

Inspection of Meon Infant School

Shelford Road, Milton, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 8NT

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
The quality of education	Requires improvement
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Ofsted has not previously inspected Meon Infant School as an academy school under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 as, 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 of the predecessor school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils to 'be their best selves'. They make sure that pupils are taught about kindness, respect, being healthy in body and mind, and how to be confident and resilient. Pupils understand these values and know that being kind and accepting each other's differences makes the school and the wider world a happier place. They learn how to keep themselves safe, including an age-appropriate understanding of how to keep safe online.

Pupils are encouraged to take a real interest in the world. For example, they learn about the history of space travel and know interesting facts about the first dog in space and the astronaut Tim Peake's visit to the moon. However, they do not learn as well as they could. Leaders are working hard to improve the curriculum, but it is still early days.

Pupils enjoy their time at school. They play well together at playtimes, making the most of the equipment in the playground, or simply enjoying the opportunity to chat together. Pupils are right to be confident that teachers sort out any unkindness and make sure it does not happen again.

Through assemblies and in lessons, staff teach them about the school values of kindness, respect and being healthy in body and mind so they develop confidence and resilience.

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

The new leadership team has an ambitious vision for the school and its pupils. Senior leaders are fully aware of what needs to be done and have introduced many improvements in the short time they have been in post. With the support of trust leaders and through working with the other schools in the 'M3' partnership, they are strengthening the curriculum and the expertise of subject leaders. However, leaders' vision is not yet a reality. Local and regional governors are not fully aware of the extent of the improvements that are needed.

Reading is mostly taught well. The school has focused on improving this to ensure pupils can learn well in other subjects and grow to love books. Leaders are making sure that all staff are fully trained to teach phonics confidently and effectively. They are looking closely at assessments to make sure that they know exactly what sounds pupils do not know, to better match any extra support. However, the teaching of phonics did not start early enough in the Reception class this year. Staff encourage pupils' interest in books by reading to them every day. They make good use of these sessions to reinforce learning in other subjects and support pupils' personal development.

Learning in mathematics is carefully planned to develop pupils' confidence with calculation, problem-solving and reasoning. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities

to revise what they have previously learned so number facts are committed securely to memory. They are taught to make connections between different areas of the curriculum and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Teachers regularly analyse pupils' mathematical reasoning skills to understand their thinking, so they know what they understand and remember. Leaders are still refining the precise content of the mathematics curriculum in early years, to ensure that children are fully prepared for Year 1.

Leaders have got further with developing the curriculum in some subjects more than others. They are working to ensure that learning builds securely from Reception Year to the end of Year 2 and that pupils develop a deeper understanding of each subject. In the Reception Year, leaders are focusing on developing the skills of staff in using language to support children's thinking and learning.

Pupils behave well around school and in lessons. Staff treat them kindly and with encouragement. Pupils respond to this approach positively and there are good relationships between pupils and staff. If pupils lose concentration or start to misbehave, teachers regain their attention quickly.

Staff know pupils well and any who need additional help are identified quickly. The new pastoral team works together effectively to make sure pupils, and their families, get the support they need to learn as well as their peers. Leaders do their best to get support for pupils from other agencies where it is needed.

Pupils know that keeping mentally and physically healthy helps them to be their best selves. They learn how to recognise their own emotions and how others may be feeling. Pupils know that people have different needs and are taught to be respectful of this. The school offers a range of clubs and activities, including yoga, to widen pupils' interests.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about the safeguarding risks pupils may face. Leaders reinforce training through regularly discussing case studies, so safeguarding is kept high on the agenda. The new inclusion team works effectively to establish a strong culture of early identification. When pupils and their families need help, staff make sure this happens quickly. There are well-established systems in place for reviewing cases to make sure pupils stay safe.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- The component knowledge in subjects other than reading and mathematics is not yet fully defined. Pupils' learning, therefore, is not as deep and broad as it should be. Leaders should ensure that there is a coherently sequenced curriculum for all subjects from Reception to Year 2

- Leaders are still determining what the early years provision should look like. As a result, children are not learning as rapidly as they should be. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum and pedagogy in the Reception Year are secure, so children are ready for learning in Year 1.
- Subject leaders do not all have sufficient experience in their role or the depth of subject knowledge to support teachers in delivering the curriculum. Senior leaders should continue to provide guidance and training to strengthen subject leaders' expertise.

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	146135
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10242353
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gerard Newman
Executive Headteacher	Sara Paine
Website	www.meoninfantschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Meon Infant School converted to become an academy school in September 2018. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall. The school is part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust (TSAT).
- The school has seen several leadership changes over the last two years. The current executive headteacher started working with the school in April 2022 before formally joining the school as executive headteacher in September. The special educational needs coordinator and head of school were new to this school in September 2022, having previously worked at another school in the M3 partnership.
- The school is not currently using any alternative provision.

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.
- During the inspection, the inspectors met with the executive headteacher, the head of school and senior trust leaders. The lead inspector also met with the chairs of the academy advisory body and the regional governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography and design technology. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also spoke to leaders, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke with pupils about art.
- The inspectors reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising safeguarding records and interviewing staff, and through discussions with pupils.
- The views of parents and carers were considered through their responses to Ofsted Parent View. Further views of pupils and staff were gathered through Ofsted's online surveys, interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspectors met with school leaders about safeguarding arrangements, attendance and progress of pupils in the alternative provision.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Joanna Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Kate Magliocco

Ofsted Inspector

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