

Inspection of Horton Mill Community Primary School

Southlink, Glodwick, Oldham, Greater Manchester OL4 1GL

Inspection dates:	25 and 26 February 2025
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils play a large part in making this school the welcoming learning community that it is. They benefit from the positive relationships that they develop with staff and their friends. Pupils know that the school expects them to behave well. Playground pals and lunchtime helpers support younger pupils to enjoy positive breaktimes. Pupils' conduct embodies the school's aim of 'Going for Gold'. They are respectful and kind to each other. This makes pupils happy.

The school has high expectations of what pupils can and should achieve. However, these aspirations are not being met. This is because, over time, pupils in key stages 1 and 2 have not benefited from an ambitious curriculum that builds their knowledge. The school has recently strengthened the curriculum across many subjects. However, it is too early to see the impact of this work. Pupils' learning across a range of subjects is uneven as a result.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities to develop as confident, young citizens. For example, they are proud to be members of the anti-bullying team and school council. 'Blue Skies' pupils help to support their peers in their learning. Pupils also benefit from trips that capture their interests, such as visits to parks, farms, museums and to London.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has prioritised the teaching of reading. Children in the Nursery class join in with rhymes and songs to help develop their early language. This helps to prepare them well for learning the letters and their sounds as soon as they enter the Reception class. The school has introduced a new phonics programme. It has provided staff with appropriate training to develop their expertise in the teaching of phonics. The books that pupils read match the sounds that they learn in class. This helps pupils to practise what they have learned. Staff keep a close eye on pupils' reading and provide support for any pupils who struggle to keep up. Those pupils who need help receive effective support. As a result, pupils' fluency and confidence in reading is improving.

Beyond reading, the school has introduced new and more ambitious curriculums in many subjects. It has ordered learning in a logical sequence that builds on pupils' previous learning. However, these improvements are recent and have not had time to have an impact on pupils' learning. Pupils continue to have gaps in their knowledge from the previous curriculum. In addition, staff do not consistently check pupils' understanding before moving on to new learning. As a result, pupils continue to develop gaps in their knowledge.

Conversely, children in the early years are well prepared for the challenges of key stage 1. The school has ensured that children in the early years benefit from a strong and effective curriculum. Many children who join the school speak English as an additional language. Staff support these children to develop strong communication and language skills from the very start. The school identifies and addresses the additional needs of pupils with

special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Staff provide well-matched support to address the barriers to pupils' learning.

Pupils behave well in lessons and are keen to learn. Children in the early years settle quickly. They are well supported to develop their confidence and independence. The school prioritises pupils' attendance. It has a clear understanding of the reasons for pupils' absences. It takes swift and effective action to provide support for these pupils and their families. As a result, pupils' rates of attendance are improving.

Pupils benefit from carefully designed opportunities to develop their understanding of the wider world. They understand the importance of treating everyone equally. They learn about a range of faiths and cultures and visit different places of worship. They demonstrate tolerance and respect and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Staff speak positively about the school's actions to help them manage their workload. They appreciate the opportunities that the school has provided to develop their subject knowledge and increase their confidence in teaching the improved curriculums.

Governors have not provided sufficient challenge or support to improve the quality of education for pupils at the school. They do not focus on ensuring that the education provided by the school has a positive impact for its pupils. This hinders governors' ability to identify some of the issues that are present at the school regarding pupils' achievement.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Improvements to the design and quality of many of the school's curriculums, including writing and mathematics, are fairly recent. It is too soon to see the full impact of this work. This means that pupils have significant gaps in their knowledge and do not remember what they have learned as well as they should. The school should make sure that the improvements made to subject curriculums result in pupils gaining a strong body of knowledge in the longer term.
- The school does not routinely check that pupils are fully secure with prior learning before they move on to learning new content. This means that pupils do not build on their previous knowledge as well as they should. The school should make sure that staff check what pupils understand so that misconceptions and gaps in learning are quickly addressed before new learning is introduced.
- Those responsible for governance do not have a secure enough understanding of the quality of education that pupils receive. As a result, their oversight of the school's work has not had enough impact on improving pupils' achievement. Those responsible for

governance should ensure that they gain the skills and expertise required to offer constructive and effective support and challenge to hold the school to account effectively.

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	105679
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	10347975
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	238
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Shoukat Ali
Headteacher	Zaira Cook
Website	www.hortonmill.uk
Dates of previous inspection	12 and 13 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school runs a breakfast club for pupils.
- The school does not make use of 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 education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors conducted deep dives in the following subjects: early reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, they had discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors spoke with subject leaders and with pupils about their learning in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector observed pupils from key stages 1 and 2 read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders. The lead inspector met with members of the governing body and spoke with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors talked with staff and leaders about their workload and well-being.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for attendance, behaviour, early years, the provision for pupils with SEND and pupils' 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 spoke with pupils about their experiences of school. They looked at a range of documents related to pupils' welfare and education. They also observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted's online surveys for staff and for pupils.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.

Inspection team

Rebecca Jewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ian Young

Ofsted Inspector

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