

# Inspection of Hartford Infant and Preschool

Mayfield Crescent, Hartford, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE29 1UL

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Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils at Hartford Infant and Preschool are happy. They enjoy coming to school and thrive because they achieve success. From the moment pupils start school, they are encouraged to be curious, confident learners.

Bullying is extremely rare. Pupils are confident that if bullying happens, adults will do something about it. Pupils demonstrate exemplary behaviour. They are extremely respectful and helpful to adults and each other. They show highly positive attitudes to learning and are resilient.

Each day begins with activities for pupils to apply knowledge and skills they have learned the day, week or month before. This helps pupils remember and know more. Pupils are enthusiastic and take pride in their work; they aspire to meet the high expectations leaders have for them. They encourage each other to work hard even when work is challenging. This is exemplified in the impressive way pupils respond to each other and staff.

Pupils have a rich set of experiences that develop their knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are learning about. 'Sparky start' sessions at the start of the day and whole-school trips and visits, such as going to the pantomime, the zoo and local parks, enhance what pupils learn in the curriculum.

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

Leaders' ambition to support pupils' development beyond the academic curriculum is a strength of the school. This is reflected in pupils highly positive attitudes and experiences.

Leaders have designed a curriculum that enables pupils to learn more over time. Leaders have set out clearly the steps of knowledge that pupils need to learn. These increase in difficulty as pupils move through the school. For example, in Reception, children learn about the basic geographical structure of the United Kingdom. In Year 2, they build on this knowledge by learning about the major cities and landmarks around the country.

Teachers teach well. They revisit topics and build on pupils' prior learning to help pupils remember important information. Teachers check on pupils' understanding during lessons routinely. They use this information to address pupils' misconceptions and provide opportunities for pupils to practise aspects of the curriculum they have not understood. Consequently, pupils progress well.

Leaders have developed a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics. This begins as soon as children start school. Pupils learn the sounds that letters make and use these with increasing confidence. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), quickly develop their reading skills. A few pupils fall behind. The gaps in their knowledge are not identified quickly

enough. These pupils are not given the precise support they need to catch up quickly. Therefore, they take longer to become fluent than they should.

Pupils with SEND follow the same curriculum as their peers. Staff are well trained, know pupils well and are confident in how to meet their needs. Leaders carefully consider the needs of pupils with SEND and develop bespoke provision when needed. Pupils receive effective support at the right time.

Leaders have prioritised pupils' personal development. They have planned a rich range of opportunities for pupils to develop their social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding. These provide opportunities to apply knowledge, skills and discover new things. For example, pupils learn how to travel by train, exhibit their artwork in a gallery and visit the theatre. Pupils are proud to hold positions of responsibility, including being school councillors and lunchtime monitors.

Leaders recently opened a preschool. Leaders have a clear vision for the further enhancement of the preschool. At this stage, some aspects of the preschool are not as fully developed as they are in Reception classes. For example, resources and activities to support children's learning are not sharply focused on the planned end points. In Reception, activities are carefully organised to meet children's needs. This means that children can work independently and are enthusiastic about their work. They are well prepared for year 1.

Leaders support staff well. Staff feel valued. Staff enjoy working at Hartford. This has a positive impact on workload and well-being.

Trustees and governors are knowledgeable about their roles. They know the school well and are proactive in fulfilling their responsibilities.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have ensured that there is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school. All staff receive regular training and are vetted carefully. Staff are alert to any signs that a pupil may be at risk of harm. They pass on concerns promptly. Leaders are rigorous in following up concerns and ensuring that children are safe. They work closely with a wide range of agencies to ensure that families have the support they need.

Pupils know how to stay safe and know there are many adults in school who they can talk to if they have a worry or a concern.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some pupils who fall behind with their reading are not identified quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that staff are trained on how to identify pupils that fall behind in reading so that suitable interventions can be put in place to help them catch up.
- In the preschool, the activities and resources are not sharply focused on what leaders intend children to learn. As a result, children in the preschool are not yet getting the full range of experiences they should. Leaders need to ensure that staff understand what to teach and how best to deliver this learning so that children in the preschool are well prepared for their transition into Reception.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	143870
<b>Local authority</b>	Cambridgeshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10242336
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	195
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Stephen Munday
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rae Lee
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hartfordinfantschool.org">www.hartfordinfantschool.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Hartford Infant and Preschool is a smaller than average school.
- The school converted to become an academy in 2017, when it joined the Cam Academy Trust.
- The school has a breakfast and after-school club for pupils.
- The school has recently added preschool provision to the early years foundation stage.

## 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 met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, curriculum leaders, the leader with responsibility for provision for pupils with SEND, and teaching and support staff.
- Inspectors met with representatives of the governing body and the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics, art and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with those responsible for safeguarding at the school. They scrutinised a range of documentation in relation to safeguarding. They also spoke with governors, staff and pupils about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered the 32 responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. They spoke to several parents at the end of the school day. They also considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff and the online survey for children.

### **Inspection team**

Oriana Dalton, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Julie Harrison

Ofsted Inspector

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