

Inspection of Canford Heath Infant School

Learoyd Road, Canford Heath, Poole, Dorset BH17 8PJ

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

This school was last inspected 15 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?

'A school to be proud of' and 'absolute children first approach' are typical of the many positive comments made by parents, and show what it is like to be a pupil at Canford Heath Infants. Staff create an environment where pupils thrive and evolve. Pupils love their school. They relish all the wonderful opportunities the team of dedicated and committed staff provide. Pupils achieve highly. They are remarkably well prepared for their next stage of education.

Pupils' behaviour is exceptional. They fully understand the school's ethos and values. From the time they start school in the Reception Year, pupils learn to support and care for each other. Bullying is extremely rare. If it does occur, pupils say adults resolve it swiftly.

Staff are superb role models. They expect all pupils to be responsible, respectful and active members of the school and wider community and contribute positively. Pupils have a strong voice. This builds their confidence and self-esteem. A wealth of clubs are available to pupils, including music, cheerleading and archery. These are fully inclusive and well attended.

Staff offer exceptional pastoral support to pupils and their families. This ensures that pupils are happy, safe and ready to learn.

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

Canford Heath Infants is a beacon of excellence. The motto of 'children first' shines throughout every aspect of the school's work. Leaders have designed an ambitious, inclusive and exciting curriculum which has pupils' needs at its heart. Pupils demonstrate excellent learning behaviours. They attend school regularly, and rapidly develop a love of learning. Teachers are meticulous in ensuring that the curriculum they deliver enables pupils to learn the right knowledge and skills at the right time. Pupils talk about what they learn in depth and remember the knowledge taught. They make links to their learning across subjects such as science and personal, social and health education (PSHE).

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) learn the same curriculum content and experience the same opportunities as their peers. Inclusion leaders identify and assess pupils' needs swiftly. In classrooms, pupils with SEND are well cared for. Environmental adaptations and supportive aids are in place for individual pupils. Pupils can explain how these aids help them. This helps these pupils achieve extremely well. Pupils with SEND achieve exceptionally well across the curriculum.

Leaders are determined that every pupil will become a fluent reader by the time they leave Year 2. Children learn phonics from the start in the Reception Year. Pupils benefit from highly effective phonics teaching throughout the school. The sequence

of books that pupils read shows a clear progression in phonic knowledge. This helps to build their confidence and fluency in reading. Staff are skilled in identifying any pupil who may be at risk of falling behind. Additional support is in place to enable pupils to catch up quickly. Staff foster a love of reading. Pupils hear stories every day. These times are special with teachers, creating an atmosphere where pupils become immersed in the story.

Pupils' wider personal development programme is exceptional. The curriculum for PSHE is planned and sequenced with care. Pupils, including children in the Reception Year, are taught to work together, listen to each other and respect different points of view. Pupils' knowledge of democracy and equality is impressive. They relish the roles and responsibilities afforded to them and take these roles seriously, for example as well-being and friendship ambassadors or school councillors.

The curriculum enables pupils to build knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy and lead safe, active lives. All pupils learn basic first aid. Pupils' service to the community is impressive. For example, they visit the local hospital and care home to perform to patients and residents, and enjoy being pen pals to the elderly. This develops pupils' social skills and prepares them for their future. Pupils show a deep understanding of other cultures, faiths, types of families and relationships.

Leaders and staff have strong working relationships with each other. Staff comment how senior leaders value and appreciate the work they do. They are unified in their belief that every pupil deserves the very best quality of education and care. Leaders ensure that staff get time, opportunities and guidance to develop their expertise in teaching. Staff feel well supported. They value what leaders do to help them manage their workload and support their well-being.

Leaders are ably supported by the trust, who provide both support and challenge. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school, with many commenting on how the leaders and staff constantly go above and beyond. For example, the school-wide approach, following the pandemic, to ensure that pupils were able to catch up on lost learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility at Canford Heath Infants. All staff, irrespective of their role, are well trained to notice and report any signs of concern. Leaders are swift to support pupils and families in need of help. They do not hesitate to escalate concerns when needed. Leaders carry out the required checks on the suitability of staff to work with pupils.

Leaders provide a curriculum that teaches pupils to understand age-appropriate risks, including personal safety and how to be safe online. Pupils know that adults will listen to them if they have any concerns.

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	141762
Local authority	Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole
Inspection number	10228811
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	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Emma Hall
Headteacher	Laurin Palmer
Website	www.chis.poole.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	13 February 2008

Information about this school

- The school is part of The Educational Alliance of Canford Heath (TEACH), a multi-academy trust.
- The school does not use 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 any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other school staff, the chief executive officer and three members of the board of trustees, including the chair.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and music. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum

with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors sampled pupils' work across a range of subjects, including history and geography.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1 and 2 read to an adult. Story time was visited in Reception Year and Year 2.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including the safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding leader acts on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and trustees about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- The lead inspector considered key documentation, including school development plans and trustees' minutes.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times. An inspector met with leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- An inspector spoke to pupils who attend an early morning breakfast club.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text replies and correspondence received from parents via email. Inspectors spoke with parents at the beginning of the school day. They also considered responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Marcia Northeast	Ofsted Inspector
Faye Bertham	Ofsted Inspector

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