do not always make the most of opportunities for pupils to revisit, practise and apply their prior learning. Consequently, pupils do not remember some of the curriculum well enough.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported across the school. Staff identify pupils' needs quickly and seek external advice where needed. Staff make adjustments to how the curriculum is taught so that pupils are able to access the teaching and learning. Pupils in the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND are supported well, both in class and within the base, to become successful learners. Leaders are ambitious that pupils will be ready for the next stage of their educational journey.

Children are exposed to a range of exciting books from the moment they start in pre-school. Children are prepared well for learning phonics in Reception, which supports them to quickly become fluent readers. Teaching of phonics is consistently effective across the school. Teachers act quickly to close any gaps in knowledge, ensuring that pupils catch up with their peers. Books are appropriately matched to the sounds pupils are learning. Pupils love reading and have access to a range of different books and genres. Leaders have made sure that book choices for lessons are exciting and varied.

Children in the pre-school and those in Reception are well supported and cared for by staff. Leaders have worked hard to ensure there is consistency in approaches across the early years foundation stage. Children are happy, engaged in and eager to talk about their learning. The environment in Reception is well thought out and matches the learning themes the children are exploring. During the inspection, for instance, children demonstrated their broad understanding of their topic on sharks.

Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils work well, both independently and in groups. Children show a high level of concentration and engagement in activities in pre-school and continue this into their learning at primary. Leaders have acted swiftly to address concerns around behaviour, implementing new approaches to ensure consistency. Pupils and some staff say that derogatory language and swearing do still happen occasionally in school. This is seen as acceptable banter by some pupils, as they lack the deeper understanding that banter can cause upset.

Respectful and responsible citizenship and building good character are at the heart of the school's values. Pupils are taught to respect other people's views and opinions. Pupils take pride in their leadership roles on the school council and make links to democracy and political engagement. Pupils understand the importance of equality of opportunity and are able to identify and recall protected characteristics. Through assemblies, leaders ensure that pupils hear from a range of speakers from outside the school community, which motivates and encourages discussion among pupils.

During the changes in leadership over the last few years, the acting headteacher and her team have worked hard to ensure stability and consistency for the school. Staff value the professional training and support they receive and enjoy working at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the school. Staff are very much aware that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is current.

Staff know pupils well and pass on concerns quickly. Leaders keep detailed records and act swiftly on the information they receive. Governors monitor the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements through regular visits and local authority audits.

Pupils are supported well to stay safe. They learn about risks in their daily life, including when online. Local police visit the school to talk to pupils about how to stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, pupils do not get enough chance to practise and apply what they have learned. Adults do not check carefully enough that pupils have retained vital knowledge. Leaders should ensure that assessments enable teachers to identify and address gaps in pupils' learning consistently well.
- Improvements to expectations for pupils' behaviour are not fully embedded. Consequently, some pupils use derogatory language in school, considering it to be acceptable banter. Leaders should ensure that pupils develop their shared understanding of acceptable language so that use of derogatory language declines.

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	110398
Local authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	10240303
Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	222
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Clare Warnett
Headteacher	Jacqueline Blackmore (Acting Headteacher)
Website	http://www.holtspursch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 and 29 September 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school use two registered alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the second routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in early reading, mathematics, geography and religious education. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum planning, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of their work.
- The inspectors met with the acting headteacher, assistant headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator and subject leaders.

- Inspectors visited pre-school and observed pupils from the specially resourced provision.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents provided by the school.
- The inspectors met with representatives from the local authority and governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with support staff.
- The inspectors met with pupils, parents and staff and also took into consideration the feedback from Ofsted's questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school, in lessons, and at lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Simon Woodbridge, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

James Lovell

Ofsted Inspector

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