

Inspection of Liss Infant School

Hillbrow Road, Liss, Hampshire GU33 7LQ

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

Overall effectiveness

Requires Improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early Years

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and delightful. They look out for each other and enjoy school life. Pupils are positive about their learning and are keen to come to school. One pupil said that 'mistakes are good as they help you to learn.' The school's resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is led by adults who understand pupil's needs very well. Leaders cherish all pupils and ensure that all can access the full curriculum.

Leaders set high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Children in early years learn rules and routines, so that they can learn positively together. Pupils talk confidently about how to be a good friend. Bullying is not of concern to pupils. They understand the school's 'RICH' values of respect, inclusivity, caring and cooperation, and honesty.

Pupils enjoy the first-hand experiences adults provide. They love the school trips and visitors who come in. They learn about healthy choices and adore the outside space to play in.

Beyond pupils' behaviour and personal development, staff's expectations for the quality of education are not yet ambitious enough. Leaders are working with teachers to ensure pupils effectively learn the reading and mathematical knowledge and skills they need for the next stage in their education.

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

Leaders have been on a rapid journey to improve this school. They are determined to provide the best education for pupils. Governors share this ambition. They have effectively supported the executive headteacher to get the team in place to realise the goals set. Improvement planning outlines the necessary actions to ensure pupils receive a high-quality education. Nevertheless, these curriculum changes are at an early stage and leaders have yet to secure the impact for pupils.

In some subjects, the curriculum outlines the essential knowledge that pupils need. In mathematics and science, it is clear what pupils need to know in each year group. This curriculum thinking begins strongly in early years, where key concepts and vocabulary are well sequenced. However, the curriculum in some other subjects does not outline the precise content pupils should learn and in what order. This means teachers focus more on developing generic skills rather than helping pupils learn the most important knowledge.

Children in Reception receive a good start to their education. The curriculum is carefully planned around the interests of children and connects strongly to what they will learn in key stage 1. Resources are chosen to meet children's needs well. Learning is meaningful and children benefit from real life experiences, which build on what they know.

Teachers' subject knowledge is not strong across all subjects. Teachers can set work that does not enable pupils to acquire knowledge. At times, there can be a tendency to think more about engaging activities than clarity around what pupils must learn and remember. Teachers do check pupils' understanding regularly in lessons. However, this does not always support pupils to learn effectively as the intended learning is not always clear.

Leaders have introduced a new phonics scheme to teach reading. This is taught from the beginning of Reception. Despite this, not all staff have the expertise to teach pupils to read accurately and fluently. Furthermore, some older pupils who find reading more difficult do not get the support they need to catch up. They, therefore, are not learning to read quickly enough. Leaders promote the importance of reading for pleasure through the school library and story time is a daily essential.

The school is highly inclusive. The needs of pupils with SEND are quickly identified. Leaders ensure these pupils have provision matched to their needs. Teachers use effective strategies to help pupils gain a head start in what they will be learning next. Pupils with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Instilling independence is a strength of what leaders do. The specially resourced provision is integrated well into the school and promotes high aspirations for all.

In lessons, pupils try their best and follow the school rules. Pupils know how to be a good friend. From an early age, they learn how to name and consider their emotions. Pupils embrace differences and understand that lifestyles differ. They enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, such as being on the school council or eco-council. Pupils take part in a range of clubs in the arts and sports.

New governors are committed and driven. They have sought ongoing professional development, so they can challenge leaders robustly. They understand their role well. However, governors have not explored enough how well pupils are learning the curriculum and leaving school as fluent readers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding is the highest priority. Staff are well trained and receive regular updates. Leaders act in the best interests of pupils to ensure they are protected from harm. Referrals are made in a timely way, so that pupils and families get the help they need. Adults know pupils and their families very well. Pupils feel safe at school because they can talk to any adult if they have a worry. The curriculum teaches pupils effectively how to stay safe in different ways, including accessing technology.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, component knowledge is not precisely identified. This means that teachers are unsure about the key knowledge that pupils need to learn within units of work. Leaders need to continue to develop their curriculum thinking to outline all the steps of knowledge within subjects.
- Teachers' pedagogical and pedagogical content knowledge requires further support. In some subjects, teachers set work that does not help pupils learn the knowledge they need. Leaders need to support teachers' expertise in implementing the curriculum effectively.
- Not all staff have had the required training to implement the school's phonics programme. Some pupils who find reading more challenging are, therefore, not catching up quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that all staff have the training needed to help all pupils develop their confidence and fluency in reading.
- Governors have not always provided robust support and challenge to leaders about the quality of the school's curriculum. They need to continue to access professional development opportunities to enable them to carry out their roles effectively in ensuring a high-quality education for all pupils.

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	116021
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10241531
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Zoe Webster
Headteacher	Jillian Myers
Website	www.lissfederation.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with the junior school under the same executive headteacher. The deputy headteacher joined the school in April 2022. Several governors have only recently joined the governing body.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for 10 pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and history. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke with teachers, talked with pupils about

learning and sampled pupils' work. Pupils across the school were observed reading to a familiar adult by the lead inspector.

- The inspection team spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects and looked at curriculum planning.
- During the inspection, inspectors met with subject leaders, staff, and pupils. The lead inspector also met with governors, including the chair of governors, and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the Ofsted online parent survey and the free-text comments. Parents were also spoken to at the school gate.
- The views of staff and pupils were gathered through informal discussion and through Ofsted's confidential staff survey.
- Safeguarding arrangements were considered by looking at school policies and documents, meeting with the school's designated safeguarding leads and completing checks on records of recruitment. Inspectors also spoke to pupils and staff.

Inspection team

Clare Wilkins, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Debra Anderson

Ofsted Inspector

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