

Histon and Impington Infant School

New School Road, Histon, Cambridge CB24 9LL

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| Inspection dates | 18–19 May 2016 |
| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| Quality of teaching, learning and assessment | Good |
| Personal development, behaviour and welfare | Good |
| Outcomes for pupils | Good |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new leadership team has an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders are ensuring that teaching, learning and assessment are good.
- Under the strong leadership and governance of the Cambridge Primary Education Trust, staff receive effective training and support. Consequently, staff are motivated and given opportunities to develop their professional expertise.
- Pupils achieve very well. This is because teachers plan learning that interests and challenges individuals to achieve their best.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability, and those who are disadvantaged, are cared for thoughtfully and considerately. They make good progress from their individual starting points.
- Children start their school life enthusiastically in Reception. They are happy and enjoy their learning in a safe and secure environment.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are provided for effectively. Therefore, pupils have mature and positive attitudes and are eager to learn.
- Attainment in reading at the end of key stage 1 continues to be a strength of the school. Most pupils leave with skills that are significantly above the level expected for their age.
- Pupils present their work with pride. In the many opportunities they have to practise their writing skills, pupils are taught to form letters and develop their handwriting abilities effectively.
- Leaders and managers ensure that pupils are very safe. Policies and procedures to safeguard them fully meet requirements and are well thought through.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In lessons, some teaching assistants are not deployed as consistently as they could be. This reduces the positive impact these skilled staff have on the progress of pupils.
- Middle leaders have yet to monitor the impact of their work on the progress pupils are making from their starting points.
- Leaders do not have enough relevant evidence about children's skills from the very start of Reception. This means they are not able to check children's progress as well as they could.
- Pupils' understanding and experience of other cultures and diversity requires even further development.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning further by:
 - making better use of teaching assistants in the classroom so they are even more effective
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and influences in our society.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management further by:
 - ensuring that middle leaders evaluate the impact of their work so they can take further action to improve pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility
 - gathering more accurate information about each child's individual starting points and using this information to track their progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The leadership of the school has undergone a marked change over the last year. Nevertheless, leadership and management are good because the newly appointed headteacher and assistant headteacher have a clear vision and commitment to improve pupil outcomes. They have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and the areas for development and are already making a positive impact on the progress that pupils make. School leaders are guided and supported through the expertise of the executive principal who ensures that the priorities for school improvement are carefully monitored and evaluated.
- The school is part of a multi-academy trust, the Cambridge Primary Education Trust. Leaders and staff who responded to the staff questionnaire commented on the high-quality support and effective training they receive. Staff work with the other schools in the trust to ensure that pupils in the village and surrounding area receive the best-quality educational experience. For example, the leaders of English work across the trust to check their judgements of pupils' writing to verify accuracy and consistency. This collaborative approach is proving a strength as the progress of pupils at Histon and Impington Infant School is improving at pace.
- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is a strength of the school. Through early identification of pupils' needs, leaders are able to provide thoughtful and timely support. Consequently, pupils who have education, health and care plans make good and often better progress from their individual starting points. They are well provided for and have equal access to the curriculum, so they can make high levels of academic and personal progress.
- The school uses the small amounts of additional money it receives for disadvantaged pupils well by providing additional reading and mathematics support for pupils who require it. School leaders take account of individual needs when allocating additional funds, so that it has the most effective impact on the progress these pupils make.
- A proportion of the school's sports premium has been creatively used to provide expert coaching for the Year 2 pupils in the junior school building. Pupils told inspectors that they very much enjoy the coaching they receive. They participate extremely well in lessons that help them practise skills to build their confidence in a range of sports.
- The curriculum is well planned and improving. It takes account of the needs and interests of pupils so that work is purposeful and engaging, helping pupils make good progress in developing their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils have many opportunities to learn through creative activities such as music and art. Leaders ensure that the planned curriculum contributes well to pupils' good personal development and their enjoyment of school.
- Leaders ensure that pupils have many opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Through activities such as themed days and assemblies, leaders encourage pupils to become more reflective about themselves and others to create a sense of unity in this large school. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and take care of their belongings. School leaders place a high importance on pupils learning about positive relationships and building social confidence. However, pupils do not have as much opportunity to develop their understanding and appreciation of the many cultures that make up modern Britain, so they are even better prepared for living in a diverse society.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to their positions, are enthusiastic about their roles. They benefit from working with leaders from the other schools in the trust. Although they are monitoring the quality of the curriculum in their subject areas, not all subject leaders are able to evaluate and demonstrate the impact of their actions on the progress that pupils are making.
- The vast majority of parents are fully supportive of the school and its ethos. They say their children are happy and safe. Inspectors agree. A small number of parents expressed some concern in the free text responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. They were concerned about the communication of the recent change in moving Year 2 to the local junior school site. Inspectors found that leaders and governors understood parents' concerns and are making improvements as a result. Parents spoken to during the inspection were highly positive about the work and ethos created by staff, leaders and the trust, and the benefits for their children.
- Members of the trust board ensure that the ethos and vision flows through into practice. They are committed to providing the children in the village with a high-quality education at their local school. The recently appointed chair of the trust fully understands the strengths and areas for improvement at the

