

Inspection of a good school: Solent Infant School

Eveleigh Road, Farlington, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 1DH

Inspection dates: 11–12 February 2020

Outcome

Solent Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a very welcoming and nurturing school. Pupils are happy and say that they have lots of friends. At playtime, they play sensibly together. Pupils are confident to talk to staff if they are worried or upset. They know that the adults in the school will help them. Pupils feel safe at school and say that bullying does not happen here.

Leaders are keen for all pupils to succeed. Staff know the pupils well and mostly provide pupils with the right help to flourish academically, socially and emotionally. However, in reading and writing, teachers do not routinely challenge the most able pupils. This means that this group of pupils do not always reach the standards that they are capable of.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and find their topics interesting. The many trips and events bring pupils' learning to life. For example, pupils go to Staunton Country Park as part of their science learning. They visit the Weald and Downland Museum and get the chance to meet a local architect as part of the their 'dens and dwellings' topic in history.

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

Teachers have worked with staff from other trust schools to design a creative and exciting curriculum in all subjects. In some subjects, the curriculum is planned and sequenced so that learning builds carefully on from what pupils know. An example of this is mathematics. Pupils learn skills and knowledge in a clear sequence. Pupils use mathematical vocabulary accurately. They can explain their understanding and apply this to calculation and problem-solving activities. In other subjects, leaders are still refining plans. They are working to set out precisely the knowledge, skills and vocabulary pupils need to retain to build on their learning as they move through the school.

Teachers ask pupils questions that help them to make links in their learning. Pupils are used to discussing their ideas to develop their thinking. They are confident and keen to share their understanding with their teachers and classmates. They pay close attention in lessons and try hard to achieve their best. Pupils who find learning difficult receive the

right support. This helps them to be fully involved in all activities and successful in their learning.

Leaders prioritise reading in the school. Teachers read aloud to pupils often, encouraging them to develop a love of reading. As a result, pupils enjoy talking about their favourite books and why they like them. Pupils benefit from the new range of books in their newly refurbished library.

Children are taught phonics from when they first start school in the Reception Year. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have the help they need to keep up. As pupils move into key stage 1, most become fluent readers, and they transfer these reading skills into their writing. However, teachers do not always provide enough challenge for the most able pupils. As a result, these pupils do not always do as well in reading and writing as they should. Leaders have recently implemented a new approach to the teaching of reading and writing to provide more challenge. However, it is too early to see an improvement in pupils' learning.

Children get off to a flying start in the Reception Year. This is because staff have a good understanding about how children learn. The learning environment is bright and stimulating, which encourages children to investigate and explore. Children are engaged in the interesting learning activities that teachers plan for them. For example, they are excited to learn about shape in mathematics, making patterns using shape and colour with beads, paint, building blocks and computers.

Leaders provide many opportunities for pupils to experience more than academic success. They want them to become confident and kind young people. Children in Reception regularly visit the local residential home for 'boogie beats' sessions where they perform music and movement for the residents. Pupils develop the confidence to perform for parents on different occasions. They experience different sporting activities and learn important skills such as how to ride a scooter safely.

Staff are proud to work at Solent Infant School. They feel that leaders support them in managing their workload. Staff say that leaders listen to them and take their concerns seriously. Leaders are keen to support the well-being of staff. Recent changes to assessment have helped teachers. They spend time doing what helps pupils the most.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All adults know what to do if they have a concern about a child because they receive regular safeguarding training. Leaders and teachers work closely with families to make sure that pupils get the right help and support.

Pupils are taught about the importance of keeping themselves safe. As part of national safer internet day, pupils in key stage 1 discuss the things that are safe and unsafe to share online.

Leaders and governors review safeguarding arrangements often. They monitor the checks that have been carried out on new staff and volunteers to make sure that it is safe for them to be in school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders need to finish planning the sequence of knowledge, skills and vocabulary in some subjects. They need to make sure that teachers are clear what pupils need to know and remember so that they build on their learning as they move through the school.
- The most able pupils in key stage 1 do not always do as well as they should in reading and writing. Leaders need to make sure that teachers have higher expectations for this group of pupils and challenge them accordingly.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Solent Infant, to be good on 3–4 November 2010.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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

Unique reference number	144189
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10122243
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	270
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of Trust	Susan Hamilton
Headteacher	Lucy Wilby
Website	https://solentinfant.thesolentschools.org/
Date of previous inspection	3 February 2016

Information about this school

- Solent Infant School converted to become an academy school in 2017. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good overall.

Information about this inspection

- I met with the chief executive officer of The De Curci Trust, several trustees and governors, the executive headteacher, the head of school, the early years leader, the special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) and the subject leaders for mathematics and personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- I did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and PSHE. This involved talking to subject leaders, visiting lessons, talking to pupils, looking at pupils' work, hearing pupils read and talking to teachers.
- I talked to the designated safeguarding leader and scrutinised the single central record and other documents related to safeguarding. I talked to teachers about the processes they would follow if they had safeguarding concerns about a pupil. I spoke to pupils about what they would do if they were worried about anything in school.

- I visited all classrooms in the Reception Year and key stage 1. I observed pupils during the school day while moving around the school, in the playground and the dining room.
- I scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the school's own evaluation and improvement plan and external reports.
- I considered the views of 120 parents who completed the online questionnaire, Parent View, and 65 comments from parents who used the free-text facility.

Inspection team

Luisa Gould, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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