

Inspection of a good school: Rowner Infant School

Copse Lane, Rowner, Gosport, Hampshire PO13 0DH

Inspection dates:

28 February and 1 March 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The Inspector is recommending the next inspection to be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Rowner Infant School is a highly inclusive and nurturing school. Pupils benefit from a caring school culture with a strong community feeling. They arrive each morning excited to see their friends and teachers. As one parent summarised, 'This is a very welcoming and happy school.'

The Rowner values are lived and breathed by all. Each value is represented by a bug, including 'Resilient Rio' and 'Special Sidney'. Pupils are encouraged to put these values into action through their learning. Pupils understand the new behaviour policy of being kind, safe and ready. They like earning rewards for behaving well. However, sometimes, learning is disturbed by the behaviour of some pupils. This is because not all staff have consistently high expectations of all pupils. Pupils feel safe and will talk to a trusted adult if they are worried. Pupils rightly know that bullying will be dealt with quickly and fairly.

Despite recent improvements, pupils do not benefit from an effective curriculum. As the curriculum is still in the early stages of development, pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Pupils appreciate the range of opportunities available to develop their interests. They enjoy attending clubs such as archery, gardening and Makaton signing. The newly established 'bee team' of pupil leaders plays an active role in developing the school.

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

Following an unsettled period, the new headteacher was a welcome addition to the school community. This much-needed stability has allowed governors and leaders to now focus on improving the quality of education for pupils. Leaders have an accurate understanding

of what needs to be done, and they make good use of local authority support. Staff are excited by the improvements being introduced across the school. They describe themselves as a 'family' and feel valued by leaders. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being when introducing new initiatives.

Leaders, with staff support, are committed to developing the curriculum. Together, they are starting to make the necessary improvements to the curriculum. Work has begun to sequence the important skills and knowledge pupils should learn over time. However, this work is at an early stage of development.

Pupils love reading. They enjoy listening to stories read to them by their teachers and like that their parents join the reading sessions each week. Leaders have recently introduced a carefully chosen new phonics scheme, and all adults have regular training to deliver this. Pupils take part in phonics lessons with enthusiasm. However, they are less confident in using phonics in their writing and spelling. Pupils at the earlier stages of learning to read are not always given the right support to help them catch up. Staff do not have a consistent approach to supporting these pupils, and reading books are not always well matched to pupils' ability. Therefore, these pupils are not becoming confident and fluent readers.

Leaders have rightly prioritised developing the reading and mathematics curriculums, including in early years. Pupils enjoy lessons in these subjects and are starting to remember key knowledge over time. However, beyond these subjects, the curriculum is not yet well planned. Subject content is not sequenced, and teachers are not clear about what they should teach and when. In most subjects, assessment is underdeveloped, and teachers do not routinely address misconceptions in pupils' understanding. Therefore, pupils do not always remember what they have been taught, and many have gaps in their knowledge.

Leaders prioritise the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Leaders create useful learning plans to help staff meet the broad range of needs of pupils with SEND effectively. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is knowledgeable and highly experienced. She is uncompromising in her endeavours when applying for education, health and care plans to secure additional support for pupils with more complex needs.

There is a sharp focus on supporting pupils' mental health. Leaders ensure that all staff receive attachment and trauma training so that staff can ably support pupils experiencing complex emotional issues. They accurately analyse whole-school and individual pupils' behaviour patterns to put suitable support in place. However, low-level disruption occurs during lessons where learning is less focused or teachers' expectations are not high enough.

Leaders give suitable priority to the personal development of pupils at the school. There is a strong provision for the wider development of pupils, with many opportunities to engage in activities that promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. All pupils benefit from a range of curriculum enrichment experiences, such as an 'exploring space' day with a space dome. They enjoy the different clubs, which sparks

their interest. Pupils enjoy fundraising for local charities, including for the Armed Forces. All members of the school are proud of the community they serve.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has a securely embedded culture of safeguarding. The relevant recruitment checks on adults are made before they start working at the school. Leaders prioritise training for staff so that they have a clear understanding of the risks pupils face, both physically and online. Records show that any concerns are reported promptly to safeguarding leaders.

Leaders do all they can to help families that are more vulnerable. They work closely with external agencies when their involvement is needed. Strong relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils all have a trusted adult to talk to if they have a concern.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In most subjects, leaders are at the early stage of developing the curriculum. This means that teachers are not always clear what they should teach and when. Leaders should continue their work in identifying the important skills and knowledge they want pupils to learn from early years to Year 2.
- Not all teachers use assessment well to systematically check pupils' learning. Consequently, gaps in pupils' understanding and knowledge are missed. Leaders should ensure that teachers check pupils' learning in lessons more effectively so that misconceptions and mistakes are identified and quickly addressed.
- Weaker readers are not always supported effectively. This hinders some pupils in becoming confident readers as quickly as they could. Leaders should ensure that these pupils have high-quality support and ample opportunities to practise their reading, using books that are matched well to their phonics knowledge.
- Not all teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. This means that pupils can become disengaged in their learning and sometimes disturb the learning of others. Leaders should ensure that they securely establish high expectations and clear routines that all staff apply consistently across the school.

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 February 2013.

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	116168
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10242021
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	148
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Chris Potter
Headteacher	Jo Bedson
Website	www.rowner-inf.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has had three headteachers. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2021.
- There have been significant changes in governance since the last inspection, including a new chair of governors.
- The school does not currently use any external alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher and SENCo.
- Deep dives were carried out in early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited

lessons, spoke with teachers, talked with pupils about their learning and sampled pupils' work. The inspector also observed some pupils read to a member of staff.

- The inspector also spoke with leaders about the curriculum in other subjects, including science.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour around the school and during lessons. She also spoke to pupils during lessons and at other times of the day, including lunchtimes.
- A range of documents were reviewed, including leaders' evaluation of the school, priorities for improvement, external reviews, local authority visits, minutes from governors' meetings and documentation relating to attendance and behaviour.
- The views of parents were considered through their responses and confidential free-text comments to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspector also spoke with parents and carers at the start of the school day.
- The inspector also took account of the views of staff through both formal and informal discussions and took account of their responses to Ofsted's online staff survey.
- To inspect the school's safeguarding arrangements, the inspector talked with pupils and staff and reviewed the school's policies, documents and procedures, including the single central record. The inspector also met with the school's designated leaders for safeguarding to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. The inspector also spoke with staff about their responsibilities.

Inspection team

Vicky Matthews, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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