school. Members work closely with the school to provide additional strength to the decision-making of the local governing body, bringing a range of expertise and strategic direction.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body is highly organised and effective. Minutes show that governors spend time on the important matters of raising pupils' achievement and keeping pupils safe and well cared for. They fulfil their statutory duties well.
 - The governing body challenges and supports school leaders appropriately to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning continues to develop and improve. Governors visit the school frequently to satisfy themselves that pupils are making progress and are happy and safe. They ensure that the information school leaders provide is accurate and timely. Consequently, governors understand the strengths and challenges that the school needs to overcome to be an outstanding school. They are knowledgeable and wholeheartedly committed to the vision of the school.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders provide staff with highly effective safeguarding training that is relevant and specific to the context of the school. Staff and governors have received training on the 'Prevent' duty as part of the leaders' promotion of a culture of vigilance. The governors and school leaders regularly check the school's work on safeguarding to satisfy themselves that all the necessary documentation and work with other agencies is in good order. Inspectors agree with the view of the governors that safeguarding is a strength of the school. All checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are rigorously carried out, and records are meticulously kept.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Learning takes place in a relaxed and purposeful atmosphere. Teachers give clear explanations, which help pupils to apply their learning quickly, confidently and successfully. They ensure that their classes are vibrant places in which to learn. Classrooms are well resourced and well organised.
- Teachers' skilful teaching of letters, sounds and handwriting allows pupils to be confident and proficient readers and writers from an early age. The solid groundwork in early years is built upon and consolidated in Years 1 and 2. Pupils leave the school with skills and abilities in reading that are consistently above those expected for their age.
- Adults who work with pupils who have special educational needs or disability ensure that these pupils receive the care, guidance and support they need to make the best possible progress in their learning. Support staff provide well-designed lessons each week for pupils with specific needs to practise their balancing skills and develop their muscle and coordination abilities. Consequently, these pupils are more settled in class, communicate well with others and make exceptional gains in their learning from their starting points.
- Pupils are provided with many opportunities to apply their mathematical skills. In one lesson seen, pupils in Year 1 were using their reasoning skills proficiently to decide the combination of coins required to make a total. They were able to explain their strategies and check their answers skilfully. Pupils' work in mathematics books demonstrates that they work hard and persevere with the activities they are given. Most pupils make strong progress as a result.
- Teachers ensure that pupils consolidate their knowledge and understanding through homework that is regularly completed. Pupils understand the value of homework and enjoy practising their skills. The vast majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agreed that the homework is suitable for their children.
- Teachers consistently apply high expectations of how pupils should present their work. They insist on pupils forming their letters correctly and neatly from Reception onwards. Consequently, pupils have made great gains in their progress in handwriting using the school's adopted policy. By Year 2, pupils are using more technical and grammatical vocabulary as the year progresses, with mature and neat handwriting. They are producing carefully crafted pieces of work that are presented well. Pupils' writing books show strong progress over time.
- Teachers' strong subject knowledge and skilled planning ensure that pupils' needs are met across a range of subjects. For example, in science, Year 2 pupils are learning a broad range of scientific concepts, including learning to observe more closely and suggest answers to questions and investigations. Some of this work is linked to the theme for the half term. Staff have the same high expectations for the quality of literacy skills in pupils' work in subjects such as science.
- In some lessons, teaching assistants are not consistently well deployed. This results in periods of time

