

Inspection of a good school: Kents Hill Junior School

Kents Hill Road, Benfleet, Essex SS7 5PS

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

Kents Hill Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe at Kents Hill Junior school. The staff and pupils have strong relationships. This enables staff to be able to respond to individual pupils' needs. Pupils know that teachers expect them to complete their work and join in during the lessons.

There are high expectations of how pupils should behave. Most behave well. Pupils understand how to look after their mental well-being. They learn various techniques, which they keep in their personal 'toolkits', to help them manage their emotions. Pupils know how and when to use their toolkit, which ensures a calm environment.

While bullying can happen, most pupils feel that staff manage this well. Some pupils are anti-bullying ambassadors. They support pupils with dealing with friendship issues at breaktimes and lunchtimes.

Pupils have a wide range of opportunities open to them at lunchtime, playtime and after school. At playtimes, pupils can build dens, play on the Viking ship and dress up. There are a range of sports teams, which enter regular competitions, including cross-country, the swimming gala and district sports. These opportunities enable the pupils to be active and learn the importance of exercise.

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

Leaders have high aspirations for the pupils who attend the school. They ensure that all pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum which sets out precisely the knowledge leaders want pupils to know. It states the order in which topics should be taught to ensure that new information builds on what pupils have previously learned. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this to explain new ideas and concepts. They use assessment well to identify any gaps in pupils' learning. They adapt their teaching accordingly. This helps pupils to deepen their learning across the curriculum.

Leaders understand the importance of pupils reading fluently and confidently. The well-structured reading programme ensures that pupils are making progress. They make sure that any pupils who struggle to learn to read get the extra help they need to catch up quickly. Pupils learn to comprehend a wide range of texts, including some that complement the wider curriculum. The vast range of texts, gaining awards for the number of books they read, and visits from different authors, all help pupils in developing a love of reading.

Leaders have clear identification processes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff have many strategies to support pupils with SEND. They adapt the curriculum where appropriate so that pupils can access the learning. This enables these pupils to learn well alongside their peers. However, some parents and carers do not recognise the impact of this work and do not feel that there is the right provision in place for their children. This limits the effectiveness of the way the school can work with parents to support pupils with SEND.

Leaders have a calm and positive approach to managing behaviour. A new behaviour policy has ensured that there are high expectations of pupils which they know and understand. Staff feel supported by leaders when implementing the policy. It has reduced the number of incidents of negative behaviour. Most pupils behave well.

Leaders ensure that pupils access a wide personal development programme. They arrange for pupils to hold international picnics which celebrate all the food and culture of the pupils attending the school, to visit places of worship and to share the cultures which they are learning about. This helps pupils to develop a rich understanding of people from different cultures and faiths.

Leaders use 'personal passports' to ensure that the school curriculum goes beyond the national curriculum. Passports entitle pupils to experiences they might not otherwise have and provide pupils with some lifelong skills. Each year, they change and build on the previous experiences. They include watching the sunrise or being able to tie your shoelaces.

Staff enjoy working at the school. Leaders listen to them and support them. They value staff's ideas. Leaders consider staff workload and well-being when introducing new policy and practice. Trustees know the school well. They support and challenge leaders with their vision and moving the school forward.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive up-to-date safeguarding training and have regular updates. They are curious and record any concerns that they have so that leaders can build a clear picture of what is happening for pupils. Leaders act quickly on these concerns to ensure that children are safe.

Pupils know how to stay safe online and can clearly say how to do this. When incidents have arisen, the school has worked with parents to resolve them. Leaders encourage pupils to be 'defenders'. This means that if they see or hear anything that they are not comfortable with then they should tell an adult.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A small number of parents of pupils with SEND do not feel the school provides well for their children. This is not conducive to joint working to ensure that pupils have the best educational experience they can. Leaders should ensure that they work with parents so that parents understand the reasoning for, and effectiveness of, the school's work to support pupils with SEND.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour, or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in July 2013.

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	137631
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	10268421
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	351
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Annie Sutton
Headteacher	Joanne Parkes, Head of Academy
Website	www.kentshilljuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 June 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses one registered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the head of academy, deputy headteacher, subject leaders and trustees.
- The inspector carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, computing and religious 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.
- To check the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector reviewed a range of documents, including school policies, procedures and records. The inspector met with the head of academy as the designated safeguarding leader, and other staff, to discuss and review examples of the actions taken to keep pupils safe. The inspector spoke to

pupils and checked staff members' understanding of how to keep pupils safe from harm.

- To gather pupils' views, the inspector spoke to pupils when visiting lessons, met with groups of pupils and spoke to pupils at lunchtimes.
- The inspector considered the 101 responses and 58 free-text comments submitted to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also considered phone calls that were held with parents. The 289 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey were also considered.
- The inspector spoke to groups of staff, including non-teaching staff. They also considered 32 responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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