

Inspection of a good school: Herne Bay Junior School

Kings Road, Herne Bay, Kent CT6 5DA

Inspection dates:

28–29 January 2020

Outcome

Herne Bay Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love their school. They feel safe and are happy. They are enthusiastic and motivated to learn in lessons. Pupils behave well throughout the school day. They respond to teachers' high expectations. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with staff. There is an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Pupils appreciate the ways in which staff support them. For example, they like being able to talk to the Director of Mental Health and Wellbeing if something is troubling them. Pupils trust staff to care for them. They also value their peer mentors, who support them if they feel unhappy.

Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. They are also aware of the risks of online bullying. Bullying rarely happens. Pupils are confident that if it does, adults will deal with it swiftly. This makes them feel secure and confident at school.

Pupils enjoy their experiences at school. They take a real interest in the topics they study. Pupils like the many ways in which their learning is enriched. For example, the visits from Mr Egypt, who brings artefacts for pupils to examine. Pupils take part in a wide variety of clubs and sporting opportunities.

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

Leaders have designed the curriculum to give pupils the grounding they need. In all subjects, they have set out the skills and knowledge pupils will learn year by year in a logical order. For example, in Year 3 teachers ensure that pupils have a secure understanding of multiplication. This enables pupils to make good use of multiples when they learn division in Year 4. As a result, most pupils achieve well in most subjects. However, in some subjects pupils do not recall or use the skills and knowledge they have learnt well enough. For example, some pupils in Year 6 do not remember their experiences of carrying out fair tests in science.

Curriculum leaders provide ongoing training and support for teachers. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are equipped to teach the curriculum. They use a wide variety of resources to support learning. All staff question pupils to check how well they are doing. In most subjects, pupils build a secure understanding. Teachers appreciate the training they receive. They also feel that leaders support them to manage their workloads.

Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well. Staff have high expectations. They adapt tasks to enable these pupils to succeed. For example, if a pupil finds writing difficult, this will not get in the way of learning science. As a result, all pupils achieve well, including disadvantaged pupils.

The school prioritises reading and staff teach it well. Teachers ensure that all pupils get off to a good start in Year 3. Well-trained staff support pupils who need to catch up. Leaders have structured the reading programme well. Staff guide pupils in their book choices. Staff read engaging stories to pupils. Pupils make good use of the well-stocked library. They become motivated readers who love books.

The school takes the mental health and well-being of pupils very seriously. One parent said, 'I am really pleased with the level of pastoral care my daughter has received.' Well-trained staff provide high levels of care. As a result, pupils gain self-esteem, resilience and confidence. Respectful relationships exist throughout the school. Pupils behave very well. This helps them learn confidently and with enjoyment.

Staff enrich the curriculum in many ways. For example, pupils take part in workshops with the Turner Contemporary Gallery. Pupils have created attractive works of art. Year 3 pupils have been to see theatre productions as part of their learning in English. Pupils have many sporting opportunities. They often take part in local and national competitions. Leaders ensure that disadvantaged pupils take up the many opportunities on offer. Pupils take part in the wide range of clubs that the school provides.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school gives high priority to the welfare and safety of all its pupils. Leaders have ensured that all staff are well trained to spot the signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. All staff know how to follow the school's procedures to quickly refer a concern. Staff are also fully aware of the importance of online safety. They give pupils frequent reminders about how to stay safe on the internet.

Leaders maintain meticulous records. They work well with external agencies, such as social services, to provide support to vulnerable children and their families.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have established a well-planned curriculum that sequences the skills and knowledge pupils need to learn in a logical way. Pupils are achieving well in most subjects. However, in some subjects, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have been taught and to remember important knowledge. As a result, older pupils' knowledge and skills are not secure enough to help them achieve well in these subjects. Leaders need to ensure that the curriculum provides pupils with enough opportunities to remember important knowledge and practise skills they have acquired.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged Herne Bay Junior School to be good on 8–9 June 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

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| Unique reference number | 118852 |
| Local authority | Kent |
| Inspection number | 10122282 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 459 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | David Wilkinson and George Smart (co-chairs) |
| Headteacher | Melody Kingman |
| Website | www.hernebay-jun.kent.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 8–9 June 2016 |

Information about this school

- Herne Bay Junior School is part of the Coastal Alliance Cooperative Trust. It works in partnership with the schools who form the trust to provide support and training.
- The school provides a breakfast and after-school club.

Information about this inspection

- I held meetings with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, including those with responsibility for special educational needs provision, the two co-chairs of governors and three other representatives from the governing body.
- I held a discussion with the school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- I conducted deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, and science. When focusing on these subjects, I held discussions with the subject leaders responsible for the subjects, visited lessons in several year groups, including the support provided to pupils with SEND, looked at pupils' work, and held discussions with pupils and teachers.
- I inspected safeguarding by reviewing the arrangements for pre-appointment checks carried out by the school, including the school's single central record of these checks. I spoke to staff about their training and understanding of the school's safeguarding

procedures. I held discussions with the designated safeguarding leader and one of her deputies, and reviewed case files and records held by the school, including records of staff training.

- I held discussions with parents at the start of the school day. I considered 123 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 123 free-text comments.
- I held discussions with pupils from several year groups.
- I held discussions with staff about their work.

Inspection team

Peter Wibroe, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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