

Inspection of Ocklynge Junior School

Victoria Drive, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 8XN

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 April 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5
of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils feel safe and included in this friendly community. They greet each other with smiles and are happy to be at school. Pupils rise to leaders' high expectations of behaviour. They hold good-humoured and thoughtful conversations with staff and their peers. This creates a calm environment. Staff deal with any incidents of bullying quickly.

Responsibilities such as 'eco-warriors', 'peer mediators', 'sports crew', 'play buddies' and 'litter-pickers' excite pupils. They enjoy the wide range of after-school clubs. These include the very popular dance, choir, tri-golf and kickboxing clubs. Though the 'rainbow groups', pupils use their democratic voice to bring about positive change. For instance, they raise funds to support local charities. Pupils planted more flowers and trees in the school to support the ecosystem. They also decide the lunchtime menu. Pupils know well the importance of a healthy diet and exercise.

Leaders are ambitious for what pupils can achieve. However, their actions to improve the quality of education are not as clearly honed and well established as they need to be. This means that in most subjects pupils do not learn as much as they should. Most of the weakest readers do not learn to read fluently and with comprehension.

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

Leaders are working hard to bring about improvements in many areas of the school. They are further ahead in some respects than others. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Pupils study all subjects in all year groups. Staff provide pupils with engaging and practical experiences which bring learning to life. In English and mathematics, teachers are adept at identifying pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and provide them with the help and resources they need to enable them to learn well. However, in many subjects the curriculum is not well sequenced. Leaders have not clearly identified the essential knowledge they want pupils to learn and the order in which they want them to learn it. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Teachers are not well trained to confidently deliver all subjects. They do not check carefully enough that pupils have understood important ideas before introducing new concepts. For example, in history and science pupils struggle to make links in their learning because they are not clear about what their teachers want them to learn and remember. Consequently, they are not prepared well enough for the next stage of their education.

Pupils enjoy reading and are keen to talk about the books they read. The phonics programme is well organised. However, some staff do not deliver phonics effectively. Furthermore, books are not always matched to the sounds pupils learn in lessons. This hampers pupils' reading. They do not read with increased fluency and comprehension. Leaders recognise this and are in the process of addressing these issues.

Relationships between staff and pupils are based on mutual respect. Pupils attend school regularly and aim to do their best at all times. Overall, staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team. Nevertheless, they say that sometimes leaders introduce too many initiatives in one go and do not communicate their plans clearly. Some staff do not feel valued and appreciated.

The provision for pupils' personal development is shaped by the school's values. These values of being responsible, resilient, reflective and respectful thread through lessons and assemblies. Pupils are empathetic towards others. One pupil said, 'Everyone is allowed to have their individual opinion and we don't all have to agree with it. What matters is that we are all kind and respectful of others.' Pupils learn about different faiths, religions and cultures. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governors know what the school does well and where improvements need to be made. However, they recognise that they need to focus their monitoring of the curriculum more sharply. They have identified that, in the past, they have not challenged leaders well enough about the quality of education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take appropriate action to keep pupils safe. They know pupils and their families well. All staff are well trained and receive regular and up-to-date information. Leaders take account of local risks and make sure that this information is passed on to staff. As a result, staff are well placed to keep a close eye on pupils they know to be vulnerable or at potential risk of harm. They teach pupils how to keep themselves safe through the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about road safety. They know well how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most foundation subjects, leaders have not identified the essential knowledge that pupils must learn and remember well. As a result, pupils, including those with SEND, do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders need to continue their work to ensure that all subjects are coherently planned with the essential knowledge that pupils need.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is too variable. They do not embed the essential knowledge that pupils need to know well. Consequently, pupils are not well prepared for the next stage of their education. Leaders need to provide training to develop teachers' expertise to deliver the curriculum effectively.
- Some staff do not teach phonics effectively. In addition, the books that pupils read do not help them to learn to read with increased fluency. Some of the weakest readers do not read as well as they should. Leaders need to make sure

that all staff who teach phonics are well trained and that the books pupils read match the sounds they learn.

- Some staff do not feel that leaders appreciate their work or communicate clearly enough their expectations about the plans they introduce. This creates some confusion and means that sometimes staff feel left out. Leaders need to make sure that they improve communication at all levels and that all staff feel valued.
- Governors do not challenge leaders well enough to check for the impact of strategic actions to improve the quality of education, which includes the achievement of pupils with SEND. Therefore, some of the plans to improve the quality of education are not as rigorous as they should be. Governors need to hold leaders to account more effectively.

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	144954
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	10227673
Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	789
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of trust	Peter Lindsey
Headteacher	Jon Reynard
Website	http://www.ocklynge.co.uk/index.html
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Ocklynge Junior School joined Ratton School in December 2017 to form the South Downs Learning Trust.
- The school currently does not use any 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. 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 trust's executive headteacher, the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, pupils, the chair of trustees and three governors, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, music and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at a sample of pupils' work.

- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. Inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses.
- Inspectors met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s online pupil survey.

Inspection team

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