

Inspection of Chambersbury Primary School

Hill Common, Bennetts End, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP3 8JH

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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?

Pupils at Chambersbury Primary School receive a good quality of education. They know staff want them to do well. Pupils benefit from carefully chosen visits to historical and cultural sites they may not normally experience. This helps them gain wider knowledge about the world around them.

Pupils, including children in the early years, follow routines and respond well to leaders' high expectations. Pupils are kind and thoughtful, so bullying is rare. Pupils are confident that if it were to happen, adults would make it stop. Being able to confide in adults means pupils feel safe at school.

Pupils relish the opportunity to take on leadership roles. Older pupils aspire to the role of 'house captain' and all pupils play an active part in electing who gets these roles. Pupils enjoy working in house teams to earn 'gold coins' to help win the sought after house trophy.

Wider opportunities benefit pupils greatly. Fundraising for charities helps pupils understand the difference they can make in other people's lives. After-school clubs, including art, football, and yoga, allow pupils to realise and refine their talents. Pupils gain lots from the 'Wild Chambersbury' challenges. Pupils say these nature activities, including bird-watching, have improved their mental well-being.

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

Leaders have recently renewed the curriculum from the early years to Year 6. Clarity in curriculum plans means teachers identify what pupils need to learn and in what order. This is mostly working well. In the early years, staff know what words, phrases and mathematical concepts children need to learn. They weave these into their teaching and into children's play. In key stages 1 and 2, pupils typically meet curriculum aims. However, in some subjects, a few staff lack the subject knowledge that would help them adapt explanations or activities to help all pupils achieve their best. Leaders are in the early stages of implementing plans to address this.

Leaders prioritise reading, ensuring staff received the training and support to teach the revised reading curriculum well. Staff check pupils' phonic knowledge carefully to make sure pupils receive books which contain the sounds they know. When pupils struggle with reading, skilled adults intervene to provide effective support. This ensures that any pupils at risk of falling behind catch up quickly. Teachers provide older pupils with opportunities to access well-thought-out text choices and a wide range of subject-specific vocabulary. Consequently, pupils learn to become fluent and confident readers.

Assessment is used best in English and mathematics. In these subjects, teachers identify quickly what pupils know and what they need to learn next. For example, teachers regularly check pupil's understanding of new vocabulary in guided reading.

However, in other subjects, the system for checking what pupils know is not as clear. As a result, there are a few occasions where teachers move pupils on to new learning before pupils have securely understood important knowledge.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from support from well-trained staff. Adults know the needs of these pupils well and provide targeted and regular additional help, as well as effective support in class. This means pupils with SEND, including those in the early years, are able to access the same curriculum as their peers.

Pupils behave well. This is because staff reiterate the 'Hi Five' regularly, meaning pupils understand staff's expectations. As a result, learning time is not wasted. Pupils are attending school more regularly as leaders work determinedly to ensure parents understand the importance of school attendance.

Leaders oversee a suitable personal development programme. This includes providing high-quality pastoral care as leaders swiftly identify pupils who may need extra well-being support. Personal, social and health education and religious education help pupils learn about their own and others' cultures. They build an understanding of celebrations and festivals and talk of knowing when their friends are celebrating Eid or Diwali. Pupils from different backgrounds behave respectfully towards each other. They are very clear that everyone is welcome at this school and that they support everyone.

Leaders, including governors, are working well to further improve the school. They are mindful of staff workload and all staff feel they can approach leaders for support. Governors use effective questioning to help them understand the school's strengths and areas to develop. They work well with leaders and the local authority advisor to address issues quickly. Governors fulfil their statutory duties.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Governors, school leaders and staff all receive regular safeguarding training to understand their roles and responsibilities. Appropriate checks are in place for any adults working or volunteering in the school. There is an efficient system in place for reporting and recording concerns. Staff know when to use it. When they do, leaders swiftly follow up issues. Leaders ensure vulnerable pupils and their families receive timely support.

Through the curriculum, pupils learn how to stay safe. This includes knowing how to stay safe online. Older pupils are taught how to access social media safely.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In updating the curriculum, leaders have supported staff with training on subject knowledge and pedagogy in some of the foundation subjects. A small minority of staff are still getting to grips with this and, as a result, sometimes do not help all pupils to understand and remember key knowledge and skills. Leaders need to ensure these staff are confident in adapting the curriculum content for the needs of the pupils they teach.
- Assessment in the foundation subjects is at an earlier stage of development than in English and mathematics. Teachers check that pupils have understood recently taught knowledge and skills, but this does not give leaders and teachers information about how much key knowledge pupils remember over time. This means that, when pupils are about to begin a new sequence of learning, teachers cannot be sure that pupils are ready to move on to this new learning. Leaders should ensure that assessment information helps teachers to know when pupils have learned, long-term, the information they need to move on.

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

Unique reference number	117214
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10241325
Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Doug Stack
Headteacher	Naomi Chapman-Cotter
Website	www.chambersbury.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- School leaders do not currently use alternative provision for any pupils.
- There is a breakfast club run by school staff and managed by school leaders.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, history and computing. 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.

- An inspector also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in geography, science and personal, social and health education. The inspector also reviewed pupils' workbooks for these subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, special educational needs and disabilities coordinator, early years leader, two governors, and a local authority school improvement adviser.
- Inspectors reviewed school documentation, including the minutes of the meetings of the governing body and monitoring notes from the local authority.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with leaders to scrutinise records and review the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks. Inspectors also used discussions with pupils and staff to gather information about the culture of safeguarding at the school.
- Inspectors observed pupils at different points in the school day and held discussions with several pupils. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil questionnaire.
- To gather the views of staff, inspectors held discussions with several of them and reviewed the 12 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- To gather the views of parents, inspectors spoke to several parents, studied any correspondence shared by parents, and reviewed the 33 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including 25 free-text responses.

Inspection team

Sara Boyce, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Emma Breckenridge

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