

Inspection of a good school: Southampton Hospital School

119 Tremona Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 6HU

Inspection dates:

6 and 7 December 2022

Outcome

Southampton Hospital School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils who attend Southampton Hospital School are unquestionably proud and happy here. Depending on their medical needs, pupils may be at the school for short or long periods of time. Staff quickly build rapport with pupils and their parents. They take care to understand each pupil's personality, interests, talents and future goals. Staff reassure pupils who are admitted to the ward that they can continue learning and keep up with their schoolwork. As one pupil said: 'Adults make sure that we never lose our confidence about learning. Just because we are in a hospital does not mean that school life stops.'

Leaders have high expectations. They understand the challenges that each pupil is facing personally. Pupils are kind and supportive of each other. Incidents of bullying or discrimination are almost unheard of. Pupils trust that staff will help them deal with even the slightest worries they have.

Breaktimes are sociable occasions. As well as catching up with their friends, pupils enjoy setting up games on the sensory trail. They are keen to look after the environment. For instance, they take care of the bugs, butterflies and snails in the garden area. Pupils are working on ideas to increase recycling in the hospital.

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

Leaders, governors and staff have high aspirations for all pupils. Leaders have an imperative to ensure that all pupils feel valued and do not see their medical injury or needs as a barrier to fulfilling their potential. Adults help pupils to develop their confidence and resilience through a dynamic educational experience during their stay at the hospital. For instance, pupils work with artists, storytellers and musicians, who visit regularly. Through activities such as trips to museums, art galleries and the theatre, pupils broaden their horizons. They study different religions and learn about celebrations and festivals. Pupils find out about the importance of British values. They discuss and debate maturely their ideas on topics such as immigration, sexual orientation and plastic pollution.

Leaders and staff identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly. They work closely with pupils' home schools and medical staff on the wards to ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively. Some pupils are taught at their bedside. Teachers quickly build rapport with pupils, including some who have life-changing, significant medical needs. They skilfully tailor activities for each individual pupil's interests and starting points. As a result, pupils overcome considerable gaps in their education. For instance, some older pupils study successfully for a range of GCSEs.

Learning is stimulating and interesting. Staff use a range of methods to support pupils' communication, including using songs and symbols. Pupils also learn Makaton. In most subjects, leaders have provided teachers with information on what needs to be taught and the order in which pupils should learn the essential knowledge. However, this is not set out as clearly in some subjects. This means that, sometimes, teachers do not help pupils make links in their learning. Leaders are addressing this.

Reading is a priority. Staff provide pupils with a diverse and interesting range of books to enjoy. Pupils look forward to listening to the stories staff read. There is a strong love of reading in school and on the wards. Leaders ensure that, if required, pupils have access to audio books. The phonics programme is well constructed. Staff provide younger readers with books that help them practise their phonics. Staff use their expert training to check and make sure that pupils learn to read fluently.

Governors and trustees know their school very well. Governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and of what needs to improve further. They challenge leaders around the impact of their actions to improve the quality of education.

Parents spoke very highly about the school and talked about the nurturing and calming environment. All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, agreed that their children are safe and would recommend the school to another parent.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a strong culture of safeguarding. All staff know how to recognise the signs that a pupil may need help. Leaders work with their colleagues at the hospital to share information and to follow up any concerns promptly. They keep well-organised records of any concerns raised. Where necessary, leaders ensure that referrals to the local authority and external agencies are made swiftly. They make sure that appropriate checks on staff are made before they start to work at the school. Through the curriculum, pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe, including online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the curriculum does not set out step by step what pupils should learn. This means that, sometimes, teachers do not help pupils make links in their learning. Leaders need to continue to refine the curriculum and make sure that it is well sequenced in all subjects.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2017.

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	140649
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10200536
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy alternative provision converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	37
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alice Wrighton
Headteacher	Nell Giles
Website	southamptonhospitalschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Southampton Hospital School is part of the Hamwic Education Trust.
- The school provides the educational provision for children admitted to Southampton Hospital. The school is attached to two classrooms on the wards and two classrooms in Bursledon House.
- Southampton Hospital School caters for pupils with a range of SEND, significant medical and mental health needs. Some pupils have additional learning needs and have an education, health and care plan.
- The number of pupils on the school's roll fluctuates weekly. Most pupils attend the school for a two- to eight-week programme. Some attend for longer or shorter periods of time, depending on their needs.
- The school caters for primary- and secondary-age pupils. Most pupils are dual registered. This means that they remain on the roll of their main school while being educated at the Southampton Hospital School.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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 and the senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of governors. She met with the chief executive officer for the Hamwic Education Trust and the standards officer. She also spoke on the telephone with the inclusion officer and service manager for inclusion from Southampton local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, computing and art. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other subjects.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during visits to classrooms, during breaktimes and while pupils were on the wards.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online survey for parents. The lead inspector spoke to some parents on the wards during the inspection. Inspectors also considered the views of staff during meetings with them.
- The lead inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked with leaders responsible for safeguarding. She also considered safeguarding documents and records.

Inspection team

Shazia Akram, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Alan Johnson

Ofsted Inspector

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