

# Inspection of Chaulden Infants' and Nursery

School Row, Chaulden, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP1 2JU

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Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

## **Requires improvement**

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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

Inadequate

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

At Chaulden Infants, pupils' safety and quality of education are core priorities. Pupils' lessons are increasingly focused on giving them the knowledge they need for future success. There is still some variability in the quality of learning in some areas, but this is reliably improving.

Pupils learn in a caring environment where they are accepted and welcomed as unique individuals. This is a value pupils demonstrate to one another. They consider the needs of their peers in a mature and thoughtful way. This is seen during exciting playtimes and around the school. At play, pupils are confident to instigate their own ideas and share them with others.

Pupils behave well. High expectations for routines and respectful interaction are established in the nursery. This is built upon over time and older pupils demonstrate impressive self-control and focus in lessons. Significant behaviour incidents, such as bullying, are unusual. However, pupils have trust in adults to quickly address any concerns or worries they have.

The wider development of pupils is a key consideration in the curriculum. This includes extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school. These opportunities are designed to match pupils' interests, such as signing and Lego clubs.

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

The quality of education in the school is continuing to improve. This is because leaders and staff are focused on the priorities that make the biggest difference to pupils' learning experiences. Leaders have established a curriculum that is helping pupils to prepare for the demands of junior school.

The curriculum pupils follow is designed to build pupils' knowledge from the moment they join Nursery. The curriculum content enables pupils to learn a broad range of concepts and subject knowledge. In core areas that have been prioritised, such as phonics, plans are detailed. This supports teachers to focus on the important knowledge that needs regular practice, and helps pupils remember. In some areas of the curriculum, the plans are not precise enough. Teachers do not always focus activities and assessment on the key knowledge pupils need to remember. This leads to some variation in what pupils know and can do.

New curriculum plans have been introduced in a wide range of subjects and areas of learning. In some areas, the subject knowledge of staff is less secure, and these plans do not have the intended impact. This is true in some areas of learning in the early years. In the Reception year, opportunities to embed and extend children's learning are not always linked directly to the planned curriculum. However, staff expertise across the school has developed significantly and continues to do so.

The phonics curriculum ensures that pupils build confidence with the key knowledge they need to start to learn to read. Lessons support pupils to apply what they learn through relevant activities. Pupils take home books that are matched well to their current stage. This is making sure that pupils are reading fluently and growing in confidence. If pupils need extra support, this is quickly spotted and addressed. The extra reading support provided by trained adults is very effective.

There is effective support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This support is typically ambitious for what pupils with SEND can achieve. This is especially true for pupils with education, health and care plans. Targets set for these pupils are precise and well informed by professional advice. Some targets set for other pupils with SEND are less precise. They do not consistently demonstrate high expectations to maximise progress.

The conduct of pupils reflects the shared high expectations that staff have for behaviour. In the early years, children share and cooperate well with each other. Pupils are encouraged to learn like 'Tigger' and persevere when learning gets tricky. They show this ability as they stick with activities in lessons, avoiding distractions. The attendance of some pupils needs to improve. Leaders are taking effective action to support parents to make this happen.

Personal, social and health education lessons start from the moment children join Nursery. This encourages pupils to think about their place in the world. Pupils discuss important values and build a strong sense of identity. This helps them to be emotionally and socially prepared for their next stage of learning.

Governors have established effective routines and systems to fulfil their roles. They have also gained secure expertise to confidently hold leaders to account. The continuity of leadership and sustained improvement have been well considered. Governors have drawn effectively on advice and guidance from the local authority. As a result, plans to further improve the quality of education are focused and realistic.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders maintain high expectations for safeguarding in the school. All appropriate and mandatory checks are made on adults working with pupils. Systems for recording and sharing concerns about pupils are well established and effective. Leaders are tenacious and respond swiftly to concerns raised, seeking professional services and support as required.

All staff have had impactful training. This ensures that the important knowledge they need is at the forefront of their minds.

Pupils learn important knowledge through the curriculum that helps them to make safe choices and to respect others. This includes advice about staying safe online.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' curriculum plans in some subjects do not precisely set out the most important knowledge pupils should learn. This means there is some variation in the specific content focused on and assessed in lessons. Leaders should continue with their work to develop the curriculum and ensure that there is a sharp focus on pupils acquiring the knowledge they need for future learning.
- There is some variability in the pedagogical knowledge and expertise of staff. This means the ambition of the curriculum is not always seen in practice, including in the early years. Leaders should ensure the expertise of staff across all areas of learning is consistently secure. This will ensure concepts are consistently taught in a way that will help pupils to remember what they learn.
- The targets set for some pupils with SEND are not sufficiently precise. As a result, it is not always clear that ambition for these pupils is as high as it could be. Leaders should ensure that all staff have the secure understanding needed to set relevant and specific targets, and that support plans are robustly monitored.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117202
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10265736
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	142
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chairs of governing body</b>	Rachel Ayree and Kirstene Cutler
<b>Interim Headteacher</b>	Alex Lindley
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.chauldeninfants.com">www.chauldeninfants.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	14 and 15 December 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Since the previous monitoring inspection in December 2022, there has been a change to leadership arrangements in the school. The school is led by an interim headteacher and team of experienced interim senior leaders, who took up their roles in April 2023.
- The school manages a breakfast club provision providing before-school childcare.
- The school does not make use of off-site alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

The inspector(s) carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a graded (section 5) inspection under the same Act.

In accordance with section 13(4) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

- Inspectors held meetings with the interim headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, the early years leader and a range of other staff to explore

provision across the school, including behaviour, curriculum, provision for pupils with SEND and early years.

- The lead inspector met with four representatives of the governing body, including both co-chairs. A separate meeting was held with an improvement partner from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, physical education, and design and technology. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum documentation, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the designated safeguarding lead, the office manager and other staff to discuss safeguarding.
- During the inspection, inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including the single central record of recruitment and vetting checks, curriculum plans, school development plans, and safeguarding and behaviour records.
- Inspectors also spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences of school life and their learning in lessons to understand what it is like to be a pupil in their school. Inspectors also observed the behaviour of pupils across the school site.
- Inspectors reviewed 60 new responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 13 responses to Ofsted's staff survey.

### **Inspection team**

Kristian Hewitt, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Ann Bowen-Breslin

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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