

Inspection of Petersfield Infant School

St Peter's Road, Petersfield, Hampshire GU32 3HX

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 October 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Early years provision

Good

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 at Petersfield Infant School learn in a stimulating and happy environment. They are cared for by staff who know them well and treat them fairly. Pupils are polite and courteous. They demonstrate self-confidence and enthusiasm when talking to adults.

Pupils, including those in the early years, enjoy playing together using a wide range of interesting play equipment. They know and follow the rules when eating in the canteen at lunchtime. Bullying is rare because pupils demonstrate the school values of kindness, compassion and respect.

Pupils try to do their best in lessons. They want to live up to the high expectations leaders have for them to do well. Teachers are quick to re-engage any pupils who become distracted. However, pupils do not always achieve as well as they should in some subjects because important knowledge that they must know is not always identified. Pupils have not made as much progress as they should in reading and phonics. At times, connections between what is learned in the early years and in key stage 1 are not well considered.

Children have opportunities to show leadership, for example as 'new arrivals ambassadors'. They take care of their school environment and learn to be active citizens in the local community by litter picking throughout the year.

Parents are happy to send their children to this school. They comment on the supportive staff and the positive changes that have been brought about by the new headteacher.

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

The new headteacher has had a sharp focus on improving the curriculum. There is a broad and interesting range of subjects on offer for all pupils. Those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported effectively to access the same curriculum as their peers. The curriculum in mathematics is well sequenced so that pupils can build on their knowledge from the early years. However, in subjects such as art and science, leaders do not consider what children in Reception must know so that they are ready for learning in Year 1. In several subjects, leaders have not precisely identified the core knowledge that pupils must learn. This means that teachers cannot effectively check that pupils know and can do more.

Teachers create many opportunities for pupils to apply their learning. For example, in art, Year 2 pupils make clear comparisons between the works of Kandinsky and Mondrian. In mathematics, Year 1 pupils use their understanding of the part-whole model to explore the relationship between numbers. In most subjects, teachers use

their expert subject knowledge to develop pupils' understanding of key concepts and vocabulary.

The newly introduced validated phonics scheme is well sequenced. However, this has taken too long to embed. This means that pupils have not learned to read well as quickly as they should. Leaders have put robust plans in place to help pupils catch up, although it is too soon to know what impact these have had. Children in Reception benefit from learning phonics as soon as they start the school. Wider reading books are thoughtfully chosen so that pupils explore culture and diversity.

Children and adults enjoy positive relationships in the early years. Staff care for the children and are ambitious for them to succeed. Leaders prioritise language and vocabulary development in Reception. Children develop their language skills when working alongside adults and their peers during independent learning time. The environment has been designed to ensure that children can explore their interests by accessing resources independently.

Pupils develop a sense of responsibility as part of the school council. For example, they vote to decide which charities they would like to raise money for. Leaders plan visits to a local museum and gardens to enrich pupils' learning experiences. Pupils take part in a wide range of clubs, including yoga and running, to keep fit and healthy. However, leaders do not currently track whether those who would benefit the most attend. Assemblies and acts of worship ensure that pupils develop an understanding of tolerance and respect for others. Pupils learn about personal care and relationships in an age-appropriate way through the personal, social and health education curriculum.

Governors know the school well and ask challenging questions so that leaders are held to account. They work closely with the headteacher to ensure that she has the support she needs to make improvements. The headteacher has worked hard to bring about significant positive change in the school. However, there is still work to be done to strengthen the quality of education. The headteacher has plans in place to ensure that the curriculum is developed further. Staff say that leaders are supportive and consider their well-being. They are committed to improving the school under the headteacher's leadership.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that staff receive effective safeguarding training. Staff know how to identify pupils who might be at risk of harm, and report their concerns quickly. Leaders take appropriate actions so that pupils and their families get the support that they might need from external agencies. Governors assure themselves that leaders take the right steps to check that adults are safe to work in the school.

Pupils know that there is an adult they can talk to if they are worried. They learn about water safety and how to identify the potential dangers they may face online through the curriculum.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans do not begin from Reception in several subjects. This means that leaders cannot be sure that children in the early years have the secure knowledge that they need for the next stage of their learning. Leaders need to develop subject leaders' expertise so that well-sequenced plans allow children to build on their knowledge from the early years into Year 1.
- Leaders do not explicitly identify the key knowledge that pupils must know to achieve success in several subjects. This means that teachers do not always take a consistent approach to identifying what pupils know and can do. Leaders should refine their plans so that staff have a clear understanding of the specific knowledge that must be learned, and assessed, so that pupils can improve.
- Implementation of the new reading programme has been too slow. As a result, too many children have fallen behind in learning to read and developing fluency. Leaders need to ensure that they monitor and review their plans to help pupils catch up quickly, so that pupils make the rapid progress they need to meet the age-related reading expectations.

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.

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	115936
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10242302
Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	334
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair of governing body	Julian James
Headteacher	Crissy Hodgkinson
Website	www.petersfieldinfantschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	27 November 2008, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school does not use alternative provision.
- There is a breakfast club run by an external provider on the school site.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded 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.
- The inspectors completed deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, computing and art. This included meeting with subject leaders and talking with staff and pupils. The inspectors also visited lessons and looked at pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed curriculum plans with the leaders of science and history.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement. They met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- During the inspection, the lead inspector spoke with the local authority's school improvement adviser and met with members of the governing body, including the chair.
- The arrangements for safeguarding were reviewed by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in class and at other times of the day.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

Inspection team

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