

Inspection of a good school: Arundel Court Primary Academy and Nursery

Fyning Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 1FG

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 October 2021

Outcome

Arundel Court Primary Academy and Nursery continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Every pupil receives a very warm and positive welcome at the start of each day. Staff care for pupils extremely well and get to know them as individuals. Pupils enjoy school. They feel part of a team that is fully focused on helping them to succeed and keeping them safe. One parent reflected the views of many, saying, 'The staff are amazing here. They look after our children in every way.'

The majority of pupils are respectful and kind towards each other. As one pupil said, if there are any problems 'you tell a teacher and they always fix it'. Pupils are interested in what their friends and classmates think and feel. Pupils are committed to equality of all kinds. For example, some talked about the anti-racism posters that they have recently designed and made. Pupils learn about different beliefs and traditions, including attitudes towards life, relationships and spirituality. They learn about what is right and what is wrong.

Pupils broaden their horizons. Many of them take part in the creative, sporting or cultural activities the school offers. As they get older, they develop high aspirations for the future, supported by a strong understanding of how to achieve their goals.

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

Pupils achieve well from early years through to the end of Year 6. Their knowledge and learning build progressively year by year. Leaders deliberately structure the curriculum so that what children learn in Nursery and Reception Years prepares children effectively for what they are taught in key stage 1. In turn, pupils are ready for more complex, deep learning in key stage 2 because of their strong achievement by the end of Year 2. Mathematics typifies how pupils acquire knowledge over time because of the careful links between topics within and across year groups.

Teachers make sure pupils have learned what they should have. Pupils take pride in their work and like finding out from their teachers what they have done well as well as what they can improve. Teachers are good at setting tasks and asking questions which check how much pupils have learned about what they have just been studying. However, pupils are not often required to use what they have learned over time in new contexts or different ways. Leaders rightly recognise that doing this effectively will improve pupils' achievement even further.

Teachers are quick to identify when pupils need some extra help and make sure this is put into place. Leaders invest great time and energy into making sure pupils do not fall behind and in supporting them to catch up when necessary. This is reflected in how well and quickly the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are identified and met. Teachers, leaders and teaching assistants work as a team to make sure pupils with SEND learn, achieve and thrive.

Leaders expect all pupils to leave at the end of Year 6 being able to read and to enjoy reading. Leaders prize learning to read as fundamental to pupils' success. Well-trained staff target pupils' specific needs from the early years onwards. Pupils practise their reading using appropriate books. They talk enthusiastically about what they are reading and see it as a central part of life at school. As they get older, their understanding of what they read is not always as deep as it could be, for example how well they 'read between the lines' of what is written.

Pupils work hard in lessons, showing a strong desire to succeed. They are polite, often greeting each other and adults happily and with a smile. Staff make sure everyone has fun but stays safe at break and lunchtimes. The foundations of this positive culture are firmly laid in early years. There is a small minority of older pupils whose behaviour can, at times, disrupt others' learning. Leaders take effective action to address any behaviour incidents.

Pupils have many opportunities to develop their interests beyond what they study. Leaders are steadily increasing the range of clubs on offer after the recent restrictions, which range from golf to gardening to glee club. Pupils particularly take pride in the additional responsibilities they can apply for. The school provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, including theatre visits, music workshops and activities such as sailing.

Knowledgeable trustees and governors make sure that leaders manage staff workload extremely well. Staff are incredibly positive about how they are supported in creating and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. Leaders expertly balance staff well-being with a relentless focus on improving pupils' learning and lives.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are trained to accurately identify any potential issues promptly. They understand the school's rigorous processes and use them effectively. Leaders' record-keeping is comprehensive and well organised. Trustees and governors monitor leaders' work to

safeguard pupils closely and make sure the right checks are in place when staff are recruited. Leaders secure any necessary additional support for pupils and their families swiftly, working effectively with external agencies. Leaders keep issues under constant review. Pupils learn about healthy relationships, appropriate boundaries and behaviour, and how to keep themselves safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While pupils' achievement is good overall, including those with SEND, it is not exceptional. Pupils do not routinely recall what they have learned over time and apply this in new, varied and challenging ways. Leaders should make sure that the curriculum in different subjects and key stages provides pupils with opportunities to draw upon the breadth of what they have learned, bringing it together to deepen their knowledge and skills.
- The reading curriculum in key stage 2 does not yet fully develop pupils' higher-order reading skills. Their learning in aspects such as inference, deduction and comprehension is not as effective as it could be. While leaders are taking action to address this, they should improve the reading curriculum further in key stage 2, including by continuing to broaden the range of texts pupils encounter.

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 or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Arundel Court Primary School and Nursery, to be good in June 2015.

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.

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	144194
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10200851
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	600
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Longmore
Headteacher	Karen Stocks
Website	http://arundelcourt.com/
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The predecessor school, Arundel Court Primary School and Nursery, converted to become the current academy in May 2017 when it joined the University of Chichester Multi-Academy Trust (UniCAT).
- The proportions of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils at the school are well above average.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and history. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the headteacher, the two deputy headteachers, the inclusion leader, three governors, including the chair of the local governing body, the chief executive officer of UniCAT (who is also a trustee) and the academy improvement partner who is employed by the trust to work with the school.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils, parents and staff, also taking into consideration their responses to Ofsted's questionnaires about their views of the school.
- The inspector looked at a wide range of documentation including the school's plans for future improvement and minutes of meetings of trustees and governors.
- The inspector met with leaders to discuss safeguarding, looked at records, policies and processes relating to safeguarding and talked to pupils, staff and governors about this aspect of the school's work. The inspector also reviewed the school's checks on the suitability of staff to work at the school.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour when moving around the school, in lessons, at break and lunchtime.

Inspection team

Matthew Haynes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021