Inspection of Holywell C of E Primary School

Mill Way, Needingworth, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 4TF

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 October 2024
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Early years provision	**Good**
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since June 2013. The school received an ungraded inspection under section 8 of the Act on 15 October 2020. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy coming to this school. They particularly like reading, mathematics, music and history lessons. Pupils learn more about subjects from educational visits, taking part in sports festivals or having specialist teaching. Clubs like football, choir and computing also extend their interests.

Children in early years make a positive start to school life. They quickly settle in and engage in learning. Pupils soon become confident readers. By the time they leave school, most pupils achieve well in national assessments. However, leaders recognise that pupils are capable of even more. The school has recently started to look at how to help pupils secure a deeper understanding across all subjects. This work is starting to have a positive impact but is still in its infancy.

The school provides a safe and harmonious place for pupils to learn. This is underpinned by its Christian ethos. Pupils like to earn 'value stickers', for example for showing service and respect. Pupils, including in early years, know the rules and routines and follow them. Pupils know any behaviour incidents are dealt with fairly.

Pupils appreciate that their well-being is prioritised. Trained staff oversee pupils' mental and physical health with care. Pupils with special educational needs and or/disabilities (SEND) have their academic and social and emotional needs accurately identified.

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

The school has recently updated its curriculum to ensure that it is suitably ambitious. Staff are responding positively to the revised content and expectations. They appreciate that leaders have done this in a way that does not increase staff workload. The curriculum outlines the key knowledge pupils need to know and when. Staff address misconceptions. There are effective interventions for pupils who need support, including pupils with SEND. However, there is still work to do on ensuring that there is enough clarity about the depth of knowledge pupils need to secure. This means that the work some pupils receive in some subjects is not sufficiently effective in extending their learning even further.

Pupils read widely and often. Younger pupils learn the sounds they need to know to develop reading fluency. All pupils have regular opportunities to practise reading with books matched to their ability. Most pupils who find reading tricky catch up quickly.

Pupils follow the curriculum as intended. The school checks what pupils have learned and identifies any gaps in knowledge. Pupils can recall prior learning. However, the detail of this is stronger in some subjects than others. Sometimes, staff do not use the checks on what pupils know already to precisely shape the next steps in pupils' learning. This means there are occasions when learning activities are not adapted sharply enough to address gaps in knowledge or there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' knowledge beyond what they can already do.

In early years, children are taught how to be independent and caring. Children take responsibility for tidying up the classroom and looking after the class pets. Staff encourage pupils to be curious and support them to follow their interests. There is a strong focus on developing language and listening skills through stories, songs and rhymes. Pupils become confident in the knowledge of early mathematical concepts.

Every pupil with SEND has a tailored support plan with specific targets. Advice from external professionals is acted on. Leaders check carefully how well pupils with SEND are succeeding. In most cases, pupils with SEND achieve well. However, in a few cases, work set for them is not closely matched to meet their needs quickly enough.

Most pupils behave well. Incidents of poor behaviour are few and decreasing. This is due to the school becoming more effective at managing the different needs of pupils. A new behaviour approach has just started. It is already helping pupils better understand how to manage their thoughts and feelings. Lessons are calm and orderly. Staff are quick to provide behaviour reminders if needed.

The school has been effective in working with families to ensure that pupils also attend school regularly.

There is a well-thought-out personal development programme in place. Pupils learn about different cultures and religions. They understand about democracy and know that discrimination is wrong. The school's focus on its twelve values in lessons and collective worship means that pupils have regular opportunities to reflect on how to develop their moral compass. They show this in their respectful behaviours. Throughout the curriculum, including the texts pupils read, pupils are exposed to an appreciation of the diverse world they live in.

Governors offer appropriate challenge and support. Their oversight of safeguarding is effective. Governors visit school regularly. They are working to develop further strategies to monitor the curriculum as effectively as possible.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Work is ongoing to update the curriculum to ensure that it provides sufficient opportunity for pupils to secure in-depth knowledge. This work is still in the early stages. Therefore, there are some instances where pupils are not yet learning with the depth leaders intend. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum explicitly signposts the depth of knowledge pupils need to remember. Leaders, including

governors, need to then ensure that pupils across the school are retaining this depth of knowledge securely.

- In some subjects, some pupils, including some with SEND, are not achieving what they are fully capable of. Work is not always precisely tailored to meet their specific needs. The school must ensure that all staff know how to adapt learning to support these pupils excel. Leaders, including governors, need to check that work set is suitably matched and sufficiently ambitious for these pupils.

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 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	110817
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	10345123
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	201
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Alan Whitaker
Headteacher	Paul Baddeley
Website	www.holywellprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 October 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- This school had its last graded inspection eleven years ago under a previous inspection framework. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last graded inspection.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school provision.
- There is a pre-school that shares the same site but is separately registered.
- Currently, the school does not use any alternative educational provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth-form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, the special educational needs coordinator, assessment leader, subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, the inspector spoke to leaders, visited lessons, spoke with pupils, look at pupils' work and spoke with teachers and support staff.
- The inspectors also looked at curriculum documents from other subjects.
- The lead inspector met with five members of the governing body for the school, including the chair of the governing body.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation, school improvement plan, governing body minutes and school improvement adviser visit notes.
- The lead inspector spoke with the school's improvement adviser from the local authority.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 inspectors considered the responses gathered through Ofsted Parent View, which included 75 free-text comments. There were 20 responses to the staff survey. No pupils answered the pupil survey. However, the inspectors spoke to several pupils from different year groups during the inspection, along with a range of staff.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Julie Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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