

Inspection of Gatcombe Park Primary School

St Barbara Way, Hilsea, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO2 0UR

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Early years provision **Good**

Previous inspection grade Good

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and friendly community, where pupils develop confidence and enthusiasm for learning. Pupils consistently demonstrate the school values of 'aim high, respect and teamwork'. They collaborate with each other and complete activities well. Pupils respond positively to teachers' high expectations and, consequently, behaviour is calm around school. At breaktimes, pupils happily play across different year groups, sharing the trim trail equipment thoughtfully.

Pupils are knowledgeable about how to look after themselves and each other. They understand practical approaches to well-being, such as eating healthy food and taking digital screen breaks. Pupils know how to report any worries they have. They value the 'Help me boxes', which enable them to discretely report concerns to teachers. Pupils feel safe because they know teachers will address any problems. Bullying is rare, if any does happen it is tackled quickly and effectively by leaders.

Pupils are inclusive and welcoming. This reflects leaders' strong focus on equality and ambition. For example, following a recent visit by a female footballer they are keen to explain that anyone can play any sport. The close and supportive community is further boosted by experiences for all pupils, such as residential camping trips.

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

Leaders have developed an ambitious and broad curriculum for all pupils. The curriculum provides a journey which purposefully builds knowledge from early years to Year 6. Knowledge and topics across subjects are carefully re-visited. This means new learning builds on knowledge from earlier learning. For example, in science, pupils learn how to investigate and think scientifically with increasing depth.

Leaders' focus on developing teachers' subject knowledge means it is largely secure. Support is readily available when teachers need it. This means teachers make appropriate activity choices, which are well resourced to effectively support the learning of all pupils. This includes adaptations made by teachers and teaching assistants which enable pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) to learn well. Staff check pupils' progress through the planned curriculum using mid-topic quizzes and end-of-topic reviews. However, when teachers introduce new knowledge, they do not consistently check pupils' understanding. This means that some pupils have knowledge gaps which are not identified and addressed.

Reading is well prioritised within the school. Phonic teaching enables all children, including those with SEND, to become confident, fluent readers. Staff use effective keep-up sessions, so that children who are struggling catch up. Pupils enjoy reading a rich range of texts, which means there is a distinct sense of interest and a growing love of reading when they explore characters and stories with teachers.

Lessons are focused and purposeful. Pupils complete activities enthusiastically and take pride in their work. Most pupils respond willingly to teachers' instructions. When this is not the case, teachers address it calmly and effectively. Staff help pupils to reflect on their behaviour and consider how their actions affect others. Across the school, pupils are thoughtful and demonstrate respect for others.

Pastoral care is impressive. Staff work closely with families to provide strong support for pupils experiencing challenging circumstances. Many parents and carers are grateful for this help, which helps to ensure pupils have high attendance. In lessons, pupils use 'regulation stations' to support, so they learn to respond appropriately to their feelings.

The curriculum provides many opportunities for pupils to develop curiosity and creativity. For example, when learning about food miles, pupils consider their own solutions. They are encouraged to discuss why issues matter and how they can contribute to addressing these. Pupils learn about diversity through a range of opportunities, which enable pupils to explore different religions and cultures. This means pupils are tolerant towards other pupils with different cultures and beliefs in the school community. Pupils learn about fundamental British values, including through casting votes in the annual Year 6 House Captains election. However, some pupils do not yet have secure knowledge of the difference these values make to life in modern Britain.

The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) is passionate that pupils with SEND will flourish. The SENCo works in partnership with teachers, so that bespoke, specific strategies for pupils with SEND enable them to learn well.

Leaders are highly ambitious for all pupils to be successful. They work to instil a can-do attitude in all pupils. Their accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement inform decisions about change. Most staff feel supported with workload and managing behaviour. Governors and trustees fulfil their responsibilities and provide appropriate challenge and support to leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are knowledgeable about the indicators of potential safeguarding concerns. Staff know how and who to report concerns to. They follow these procedures to ensure concerns are investigated. The designated safeguarding lead promptly reports concerns to external agencies and follows these up as needed. Leaders regularly review the progress of active cases.

The single central record is compliant with statutory requirements. Safer recruitment practice is adhered to with appropriate pre-employment checks conducted. Governors and trustees meet their statutory safeguarding duties.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- When teachers explain or use resources to introduce new knowledge, they do not always check pupils have securely understood previous learning before moving on to the new information. This means that pupils are sometimes left with misconceptions or gaps in their understanding. Leaders need to ensure that teachers have the knowledge required to use assessment consistently well to inform their planning and teaching.

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	141728
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10268893
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Alice Wrighton
Headteacher	Ian Baker
Website	www.gatcombeparkprisch.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	30 January 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Hamwic Education Trust multi-academy trust (MAT).
- The school provides wraparound care through the before-school Gatcombe Crew club.
- 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.

- 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other school leaders and staff. They also met with the chief executive officer and chair of trustees from the MAT and members of the local governing board.

- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, geography. For each deep dive, 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.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors spoke with staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with leaders to review their knowledge, records and actions. The lead inspector also met with members of the local governing body and trustees to discuss safeguarding. Inspectors also reviewed information about the safer recruitment of staff
- To review wider judgements, inspectors spoke to staff and groups of pupils from different year groups. Inspectors observed behaviour in classrooms and at play and lunchtimes.
- The views of staff, including responses to Ofsted's online staff survey, were considered.
- The views of parents were considered through talking to a group on the gate before school and taking into account responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Caroline Clarke

His Majesty's Inspector

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