where they could be more effectively used. In many classes, teaching assistants provide invaluable support. They use good questioning skills to help pupils learn even more. Where this is the case, groups of pupils, particularly those who have English as an additional language, make rapid progress.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Pupils contribute their ideas easily and well. In an assembly seen, they presented their views and opinions maturely and sensitively to the whole school. They demonstrated an enthusiasm and enjoyment when discussing the story with each other. The pupils participated in singing and actions with equal passion. 'I loved that assembly', said a pupil at the end.
- Pupils develop good levels of confidence and self-esteem. They have positive attitudes towards learning and are keen to do well. They show perseverance and often select the challenging activities in lessons when they are given a choice.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the promotion of British values are threaded throughout the school activities and promoted well. Pupils are generally kind and caring in their responses to each other. They are tolerant of the views of others, listen carefully when others are talking and make their contributions in class maturely. For example, some children were exploring what they could make using playdough. Through good-humoured discussion and debate, they challenged each other to produce their 'cakes' with increasing sophistication and skill. They were delighted with their results.
- School records indicate that incidents of poor behaviour or bullying are rare. Older pupils say that adults deal quickly and well with any incidents that do occur. Pupils and parents consider the school to be a safe place. Inspectors agree.
- Year 2 pupils, who are located on a different site, commented that they enjoy the singing assemblies and playtimes with the junior school pupils, because 'they are fun'. They feel listened to when they have concerns or worries and are confident that adults will resolve these concerns.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school is an orderly community because adults are consistent with their expectations and kindly remind pupils how to make good behaviour choices. As a result, the school is a positive and purposeful place in which to learn.
- At less-structured times, pupils are equally well supervised and cared for as when in class. Adults engage pupils in play so that pupils are occupied and happy. They enjoy the responsibility of choosing their food in the dining hall. Much laughter and friendship is evident during these times.
- Attendance is high, with most pupils rarely missing a day. Leaders provide additional support and challenge where a pupil's attendance falls below that expected by the school. The use of a family support worker has been effective where families require additional help when attendance becomes a concern. Consequently, attendance is improving for groups of pupils. Discussions with pupils and school records show that disruption in lessons is extremely rare. Pupils who require additional support participate easily and well because adults skilfully provide strategies for these pupils to make independent and positive choices.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Outcomes for pupils are good and they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Throughout the school, pupils make progress in reading, writing and mathematics, acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding quickly.
- Leaders have successfully improved pupils' writing skills over this year. For example, in Year 1, more pupils are now achieving at least the expected levels of writing, demonstrating good progress. This success is because adults provide more opportunities for pupils to write at length, using precise grammar. The work in pupils' books shows that they are producing writing of a good standard.

