

Inspection of John Hellins Primary School

Brownswood Drive, Potterspury, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 7PG

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 April 2025

The quality of education **Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes **Outstanding**

Personal development **Outstanding**

Leadership and management **Outstanding**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Outstanding

What is it like to attend this school?

John Hellins Primary School is an aspirational and inclusive school. Relationships between staff and pupils are warm and nurturing. Pupils are happy and they feel safe. They demonstrate mature attitudes to their learning. Pupils are incredibly proud of their personal achievements and also the special community that they belong to.

The school has incredibly high expectations for pupils' academic and wider development. Pupils achieve exceptionally well. The school's published outcomes are impressive. Pupils enjoy supporting each other in lessons and discussing their learning. They show high levels of perseverance, resilience and self-motivation.

Pupils consistently follow the school's behaviour charter to 'be the best that you can be'. They consistently treat each other with empathy, courtesy and respect. During unstructured times, pupils play joyfully with each other. They display a respectful confidence when talking to adults.

Pupils benefit from carefully planned experiences that enrich the curriculum. This includes an extensive range of clubs and projects such as 'grow a pound'. Disadvantaged pupils are particularly well considered as part of this offer. Pupils enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, from taking care of the school rabbits to being school librarians.

Parents and carers are incredibly positive about the school. One parent, reflective of many, shared, 'My child has thrived and excelled here.'

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

The quality of education the school provides is exceptional. This is evident in its approach to reading. Learning to read is not a series of lessons; it is a culture. The school has fostered a love of reading across pupils and staff. Staff are experts in teaching early reading. All pupils quickly learn to read well. The reading books that pupils take home are precisely matched to the sounds they have learned in phonics sessions. The library is the heartbeat of the school.

The curriculum is ambitious and pupils achieve very well. They enjoy working collaboratively and show resilience when learning new concepts. For example, they discuss and debate their mathematical thinking. Teaching is strong. New content is delivered in an engaging and active way. Teachers skilfully check pupils' understanding. They identify misconceptions accurately and provide clear, direct feedback. As a result, pupils learn from their mistakes and enjoy being challenged. Pupils' work across the curriculum is of a high quality. They can talk about their learning with confidence and maturity. Their behaviour and commitment to their studies is exceptional. Regular 'learning reviews' show that pupils consistently know and remember what they have been taught.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They know the school's expectations and take pride in fulfilling them. Pupils aspire to do their very best in lessons and conduct themselves in the

best possible way socially. Pupils show a respectful confidence in everything they do. In classrooms there is a buzz of excitement and interest. For pupils who struggle to manage their own emotions, the school provides intelligent, fair and highly effective action to support them.

The school is quick to identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school works proactively with a range of external agencies to ensure pupils with SEND receive the support they need. Teachers adapt the curriculum skilfully, using a range of appropriate and highly effective strategies and resources. As a result, pupils with SEND achieve the best possible outcomes.

Children get off to a secure and happy start in Reception. Children follow clear routines and enjoy their learning. They are enabled to explore and follow their own interests. However, in some areas of the provision, resources and interactions do not always support children to apply and embed their earlier learning. Consequently, some children do not achieve as well as they could. Adults are particularly attentive to the youngest children's needs. They teach children to develop their resilience and manage their own feelings and behaviour. Children are well prepared for key stage 1.

The school prioritises pupils' wider development. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils benefit from a comprehensive programme of religious visitors and their awareness of different faiths and cultures is broadened. Pupils' leadership roles mean many older pupils model exceptional behaviour and attitudes. For example, Year 5 pupils take great pride in their 'buddy' roles with children in Reception Year.

Leadership is exceptional and provides support to other schools. Governance is also a strength and provides the school with creative and strategic direction. The school invests in its staff, providing them with regular and innovative training. Staff feel their workload and well-being are both well considered. Leaders and staff are an ambitious and highly skilled team who work with a shared commitment to their pupils.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The key learning in the early years curriculum is not always explicitly defined. Resources and interactions do not consistently promote the repetition of learning that children need. As a result, sometimes children do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that all key learning in the early years curriculum is defined clearly so that staff can build in effective opportunities for children to develop and embed the knowledge they learn.

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	121851
Local authority	West Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10267997
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Alan Davies
Headteacher	Jodie Matthews
Website	www.johnhellins.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two unregistered alternative provisions.

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.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team carried out deep dives in: reading, mathematics, geography and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils, and reviewed samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to some pupils read to a familiar adult.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, early years and SEND.
- 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 reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan. The inspector met with members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector spoke with the local authority's school improvement partner.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including any free-text comments, as well as the results of Ofsted's survey for school staff.

Inspection team

Luella Dhoore, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Sally Manz

Ofsted Inspector

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