

Inspection of a good school: Southbourne Infant School

New Road, Southbourne, Emsworth, Hampshire PO10 8JX

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 September 2023

Outcome

Southbourne Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

A warm welcome awaits everybody at this thriving and inclusive school. A new approach encouraging pupils to be ready, respectful and safe is working well. Pupils are joyful and proud. They treat each other with kindness, which is modelled by adults every day. Relationships are positive and expectations are high. If pupils need help to manage emotions, staff use expertise and compassion to support their mental health. As a result, behaviour is positive and pupils learn well from early years to Year 2.

Pupils learn about the dangers of water and railway tracks, and how to be safe online. The school has developed its grounds to embed outdoor learning at the heart of school life. Mindfulness and awareness of nature are intertwined with outdoor provision. This boosts pupils' well-being, environmental awareness and understanding of the world. Local trips enrich subjects such as geography. Pupils loved learning about space when they visited Chichester planetarium. The trip to Arundel wetlands linked well to learning about habitats.

The school offers a diverse range of clubs. Opportunities include team games, football, construction and sewing. There are equal opportunities for all. The school uses funding with diligence to ensure that disadvantaged pupils never miss out.

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

The curriculum is ambitious for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported so they thrive. Staff use their speech and language expertise to help children make a wonderful start in early years. Pupils with SEND enjoy independence, choosing equipment to help them achieve well alongside their peers. Wall displays provide targeted prompts, which pupils find helpful. Environments are deliberately planned to avoid sensory overload. The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND through regular progress meetings and clear communication across the school and with families.

The school has introduced a new phonics programme and has ensured that all staff are well trained. Parents appreciate the phonics and reading workshops, which help them to support their children at home. Staff use a consistent approach when teaching phonics, including visual prompts and language. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the sounds they have learned. The school uses helpful keep-up sessions to address gaps in pupils' phonics skills. Individual support is often effective, but it is not always consistent. Pupils benefit from the valuable rehearsal of sounds they need help with, but some pupils need more help to develop sufficient fluency.

The teaching of mathematics is effective. Pupils joyfully identify teachers' pretend 'mistakes' and explain their reasoning with mathematical vocabulary. Pupils routinely revisit concepts through investigations and problems to become accomplished mathematicians. Work in books shows their successful application of calculation skills. Pupils enjoy mathematics and recall the important facts they need to know. The early years environment contains a wealth of opportunities to nurture mathematical understanding. Pupils with SEND achieve well, helped by a wide range of practical resources and visual aids.

The school has worked to design a curriculum in almost all subjects that contains precise knowledge, skills and vocabulary. In the strongest subjects, such as art and design, staff have strong subject knowledge, and pupils complete high-quality tasks. For example, the early years team uses its expertise to help children develop fine motor skills and the confidence to be creative. This builds through the school, so by Year 2, pupils make impressive rainforest creatures using design and painting skills. There are a couple of subjects that leaders acknowledge are less well developed.

Behaviour is very good, so learning time is never lost. From early years onwards, pupils concentrate, listen and work well. Staff manage minor distractions to ensure a purposeful and positive atmosphere for learning across the school.

The school promotes pupils' wider learning effectively, including by using trips and visitors. Identifying water safety as a local risk, the school welcomes lifeboat volunteers to share their experience to educate pupils. Everyone enjoys welcoming the fire service, dentist and police to learn about their roles in society. Diverse experiences enrich pupils' learning about faiths and cultures. These include a Diwali workshop, a Chinese New Year celebration and visits from the local church pastor. Pupils learn about different types of families and relationships to understand modern Britain. Work on friendships has helped pupils learn how to resolve differences if they fall out.

Leaders are inspirational, dedicated and effective. Governors support and challenge the school and fulfil their duties with diligence. Leaders, including governors, collaborate superbly to support staff workload and well-being. Staff morale is impressive and buoyant. Everyone is proud and happy to work in this delightful school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- A few subjects are not sufficiently well developed. As a result, pupils do not learn as well as they could in these subjects. The school should continue to refine all subjects so that pupils achieve highly across the curriculum.
- Additional support for some pupils who most need to improve their reading is not consistently strong. This means that a few pupils are not developing into fluent readers quickly enough. The school should ensure that additional support is highly effective in helping all pupils learn to read swiftly, accurately and with confidence.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2018.

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	125875
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10287961
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	175
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Briley Pappas
Headteacher	Lucy Whiffin
Website	www.southbourneinfants.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	20 and 21 March 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has recently undergone significant changes in leadership. The headteacher and assistant headteacher both started their posts during 2023.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school shares a site with Southbourne Junior School.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the school business manager, the special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator, subject leaders and governors, including the chair of governors.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the

curriculum, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read to a familiar adult. The inspector observed catch-up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support for weaker readers.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views on the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses.
- The inspector spoke with a range of pupils to learn their views about the school. The inspector evaluated responses from the pupil questionnaire.
- The inspector spoke by telephone with a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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