- Pupils read with increasing fluency and confidence, with published information showing that they attain exceptionally well by the end of key stage 1. Currently, pupils are continuing to attain well. Pupils read skilfully, showing maturity and understanding. They enthusiastically explain how much they enjoy reading and the support they receive from school.
- Pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They have many opportunities to deepen their understanding and practise their mathematical skills. In 2015, the proportion of pupils who left the school with skills and abilities in mathematics that were typical for their age was in line with national expectations. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are making accelerated progress in their mathematical understanding and skills. A larger proportion of the most able pupils are reaching the higher standards as a result.
- Across the school, the small numbers of pupils who are disadvantaged receive the support and intervention they require so they can make the progress of which they are capable. In 2015, at the end of key stage 1, there were too few disadvantaged pupils to report their achievement without identifying them.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good and often better progress from their individual starting points. This is because the school meets their needs precisely, as it does for the small numbers of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

Early years provision

is good

- Children start well at Histon and Impington Infant School. This is because adults carefully consider their needs and interests. This year, Reception has expanded to four classes. Nonetheless, adults know children as individuals and understand their likes and dislikes. Children's needs are met creatively and well. Parents spoken to during the inspection confirm that their children had been supported well at the start of the academic year.
- The progress of children is strong overall and the proportion of children who are exceeding expectations for their age is increasing. This is because the teaching in early years is good over time. Teachers provide many exciting opportunities for children to become keen learners. Children readily participate in reading, writing and number work. Activities are stimulating and build on their interests. As a result, children leave Reception ready for the challenges of Year 1.
- The early years leader recognises that the achievement of the small proportion of disadvantaged children in mathematics, reading and writing is not improving as swiftly as the rest of the cohort. Adults ensure that extra provision and support is in place to carefully close the gap for these pupils at the start of their educational journey. The achievement for this group of pupils is improving.
- The outdoor area is well equipped so that children can develop a wide range of skills. They enjoy using the many bicycles and scooters to develop their physical skills and abilities. Adults take opportunities to use the outdoor area to skilfully question children on the basics of literacy and numeracy. For example, in the brick building area, one member of staff asked 'I have nine and I need 20. How many more bricks do I need?' The child's answer was instant and correct.
- The children are inquisitive, confident and articulate. They speak with interest on a broad range of topics using a well-developed range of vocabulary and technical language.
- Staff complete good-quality assessment records which show the journey of a child's learning through their year. Most children are making progress in all areas. Support staff contribute well to each child's assessment records, sharing this information effectively with parents. The quality of the recording is of a consistently high standard across all four classes.
- Children are very keen learners who enjoy good relationships with each other. Changes nationally to deciding children's starting points when they enter Reception have caused some challenges this year for the school leadership. Even though they used a national benchmark, this did not provide leaders with enough relevant and accurate information. Inspectors were not able to fully verify the starting points for children due to insufficient relevant evidence. From the assessment information the school holds, the large majority of children enter Reception with skills and abilities that are at least typical for their age.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 139086 |
| Local authority | Cambridgeshire |
| Inspection number | 10010923 |

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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| Type of school | Infant |
| School category | Academy |
| Age range of pupils | 4–7 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 285 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Karen Monk |
| Headteacher | Jonathan Newman |
| Telephone number | 01223 568826 |
| Website | www.hiischool.net |
| Email address | office@histonimpington-inf.cambs.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- Histon and Impington Infant School is larger than an average-sized school, and is based on two sites.
- The school became an academy in December 2012 as part of the Cambridge Primary Education Trust.
- The school has an executive headteacher (who works across the multi-academy trust) and a headteacher.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium is much lower than average. This is additional government funding to support pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals or are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is lower than the national average. The percentage of pupils who have statements of special educational needs or education, health and care plans is higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. This is changing and more children entered the school in September 2015 than previously who speak a range of other languages.
- Children in Reception attend full time.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 23 lessons, some of which were jointly observed with the executive principal and the headteacher. Inspectors carried out two focused learning walks with senior leaders.
- The team held meetings with the executive principal, headteacher, senior and other key leaders and members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Meetings were held with the chair and representatives of the Cambridge Primary Education Trust.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils and looked at their books to take account of the work and the progress that pupils make over time.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding of pupils and arrangements for pupils who have special educational needs or disability were examined. The school's processes for checking on the suitability of staff who work at the school were also scrutinised.
- Inspectors took account of 81 responses from parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, together with 73 free text responses and informal conversations on the playground.
- Inspectors analysed 18 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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