

Inspection of Elson Junior School

Exmouth Road, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 4EX

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 June 2022

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| Overall effectiveness | Good |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Requires improvement |

What is it like to attend this school?

Teachers, leaders and governors are committed to making a positive difference to the lives of all pupils who attend Elson Junior School. Staff have together improved every aspect of the school so that it is achieving its vision of helping pupils to be happy and successful members of society.

Pupils enjoy learning because lessons are well organised. They listen attentively to each other and adults, and eagerly engage in practical tasks. Staff are adept at helping any pupils who get over-excited to quickly refocus on their learning. One pupil said: 'We like the 'Elson lesson' because teachers always tell us what we are going to learn and how we are going to learn it.'

Pupils feel happy and safe in this nurturing school. They are typically calm, friendly and polite to each other. A few older pupils said that sometimes pupils do fall out with each other, but that teachers will help sort out any issues. Pupils and families especially value 'Well-being Wednesdays' because pupils spend time learning how to maintain positive mental health.

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

Leaders across the school, supported expertly by the local authority, are developing an impressive, ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors challenge and support leaders well so that the school's plans for improvement have stayed on track throughout the pandemic. Leaders know the school and its pupils very well. They recognise that some of the systems and processes they use to record, collate and scrutinise information about the school are not as efficient as they could be.

Leaders believe that being a good reader allows pupils to access the whole curriculum. They quickly identify pupils who need extra, targeted help with learning phonics when they join the school. Pupils are encouraged to practise reading every day either in school or at home. They learn to read fluently and accurately. Pupils enjoy reading books from the well-stocked library, and welcome plans to further increase the range of books they can choose from.

The curriculum in subjects such as English, mathematics and geography are consistently well planned and sequenced. Leaders have set out clearly the detailed knowledge and subject-specific skills that pupils need in each subject. They have made sure that pupils learn this knowledge in a logical order. Teachers think carefully about the activities they choose so that pupils learn what they intend in an enjoyable way. Pupils especially like the frequent recapping and checking of their knowledge that teachers do, as this helps them to remember what they have been taught. Pupils display some impressive knowledge in these subjects.

Leaders across the school are well on the way to ensuring that all subjects are planned and delivered to the same high standards. Staff appreciate the professional training that has helped them to develop their teaching and subject knowledge across the whole curriculum.

Leaders have developed secure assessment procedures in English and mathematics. These are well understood by pupils and gives them confidence that teachers will help them to fill any gaps in their knowledge. Assessment is less well developed in some other subjects, however.

Pupils' personal development is prioritised. Pupils learn about a range of important issues through personal, social and health education lessons. These include learning about healthy relationships and the importance of having good mental health. Pupils can join a small range of clubs to develop their interests and talents, such as football club and the allotment club. Leaders plan to further increase the range of clubs and their uptake.

Regular and positive communication with parents and carers is a key feature of the school's success. Several parents praised the schools' approach. One expressed the views of many by saying, 'Well trained and understanding staff meet my child's needs. He gets such a good deal.' Another said, 'I have found staff to be very supportive. They have the interests of the children at heart.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils feel safe because of the strong culture of safeguarding that pervades the school. Pupils are clear about what to do if they are worried about something and know that an adult in school will help them if they need it.

Adults are well trained. They understand the school's processes for raising concerns and use them appropriately. Leaders act with tenacity to get extra help for pupils who need it. Their positive interaction with external partners is a strength.

Checks on adults working in the school are thorough and recorded securely on the single central record.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Assessment in the foundation subjects is not as effective as it is in English and mathematics. This means that teachers do not always adapt learning to fill pupils' gaps in learning. Leaders need to develop how they check pupils' knowledge in each subject so that all pupils are supported to build on their prior knowledge.

- Pupils' learning in foundation subjects such as history and geography is impressive, because teachers follow a carefully sequenced curriculum that prioritises the important knowledge they want pupils to know and remember. This is not the case in other, less well-developed subjects, but it is clear from leaders' actions that this development is well under way. For this reason, the transitional arrangements have been applied. Leaders need to continue their work to make sure that each subject is planned and implemented to the high standards evident in geography and history so that pupils receive a consistent quality education across all subject areas.
- Leaders use a variety of systems to record information. While these are well understood by leaders, they are not cohesive. There is a danger that emerging trends or important information about pupils could be missed. Leaders need to embed a clear, streamlined process to support sharper analysis of pupils' wellbeing and behaviour.

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

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| Unique reference number | 116162 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10238335 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 307 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Paul Tyler |
| Headteacher | Penny Shaw |
| Website | www.elsonjunior.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 28 and 29 November 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, the leadership team has been restructured and several new staff have joined the school.
- There school does not currently use alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, assistant headteacher, curriculum leader, special educational needs coordinator and other leaders. The lead inspector also met with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, science and art. 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 also looked at curriculum plans in some other subjects and spoke with pupils about their learning across the curriculum. Inspectors also explored pupils wider work in English and personal, social, health education.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors discussed safeguarding with leaders, governors, staff and pupils. Inspectors checked the single central record and the school's records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors also met with leaders and staff to discuss provision for personal development, behaviour and attitudes and the impact of leaders' work to improve the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses from the confidential staff survey. They took account of the responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire and free text comments. Inspectors also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Leaders considered the views of pupils shared in the confidential pupil survey and through discussions with pupils throughout the school.

Inspection team

Catherine Old, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jo Lakey

Ofsted Inspector

Felix Rayner

Ofsted Inspector

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