

# Inspection of Portswood Primary School

Somerset Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO17 3AA

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Inspection dates: 16 and 17 February 2022

<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.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Portswood Primary School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, 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 of the predecessor school.

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

Pupils are proud of their diverse and multicultural school. Together with staff, they celebrate the ways in which this diversity contributes to their community, for example by recognising the range of languages that pupils and their families speak. Pupils enjoy coming to school each day because there is a positive and respectful culture. They feel safe and secure. Teachers ensure that lessons in all subjects are engaging for pupils. Pupils value the education they receive and want to do their very best.

Staff and leaders have a clear vision for every pupil to achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum. Leaders know that to fully realise this vision, they need to refine their early reading curriculum.

Behaviour at the school is exemplary. Children in the early years learn to listen attentively. They demonstrate curiosity and sustained concentration. These attributes help pupils to learn very effectively as they move into key stage 1 and beyond. In lessons across the school, pupils are engaged and demonstrate high levels of resilience.

Parents feel that the teaching at Portswood is creative and inspires their children. They appreciate the support they received throughout the pandemic. Most parents feel that the school provides high levels of support for pupils' well-being.

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

Over time, leaders in the school have developed a clear consensus about the knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in each subject to be fully prepared for the next phase of their education, and later life more broadly. Pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders have carefully sequenced the curriculum for each subject so that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before.

Leaders have provided ongoing training for teachers so that they have expert knowledge of the subjects that they teach. They have a clear understanding of the key knowledge and skills that pupils need to build over time in each subject. This means that across the curriculum, teachers present information very clearly to pupils. They understand the sorts of misconceptions that pupils might develop, and work to identify and correct these. Across the curriculum, assessment is used to check how well pupils understand their learning. Teachers adapt their lessons very effectively to take account of what the assessments tell them.

In the past, school leaders have not always focused sufficiently on how well the curriculum was being implemented for pupils with special education needs and/or disabilities (SEND). When the school joined a new multi-academy trust in July 2020, this became a clear focus. Both leaders and school staff describe a 'sea change' in the approach to identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with SEND.

Trust executive leaders and school leaders have worked together to ensure that all staff share their view that a school is only successful when every single pupil, including those with SEND, is supported to achieve exceptionally well. Staff have had a clear programme of training. This training has enabled teachers to adapt their teaching approaches, and the curriculum itself where necessary, to ensure that pupils with SEND are able to learn successfully alongside their peers. In addition, there is now a clear focus on early identification of needs, so that pupils get the right support from the start.

Leaders have identified that to fully realise their vision of success for every pupil, they need to make some refinements to their early reading curriculum. This is because although most pupils develop very positive attitudes towards reading and achieve very well in reading, a small number of pupils do not. These pupils have struggled to learn to read, and many have an identified special educational need. Despite classroom staff planning carefully for these pupils, the support provided to them has not been consistent or urgent enough over time. Nor has it always been delivered by staff with sufficient expertise in the teaching of phonics and early reading. There are clear plans in place to address these aspects of the early reading curriculum, and leaders expect this work to be fully embedded by September 2022.

Personal development is very well developed from Nursery to Year 6. The youngest children learn how to stay safe and healthy, how to recognise and manage their feelings and how to treat others with kindness and respect. As pupils move through the school, they are supported to become responsible, respectful and active citizens. They make a tangible contribution, not just within the school, but also to the wider world. For example, pupils successfully campaigned to encourage fast-food restaurants to stop giving plastic toys with children's meals. Pupils across the school are motivated and engaged with their learning. They are articulate and confident to express their opinions. They behave extremely well in lessons and around the school.

Trustees, executive leaders within the multi-academy trust and school leaders are absolutely committed to the children that the school serves. Trust leaders have worked very effectively with school leaders to identify priorities for the school, and, despite the pandemic, these have been addressed with rigour and urgency. The trust holds a great deal of expertise, and school leaders are quick to utilise this expertise and support to get the best deal for their pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding leaders within the school are very knowledgeable about safeguarding and local procedures that relate to safeguarding. The welfare and protection of children sit at the heart of their reasoning and decision-making. They have trained staff to be able to identify when a child may be at risk. Staff know how to raise a concern and are confident that no matter how small a concern might seem, leaders

will take it seriously. When staff do raise concerns, those concerns are followed up rigorously. Leaders make referrals to external agencies appropriately to get pupils the help they need, including when pupils need support for their mental health and well-being. Record-keeping is meticulous. Safer recruitment procedures are fully embedded.

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

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

- A small number of pupils who struggle to learn to read do not consistently get the right support from sufficiently expert staff. Leaders should continue to develop the expertise of all staff in the teaching of early reading so that every pupil, including those with special educational needs, receives precisely the right help. Keeping pace with their peers in reading will enable these pupils to access the full curriculum with greater ease and raise their achievement in all curriculum areas.

## **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>	138626
<b>Local authority</b>	Southampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211785
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	488
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Andrew Parr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tony Head
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.portswoodpri.org.uk">www.portswoodpri.org.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	27 June 2007

## Information about this school

- The school converted to become an academy in September 2012.
- The school joined the HISP Multi-Academy Trust in July 2020, when its former multi-academy trust ceased to operate.
- The headteacher was appointed in 2016.
- The deputy chief executive officer of the HISP Multi-Academy Trust has been the executive headteacher of Portswood Primary School since it joined the trust in July 2020.

## 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. 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 headteachers and the special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors spoke with executive leaders from the

multi-academy trust, including the chief executive officer and the deputy chief executive officer. Inspectors also spoke with a trustee.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, religious education and languages. For each deep dive, inspectors 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. Inspectors listened to pupils of all ages reading and talked to pupils across the school about their love of reading.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about a range of additional national curriculum subjects.
- Inspectors also looked at curriculum plans and spoke to leaders about the curriculum in the early years. They visited Nursery and Reception to understand how curriculum plans were being implemented.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record and spoke to leaders, staff and pupils. Throughout the inspection, leaders considered and checked the culture of safeguarding within the school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including school improvement plans.
- Inspectors talked to pupils formally and informally about their learning, what behaviour is like at school and whether they felt safe at school.
- Inspectors reviewed pupil, staff and parent surveys and spoke to parents and carers at the start of the first day of the inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Alice Roberts, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Zoe Harris

Her Majesty's Inspector

Debbie Bennett

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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