

Inspection of Homerswood Primary and Nursery School

Kirklands, Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire AL8 7RF

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and friendly school, which pupils are proud to attend. Pupils know the school values and how these form what they do. Kindness is a value that pupils demonstrate in different ways within the school and local community.

Pupils enjoy coming together for assemblies. Every week, they discuss current issues and debate different topics that they can then vote on. They celebrate everyone's achievements in 'Marvellous me' assemblies as part of recognising pupils' uniqueness. These experiences and values help to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Pupils are typically respectful of everyone. They move around the school calmly and are safe. However, there are a few pupils who need reminders about the expectations staff have of them. Pupils want to do well at school and the school wants them to achieve well. Most pupils focus and concentrate in lessons, contributing towards discussion and are keen to answer questions. Pupils achieve well in most subjects.

There are a variety of leadership opportunities for older pupils, for example school leaders. However, all ages are part of the school council who really make a difference for others in the school. A recent project to develop the playground has been part of this.

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

The school has ensured that there is a broad and balanced curriculum in place from the early years. This has been carefully designed so that it meets the needs and interests of the pupils who attend the school. Knowledge is developed over time so that pupils can build more complex understanding and vocabulary. Staff use a range of teaching approaches to ensure that pupils remember this knowledge. However, in a few subjects, the curriculum is not delivered as the school intends. Therefore, pupils are not remembering this key knowledge. In these subjects, pupils are not making as much progress through the curriculum as they could.

Staff use their skills effectively to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work well together as a team, as some have more specialist knowledge. A few pupils need a more personalised curriculum. The school ensures that pupils get the right support from external agencies, where required. Staff have the resources to adapt learning effectively so that pupils can access the curriculum. Pupils with SEND make progress across the curriculum.

The reading curriculum successfully builds on pupils' knowledge from the early years upwards. Children start to learn phonics as soon as they join in Reception. When they know a small number of sounds, children start to blend these together. All staff are well trained so there is the same effective approach to teaching reading throughout the school. Younger pupils have books well matched to the sounds they are learning so that they can practise these. Older pupils have access to a variety of genres in reading lessons covering a diverse range of topics. All pupils visit the school library regularly so that they

can change their books. Pupils in Year 6 are reading buddies for Reception pupils, which is a popular activity. These activities support pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Recent updates to the behaviour policy have ensured that everyone has the same high expectations. Routines are well established for all pupils, including pupils with SEND. The school personalises its approach, so that all pupils are ready to learn. However, at times, pupils can get distracted and not focus on their learning. This is not always addressed by staff. Pupils attend the school regularly. The school works to support families of those pupils who find it difficult to attend school. This has improved the attendance of these pupils.

As part of the school's personal development programme, pupils can access high-quality pastoral support. This helps pupils to be able to recognise and manage their emotions. The pupils use a five-point well-being scale to do this. Pupils confidently discuss scenarios that they have explored in lessons to promote inclusivity and healthy relationships. Pupils learn to understand the importance of staying fit and healthy from a young age. The wide range of clubs on offer, for example DIY, hula hooping, knitting and fun fitness, enable pupils to explore their talents and interests.

The school prioritises staff's professional development to ensure that they have the right skills to meet pupils' needs. Alongside this, workload and well-being of staff is considered carefully at all levels. The school prides itself on building high-quality relationships with families. Most parents are positive about their experiences of the school. Governors have clear roles and are supportive of the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects, the implementation of the curriculum is not as effective as the school intends. In these subjects, pupils do not remember as much of the curriculum as they could. The school should ensure that teachers have the knowledge and expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively in all subjects.
- Low-level disruptive behaviour is not always managed consistently well in line with the school's behaviour policy. This means that pupils' learning is sometimes disrupted. The school should support staff to apply the behaviour policy effectively and consistently, so that any negative impact on learning is minimised.

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	117252
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10345180
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Stephen Flannery
Headteacher	Lesley Brennan
Website	www.homerswood.herts.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 January 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has an interim headteacher for four days a week and the deputy headteacher is acting headteacher one day a week.
- The school manages its own breakfast club and after-school club.
- The school does not make use of any alternative 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 a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The lead inspector spoke with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- 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.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders responsible for behaviour, attendance, personal development, inclusion and special educational needs.
- Inspectors gathered and considered the views of pupils, parents and staff. This included considering the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Julie Lawrence

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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