

Inspection of a good school: Brook Infant School and Nursery

Salterns Road, Maidenbower, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7JE

Inspection dates:

25 and 26 April 2023

Outcome

Brook Infant School and Nursery continues to be a good school. There is enough evidence of improved performance to suggest that the school could be judged outstanding if we were to carry out a graded (section 5) inspection now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this innovative and caring school. A calm and happy atmosphere permeates classrooms and the playground. Pupils learn and play together, helped by adults who know each of them well. The school's two therapy dogs, Bumble and Barney, are loved by pupils. If a pupil is upset, the dogs are there as a source of comfort and support. They help to raise everyone's spirits.

Staff prioritise giving pupils a varied and exciting educational experience. They value listening to pupils to find out their views and what interests them. This includes how to improve the playground or how to make the school as welcoming as possible. Pupils can confidently explain how to stay safe, including what to do if they are worried. They trust the adults to provide kind and helpful support.

Pupils know why behaving well matters. They are patient with anyone who finds managing their own behaviour more challenging. They know that their teachers want everyone to be successful in their learning. In lessons, pupils work well together. Children in the early years share ideas and take turns. Adults carefully plan opportunities for formal teaching to ensure children's individual learning through play is not interrupted.

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

Brook Infant School and Nursery is a very compassionate school. Staff resolutely identify what all pupils need to help them achieve and thrive. Leaders know that this requires consistency. Staff understand leaders' high expectations and share their aims. Adults across the school are reflective and ambitious in finding the best way to support every pupil.

The school's curriculum themes, such as 'ice worlds' and 'wild and wonderful', change each term. Adapted classrooms and displays immediately immerse pupils into the new theme. Whole-school trips create a shared experience, anchoring the theme in pupils' minds. Learning is clearly remembered because of the careful way teachers build and link the knowledge pupils need to learn. Pupils and staff also cherish the school's adjacent woodland area. Here, learning provides physical and emotional development. Pupils build resilience through perseverance through 'tricky tasks'.

Pupils' knowledge builds from Nursery to Year 2. The curriculum is designed as one continuous pathway. All pupils access the whole curriculum. Teachers regularly check pupils' knowledge. Leaders make sure all pupils learn quickly. Lessons enable frequent practice and reuse of what they have learned. If any pupil falls behind, leaders check that they have the help they need to catch up. Staff know pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) very well. Adaptions are accurately targeted. This helps pupils with SEND to also achieve highly.

Teachers and teaching assistants are experts in teaching phonics. They use this knowledge to quickly teach children how to read. All adults in the school are 'book worms' and regularly listen to pupils read. Pupils' reading books match their current understanding of the letters and sounds they are learning. This regular practice helps them make quick progress. Targeted intervention helps pupils who need extra support to catch up. Class reading is frequent. Books are chosen to reflect the term's theme as well as to explore a diverse range of characters.

The school's strong shared values of being caring and helping everyone to belong are shared by all. Teachers naturally thread teaching about friendship and equality through their lessons. This results in confident and kind pupils. All pupils are polite and keen to engage with adults. This was exemplified during the inspection when the inspector was stopped in a corridor and offered a warm welcome and handshake by a child in Reception.

The early years provision, including the nursery, are well integrated into the school. The same individualised approach is evident here as seen in key stage 1. Early years staff help each child learn through meaningful activities. These seek to build skills of communication or strengthen motor skills. Children learn how to understand and express how they are feeling. Play activities in Nursery and Reception are purposeful. They reflect the school's themes, use of number and prioritisation of early reading. Visitors to the school, such as entomologists, are invited in to enrich children's experience and enhance their learning.

Staff are proud to work at the school. Parents are positive about the school's approach. Every parent who responded to Ofsted Parent View would recommend the school to another parent.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders ensure that all staff understand the importance of safeguarding. Staff can identify any signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Because they know pupils well, they are able to report any concerns as soon as they arise. Leaders' record-keeping is detailed and provides a clear outline of actions taken. Leaders are rigorous in accessing and following up on any additional support that pupils or their families need.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe online. They know the importance of keeping themselves safe, such as what to do should they get lost while shopping.

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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in December 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

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| Unique reference number | 131602 |
| Local authority | West Sussex |
| Inspection number | 10256509 |
| 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 | 178 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Matthew Brown |
| Headteacher | Sarah Cox |
| Website | www.brookinfant.school |
| Date of previous inspection | 5 and 6 December 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- This school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school includes an on-site nursery provision for two- , three- and four-year-olds.
- The school runs both breakfast and after-school clubs. Pupils from other local schools also attend.

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.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, special educational needs coordinator, curriculum leaders, and other staff.
- The inspector met with governors, including the chair of governors. He talked to a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about

their learning, and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspector listened to a sample of pupils read.

- The inspector examined a range of documentation provided by the school, including leaders' self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The inspector scrutinised safeguarding records, checked staff's safeguarding awareness and met with the designated safeguarding leaders.
- The inspector considered the responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View. He also took into consideration the responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Ed Mather, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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