

Inspection of Houghton Regis Primary School

St Michael's Avenue, Houghton Regis, Dunstable, Bedfordshire LU5 5DH

Inspection dates:	15 and 16 July 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Requires improvement
Personal development	Requires improvement
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly, happy school, where pupils accept everyone's differences. Pupils are respectful to staff. They know that staff will take care of them and they have someone they are comfortable to talk to.

Pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Sometimes, staff do not have high expectations. Pupils can listen well and contribute to the work that they are doing. However, despite reminders, some pupils struggle to do this. This means that others find it difficult to concentrate on their learning.

Pupils enjoy their breaktimes and lunchtimes because they can play with their friends. The playground is zoned for different activities and the number of activities that pupils can do has increased. As a result, playtimes are happier times of the school day. However, there are still a number of poor behaviour incidents at playtimes.

Pupils have a vast range of leadership opportunities. All pupils vote for who is suitable for these positions once the candidates have spoken publicly. Older pupils also develop their confidence by being prefects. There is a range of clubs, including film, art and football, that pupils can attend to explore their talents and interests. However, pupils' learning about other cultures is limited.

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

The school has been through changes in leadership over the past year. There is now more stability, and necessary improvements are being made. All staff and governors share a clear vision for the school and are determined to ensure the very best for the pupils.

The school has a broad, well-sequenced curriculum from Year 1. Some subjects are well established and mainly delivered well. However, the school is reviewing the curriculum across all subjects. In some subjects, pupils are not taught as well because staff do not have the subject knowledge or skills they need to do this. As a result, pupils do not remember as much of the important subject knowledge as they should.

At times, staff skilfully draw out pupils' knowledge and understanding through effective questioning. However, sometimes staff do not spot and address pupils' misconceptions, meaning that pupils' understanding is incorrect.

In the early years, children are curious and inquisitive. They are confident and proud to share their work with adults, including songs they are performing for their parents and carers. However, the curriculum in the early years is not as ambitious as it could be, and the learning environment reflects this. Children do not develop a broad range of knowledge and skills. They are not as well prepared for learning in Year 1 as they should be.

There is a clear process for identifying pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff work alongside parents to ensure that the right support is in

place. Staff have received training about adapting teaching appropriately and are beginning to introduce these strategies across the curriculum. Despite this, some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could.

Reading is a priority from the early years. Staff check pupils' reading knowledge regularly. Staff use this information to identify pupils who need additional support. This includes those who might need catch-up, as well as keep-up, work. Pupils are keen readers. They like to access a wide variety of genres. Staff encourage pupils to read regularly, and they celebrate this in assemblies.

A review of the behaviour policy has taken place. A new approach to behaviour management is being introduced following recent staff training. However, there is not yet a consistent approach throughout the school. Staff do not all share the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour. This means some pupils' behaviour disrupts others' learning. Attendance has improved due to regular communications with parents regarding their children's attendance. The school supports pupils to break down any barriers they have to attending regularly.

The school promotes some aspects of pupils' personal development well. Pupils can participate in sporting competitions, visit local landmarks and sing at the school fair. Older pupils complete an enterprise week, where they manage budgets and run stalls. Cooking has been a recent priority, and all pupils have developed this essential life skill. However, some pupils do not have a clear understanding of different faiths and cultures and cannot engage with views that are different to their own.

Staff know their well-being and workload are considered when there are new approaches the school wants to adopt. The school empowers staff to carry out changes because they are part of the decision-making process. Governors carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. They seek advice and support, where necessary, to do this. Parents have noticed the improvements in the school over a short period of time, with everyone optimistic about the future.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, staff do not have the relevant knowledge or skills to understand and deliver the curriculum content. This includes not addressing pupils' errors or misconceptions. As a result, pupils do not secure the knowledge leaders intend in some subjects. The school should ensure that all staff have the knowledge and skills required so they can understand the content of these subjects and are clear on what pupils are to know, how it is to be taught and by when.

- The early years curriculum lacks ambition, which is demonstrated in the learning environment and learning opportunities available for children. Therefore, children do not receive the breadth of curriculum they should in order to be well prepared for learning in Year 1. The school should ensure that the early years curriculum is stimulating and well sequenced, and embraces children's curiosity, preparing them fully for Year 1.
- Staff do not have the same high expectations of pupils' behaviour and therefore behaviour is managed inconsistently. Consequently, some pupils' learning is disrupted. The school should ensure that all staff have the same high expectations of behaviour and apply these consistently.
- The curriculum does not enable pupils to develop a clear knowledge and understanding of different faiths and cultures. As a result, some pupils cannot engage with beliefs that are different to their own. The school should ensure that the curriculum is designed to enable pupils to explore different faiths and cultures so they can engage with others' views and opinions.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	109459
Local authority	Central Bedfordshire
Inspection number	10378432
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	398
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Tom Muldownie
Headteacher	Rajneet Parmar
Website	www.houghtonregisprimary.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	4 and 5 June 2024, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Information about this school

- The headteacher became the substantive headteacher on 1 July 2025. She had been the acting and then interim headteacher since December 2024.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's educational provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector spoke with representatives from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, computing and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also spoke to school leaders, including those responsible for SEND, behaviour, attendance and personal development.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors gathered and considered the views of pupils, parents and staff. This included considering the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Katie Devenport, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michele Geddes	Ofsted Inspector
Jonny Wallace	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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M1 2WD

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