School report

# Inspection of Hazelmere Junior School

Hawthorn Avenue, Colchester, Essex CO4 3JP

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

| **Overall effectiveness** | **Good** |
|---|---|
| The quality of education | **Good** |
| Behaviour and attitudes | **Good** |
| Personal development | **Good** |
| Leadership and management | **Good** |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

## What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils enjoy their learning and feel that staff help them to achieve their best. They enjoy the range of different things they do, such as playing djembe drums or the ukulele. Every pupil also takes part in the high-quality extra-curricular activities, including adventurous residential trips, learning to sail and local visits such as fruit picking or visiting Roman sites.

Most pupils behave well. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors and new pupils. Pupils say that some of their peers can, on occasion, misbehave. However, they are confident that adults sort out problems quickly when this happens. This is also the case where bullying occurs.

Pupils' physical, emotional and social development is a high priority for leaders and staff. Pupils get lots of opportunities to think and be calm in mindfulness and yoga sessions. They take part in a wide range of physical activities, in the curriculum and at playtimes. They appreciate and enjoy these activities.

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

The curriculum is well structured and plans for pupils' learning build year on year. Leaders have thought carefully about which units are taught when, and how they can link into the local context.

Teachers have had effective training on how to help pupils remember their learning. Teachers revisit content, for example using specific activities such as the school's 'fluent in four' and 'geog your mind' at the start of lessons. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is secure and constantly improving.

Teachers check on pupils' understanding throughout lessons. Pupils readily respond to feedback, correcting and improving their work. Teachers also use a range of assessment strategies to identify any gaps in pupils' understanding. Staff provide appropriate extra support to help pupils catch up.

Where the planned curriculum is used well, pupils have excellent recall of what they have learned. On occasion, staff do not have the knowledge and confidence to deliver the curriculum or choose activities as effectively. In the few instances where this is the case, pupils do not remember enough of what has been taught.

Leaders have trained all staff in the teaching of the school's chosen phonics programme. Staff deliver this programme well, and identify where any pupils may need additional support. Extra help is timely and focused, and helps pupils to catch up. Staff support any older pupils who need extra help effectively. Pupils enjoy reading and read a wide range of books. They enjoy listening to their teachers read to them and discussing the stories. The books awarded as prizes for effort and regular reading motivate pupils.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have their needs identified and well planned for. The SEND coordinator works with a wide range of specialists to ensure extra funding and advice is sought. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their classmates. Where required, pupils access additional, effective small-group support or are supported through the school's 'thrive' provision.

Teachers have high expectations for pupil behaviour in class. Pupils respond to this and work hard. Pupils work well with partners and in groups. Leaders know pupils very well. There are very few incidents of poor behaviour. Where there are, they are sorted out quickly by staff. This helps them quickly sort out any behaviour problems. The way in which behaviour incidents are recorded does not currently support leaders in spotting patterns or making links to other concerns, such as attendance, that would help them support pupils even more effectively.

Pupils have a good understanding of core British values from learning in assemblies and class. They have visitors in to help them be aspirational about their futures, for example meeting an Olympic Taekwondo athlete.

A small number of parents do not feel well informed about their children's education and well-being. Several link this to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions and the opportunities to communicate with leaders and teachers where they have concerns. Governors have struggled to recruit parents to the governing body. Parental engagement with some parents is not as strong as other aspects of leaders' work.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are proactive in seeking the right help and support for pupils who need it. They are very clear about the risks that pupils might face. Record-keeping is comprehensive and shows that leaders take concerns that staff raise seriously.

Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe both online and out and about. They know whom they can go to if they feel unsafe or worried.

All appropriate checks have been made on staff in the school.

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

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

- Some teachers do not have the confidence or knowledge to deliver parts of the curriculum effectively. Where this is the case, teachers do not provide pupils with activities and learning opportunities that help them to learn as effectively as they should. Leaders need to train and support teachers to improve the quality of education where they are less confident and skilled to deliver aspects of the curriculum.

- Incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with well, but the way that they are recorded does not support leaders to spot patterns or make links with other systems, such as attendance or safeguarding. This means that the support for some pupils is not as well joined up as it could be. Leaders need to consider ways to improve the quality of this oversight and monitoring.
- A small number of parents report not being happy with the communication between home and school. Parents feel this is limiting their opportunities to be able to support their children's education. Leaders need to work to develop communication and support for parents and carers.

## 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.

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** | 114745 |
| **Local authority** | Essex |
| **Inspection number** | 10199557 |
| **Type of school** | Junior |
| **School category** | Community |
| **Age range of pupils** | 7 to 11 |
| **Gender of pupils** | Mixed |
| **Number of pupils on the school roll** | 221 |
| **Appropriate authority** | The governing body |
| **Chair of governing body** | Adam Wright |
| **Headteacher** | Paula Derwin |
| **Website** | www.hazelmere-jun.essex.sch.uk/ |
| **Date of previous inspection** | 20 October 2015, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

## Information about this school

- The school building is joined to Hazelmere Infant School. There is also a private nursery on the same overall site. No pupil areas are shared, although catering facilities are provided by the infant school.
- The school makes use of a small number of alternative providers.
- The school accesses a separate site owned by the local authority for forest school sessions.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into: reading, mathematics, physical education and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at the curriculum and pupils' work in some other subjects. They visited some other lessons.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors scrutinised the single central record and a sample of safeguarding records. They spoke to staff and pupils.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders and other staff. They met with representatives of the governing body. They spoke to a representative of the local authority by telephone.
- Inspectors spent time observing playtimes.
- Inspectors considered the 20 responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, 130 responses to the pupil survey and 14 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

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|---|---|
| Tessa Holledge, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Julie Winwood | Ofsted Inspector |

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