

Inspection of an outstanding school: Brookfield Infant School

Swallow Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent ME20 6PY

Inspection dates:

22 and 23 March 2022

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of outstanding as a result of this initial (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a full inspection were carried out now. The next inspection will therefore be a full (section 5) inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school feel happy, safe and very well cared for. The relationships between staff and pupils are strong. Brookfield Infants is a school where children come first. Staff make every effort to ensure that pupils and their families receive all the support that they need to thrive.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary in class and around the school. Pupils understand why rules are important and that it helps everybody to follow them. As a result, pupils learn in a calm and purposeful environment of high expectations. Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. They say that no bullying takes place in school but this does not stop staff being vigilant and making sure that pupils know how to get support if they need it.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school and say the work of the staff is 'amazing'. They feel that staff 'work incredibly hard to make Brookfield the best place it can possibly be'.

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

Leaders have made learning to read a top priority for all pupils. The teaching of reading is particularly strong. There is a clear and consistent approach to teaching phonics and early reading to pupils. Staff are well trained and have the skills they need to teach all pupils to read successfully. Pupils read books that are closely matched to the phonics they are learning. They enjoy listening to the wide range of stories read to them by adults. Teachers spot pupils at risk of falling behind and make sure they receive the extra support they need. Leaders have gone to great lengths to help pupils enjoy reading. As a result, pupils read lots and quickly become confident and fluent readers.

From the start of their time in the early years, children are supported to explore mathematics and develop the building blocks to understand number confidently. For example, children enjoyed using balances to compare the weight of objects. Adults helped them to use the correct mathematical vocabulary to describe what they were learning. In all year groups the mathematics curriculum is carefully sequenced so that pupils' knowledge builds well over time. Teachers regularly check what pupils know and remember in mathematics. They make sure that pupils have a secure understanding before moving on.

Leaders and governors are ambitious for pupils to do well in all subjects. Leaders have made improvements to the wider curriculum since the previous inspection. They have focused on making sure that pupils' learning builds on what they already know. For example, pupils could recall learning about Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole and were able to compare and contrast the roles they played in history. However, teachers are not always clear about the precise knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn in all subjects. Leaders realise the need to make sure that curriculum planning helps pupils to develop specific knowledge over time.

Many teachers at the school are experienced and highly skilled. They have strong subject knowledge because they receive regular training. Teachers make sure that new learning for pupils is clearly explained and understood. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) receive the support they need. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) works in partnership with staff, pupils and parents to ensure that pupils with SEND flourish academically and in their personal development.

Pupils learn to be respectful and tolerant. They listen to each other exceptionally well, in and out of class, and care about everyone in the school community. Pupils are taught that it is ok to be different and they are proud to say that, 'everyone's included here'. They learn about different beliefs and faiths. Pupils learn how to support their community and are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Staff make sure that pupils' individual successes are recognised and celebrated. This contributes well to helping pupils develop into confident and resilient learners. Leaders prioritise the emotional well-being of pupils and make sure that help is provided if it is needed.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Leaders and governors take the well-being of staff seriously. Workload is given careful consideration and staff feel well supported. This has contributed to creating a strong and united team who are deeply committed to the pupils and the wider community.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors have made sure that safeguarding is given the highest priority in the school. Systems for identifying and reporting safeguarding concerns are robust. Staff are well trained to spot and report the signs of abuse. Leaders take quick and effective action to provide extra support to pupils and families when it is required.

The curriculum teaches pupils how to stay safe. Outdoor learning experiences help children learn how to take risks in a safe and controlled way. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have begun making changes to the way the curriculum in the foundation subjects is designed and assessed but these are not yet fully embedded. Currently, teachers lack clarity on precisely what pupils need to learn and remember in some foundation subjects. This means that pupils do not learn all that they could. Leaders should ensure that the changes are fully implemented as they intend.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. 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 school to be outstanding in March 2016.

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	118484
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10211938
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	5 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Colin Langford
Headteacher	Cathy Smith
Website	www.flourishfederation.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 and 16 March 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school joined the Flourish Federation in September 2017.
- The governing body operates jointly across the infant and junior schools in the federation.
- The headteacher has taken up post since the previous inspection.
- The school does not use any alternative providers.

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 his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and music. The inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Meetings were held with school leaders, the SENCo, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector considered 56 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including free-text responses and 27 responses to the staff survey.

Inspection team

James Freeston, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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