

# Inspection of Hassocks Infant School

Chancellors Park, Hassocks, West Sussex BN6 8EY

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Inspection dates: 19 and 20 January 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 14 years ago and judged 'Outstanding' under a previous inspection framework. This reflected the school's overall effectiveness under the inspection framework in use at the time.

From then until November 2020, the school was exempted by law from routine inspection, so there has been a longer gap than usual between inspections. Judgements in this report are based on the current inspection framework and also reflect changes that may have happened at any point since the last inspection.

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

Pupils are part of a school with 'a wonderful heart and real sense of community', as one parent said, summing up the views of most. Pupils feel well cared for. They are very happy to come to school. Pupils said that staff are kind.

Leaders are ambitious that pupils achieve their very best. Leaders have made some important improvements to the curriculum over the last three years. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and confident communicators. Throughout the inspection, they were eager to discuss their learning with inspectors. Pupils enjoy reading, and talked confidently about books. They love story time, and are clearly engrossed when teachers read aloud to them.

Pupils are respectful and polite. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. There are positive relationships and pupils said that they feel safe at school. On the rare occasions that bullying happens, this is addressed promptly by staff. In addition, pupils have a clear understanding of how to get help if they are worried about something.

Pupils learn about how they can contribute positively to local and global communities, for example by raising funds to help build a primary school in Madagascar. They enjoy participating in local events like the recent 'Light Up Hassocks' parade.

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

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum. Expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are high. In all subjects, leaders have identified the knowledge pupils need to learn. In the strongest subjects, such as mathematics, pupils achieve very well. This is because teachers have a clear understanding of how to teach these subjects well. Teachers diligently check pupils' learning and quickly correct pupils' mistakes. However, teachers' subject knowledge is not as strong in all subjects. This means that sometimes teachers do not design tasks that enable pupils to learn as much as they could.

Leaders prioritise reading. Children in Reception learn phonics very effectively. Teachers use a structured programme, with well-established routines, which supports children's learning well. In Year 1, however, pupils are not supported to practise their reading consistently well enough because the books they are given do not always match the sounds they know. This means that pupils do not develop fluency and confidence in reading as well as they could.

Reception is a real strength of the school. Children experience a high-quality, clearly planned curriculum which develops their thinking extremely well. They can talk

confidently about their learning. Children in Reception achieve exceptionally well, including the most disadvantaged and those with SEND.

Right from the start, leaders ensure that staff establish clear and consistent routines to promote good behaviour. In Reception, children work with purpose, focus and concentration. They collaborate well together. Children's behaviour in Reception is exceptional. In Years 1 and 2, pupils generally behave very well. Occasionally, there is some low-level disruption in lessons, but this is dealt with promptly and effectively.

The school's work to support pupils' personal development is a strength. There are a wide range of opportunities such as school trips, growing vegetables and cooking a simple meal. Leaders have also ensured that the curriculum promotes pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development well. For example, pupils build their moral understanding by writing a class charter which sets out expectations for acceptable conduct. This is based around the school's '5 golden rules'. Leaders have sought to maintain extra-curricular opportunities, despite the challenges presented by COVID-19. There are currently a modest but thoughtful range of clubs and groups available. Pupils who attend these thoroughly enjoy them.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive from leaders for their training and their well-being. Leaders make good use of experts to develop teachers' professional knowledge. For example, the specialist music teacher who teaches pupils to play the ukulele has also given teachers training in how to teach music. In addition, a university lecturer has led training to improve teaching in design and technology.

Parents are incredibly supportive of the school. One parent stated, 'I would highly recommend the school. The teachers are very engaged and attentive.' Parents value the regular communication from leaders. Parents feel well informed about their children's achievements. Parents are particularly positive about the online learning provided during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Leaders and governors work in partnership to improve the school. Governors routinely challenge leaders about the quality of education provided at the school. Governors regularly attend staff training, and talk to staff and pupils about their work. As a result, governors know the school well.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding practice is strong. It underpins all aspects of school life. Highly effective policies ensure that all adults know what to do to keep children safe. Leaders have established a culture of vigilance to identify pupils who are at risk of harm. Leaders make sure that children and families who are in need of additional support can access this quickly.

Pupils feel safe in school and know where to go for help if they need it. They are confident that their concerns will be dealt with well. Pupils have a clear, age-appropriate knowledge of how to keep themselves safe online.

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

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

- Early reading is taught effectively overall, but there are some inconsistencies in Year 1. This includes how well books are, at times, matched to pupils' phonic knowledge. This means that some pupils struggle to read fluently. Leaders should ensure that these inconsistencies are ironed out, so that all pupils achieve as well as they can in their reading.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is stronger in some subjects than it is in others. This means that pupils do not achieve as well as they could in some subjects. Leaders should continue to make sure that professional development is prioritised in those subjects where the staff's knowledge is less strong, so that pupils achieve well across the curriculum.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	125933
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211841
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	263
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chairs of governing body</b>	Dianne Bowles and Jenny Doyle
<b>Headteacher</b>	Adrian Bates-Holland
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hassocks.w-sussex.sch.uk">www.hassocks.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	22 November 2007

## Information about this school

- Hassocks Infant School is a larger-than-average infant school.
- The school has expanded since the previous inspection, increasing the number of registered pupils by approximately one third.
- The school currently uses no alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with senior leaders and five members of the governing body, including the co-chairs. The lead inspector also had a phone call with an officer from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject

leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans, and spoke to leaders about other subjects.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The inspection team considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View. They gathered the views of pupils and staff through surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including self-evaluation reports, governing body minutes and behaviour incident logs.

### **Inspection team**

Sue Keeling, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Matthew Haynes

Her Majesty's Inspector

Kirstine Boon

Ofsted Inspector

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