

Inspection of Hollymount School

Hollymount Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR4 9SG

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Outstanding |
| Personal development | Outstanding |
| Leadership and management | Outstanding |
| Early years provision | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at Hollymount School. They are curious and enthusiastic about learning, and they work hard. Pupils are taught that they can make a difference to the world. They demonstrate this through their social enterprise projects, the leadership roles they take on and, most importantly, by the way they behave, showing respect for each other. This makes Hollymount School a delightful place to be.

Leaders use a restorative approach throughout the school. If pupils get things wrong, they are challenged to think hard about what has happened and how to put it right. Pupils are trained as peer mentors, and they help to resolve any difficulties at break and lunchtime, using the same methods as adults. Peer mentors also spot pupils who may be alone and befriend them. As a result of this highly impressive work, pupils feel safe and look out for each other.

Leaders are hugely ambitious for pupils. Children in Nursery and Reception are taught how to listen, and they play together well. These routines are built upon throughout the school. Pupils take responsibility for their learning. They are keen to talk about the work they have done. They take pride in achieving well.

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

Leaders have worked thoughtfully and deliberately to develop the curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils. They have rightly prioritised the order in which they have developed the curriculum. This means that some subjects are better developed than others. Leaders have identified the 'sticky knowledge' that all pupils must know in nearly all subjects and crafted this into a progressive curriculum. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced. As such, pupils learn and apply this knowledge in learning that is designed to be increasingly challenging. This means that, by Year 6, in most subjects, pupils acquire a sophisticated understanding of complex topics across the curriculum. Leaders make sure that teachers have good subject knowledge, and teachers deliver the curriculum well. As a result, pupils achieve well.

Leaders identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. They make sure that staff are well trained so that they can support the needs of pupils with SEND well. As a result, these pupils make very good progress.

Reading is threaded through all curriculum areas. In Nursery, children are introduced to rhymes, songs and stories to help them extend their vocabulary. Children are taught how to listen so that they can hear the phonic sounds they will be learning. Children learn to read from the start, in Reception. Staff are very well trained to teach the phonics scheme. Pupils read books that match the sounds they are learning. Staff spot children who are falling behind and make sure that they catch up quickly. As a result of this expert teaching, pupils become confident and fluent readers.

Leaders make sure that pupils attend school regularly. They are meticulous in spotting pupils who may need support to come into school. Leaders use an extensive range of strategies to support these pupils, including driving 'the attendance minibus' to collect pupils who are finding it difficult to come to school. As a result of these actions, pupils' attendance has improved dramatically.

Pupils' wider development is exceptional. Leaders have carefully planned a wider curriculum offer that makes sure that pupils are well prepared to be active and valuable citizens. Leaders know that supporting pupils' positive behaviour is most likely to assure their long-term futures, and so relationship building is prioritised. Pupils are taught how they can make a difference to the lives of other people. They put this into practice in the way they behave towards one another, as well as in roles they take on, such as eco-council leaders, reading champions, house captains, head students and acting as a translator for pupils who are new to the country. Pupils are keen to talk about how the school's restorative approach helps them be successful. They are confident and respectful of other people. Pupils say, 'We do not judge a book by its cover here.'

Leaders work tirelessly to make sure that all pupils get the most out of their time in school. Every decision that leaders make is based on how their actions will help pupils achieve even better. Staff value the collaborative work they do with trust leaders to develop areas of the school's work. Because of this shared endeavour, important areas, such as developing the curriculum and attendance, improve rapidly.

Local governors and trustees are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They know the school well. Together with school leaders and trust leaders, trustees take a thoughtful, staged approach to their work. As a result, improvements are embedded and sustained, and pupils flourish.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders are well qualified and experienced. They know their pupils and community well. Leaders make sure that all staff are well trained and know the risks that pupils may face. As a result, staff report any concerns they have. Leaders act on these concerns appropriately. They are diligent in making sure that pupils get the help they need. Pupils are taught how to keep safe. They know that adults listen and will help them if they need it. They learn about how to keep safe online and about river safety. Leaders make sure that all staff are recruited safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have taken a considered approach to curriculum development. Where the curriculum has been reviewed and embedded, it is highly effective. However,

there are still a few subjects that are not yet fully developed and so are not having the impact leaders would like. Leaders should continue to develop the curriculum in all subjects to ensure it meets their intentions for learning.

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](#)' 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 | 140933 |
| Local authority | Worcestershire |
| Inspection number | 10241990 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy converter |
| Age range of pupils | 2 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 415 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Paul Shoesmith |
| Headteacher | Andrea Donnelly |
| Website | www.hollymountschool.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 6 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed after the previous inspection.
- The school has nursery provision for two-year olds.
- The school runs a before- and after-school club on its premises.
- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken it into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders.

- Inspectors held discussions with teachers and representatives of trustees and governors.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, art, history and physical education. For each deep dive, the inspector 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 visited the Nursery and visited other lessons across the curriculum. Inspectors also looked at a range of pupils' books.
- Inspectors met with members of staff, individually and in groups, and spoke to pupils at various points during the inspection.
- Inspectors visited the before- and after-school club held on the premises.
- Inspectors took account of responses to staff and pupils surveys, as well as the responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors looked at records relating to behaviour, bullying, attendance, and safeguarding.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with the designated safeguarding lead.

Inspection team

Claire Price, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Paul Whitcombe

Ofsted Inspector

Andrew Madden

His Majesty's Inspector

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