

Inspection of Mount Pleasant Junior School

Mount Pleasant Road, Southampton, Hampshire SO14 0WZ

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Outstanding

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive at this exceptional school. Leaders' ethos is to have 'the child at the centre of everything we do', and that is exactly what inspectors found. All staff are unwavering in their determination for every pupil to succeed. Leaders motivate pupils to strive for their very best and support them to reach their potential. As a result, pupils flourish and achieve highly.

Behaviour is excellent. Bullying and discrimination are not tolerated by pupils or staff. On the very rare occasion that anything of the sort does happen, pupils are confident to report it, knowing that leaders will take prompt and effective action. Inside the school building, the atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Outside, it is vibrant and respectful.

The provision for pupils' wider development is remarkable. The 'WISE' curriculum nurtures their well-being, identify, safety and empowerment. A notable range of leadership responsibilities give pupils meaningful ownership of their school. They are inspired to contribute to their community and learn important life skills. This includes pupils leading the way in advocating human rights and modelling a culture that embraces difference. There is a palpable sense of belonging for all pupils at this very inclusive school.

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

The school's curriculum is impressive. Leaders have paid meticulous attention to setting out the precise knowledge, skills, and key vocabulary that pupils need to learn along the way to ambitious end points. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is engaging and accessible to all pupils in this diverse community. Many are new to speaking English and arrive with little prior learning. Leaders have embedded highly efficient systems to identify any barriers to learning and ensure that teachers understand and know exactly how to support pupils' individual needs.

The exceptionally coherent curriculum means teachers know exactly what to teach pupils and when. Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use to great effect to explain new concepts with absolute clarity. All staff insist on the use of key vocabulary. Teachers use questioning skilfully to check what pupils know and can do, and then use this information to expertly adapt teaching to enable all pupils to learn well. Pupils benefit from regular opportunities to practise new concepts and to revisit prior learning. Despite the progress they make, pupils achieve less well than other pupils nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. Their ability to recall and apply their learning across the curriculum, however, is remarkable and belies recent published test results.

Pupils experience a sense of joy and achievement with their reading. Interventions are effective, and pupils quickly develop into confident readers. Once fluent, there is no ceiling to staff's ambition for pupils. During the inspection, one group of pupils fervently debated the strengths and weaknesses of some complex texts. They

clearly have a deep love of reading and are passionate about the range of books that they access.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Teachers overtly recognise pupils making the right choices. As a result, pupils are highly motivated and positive about their learning. They treat one another with the greatest respect and are excellent ambassadors for their school.

The provision for pupils' personal development is exceptional. Leaders have sensitively designed a comprehensive programme with parents, pupils and community leaders that ensures pupils learn about different cultures, faiths, religions and how to keep themselves safe. It takes account of the school's diverse community, without shying away from what pupils need to know and understand to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about democracy and value the opportunity to debate controversial issues. As one pupil shared, 'it is part of our rights and helps us to know how not to be mistreated...it gives us respect and helps us all to include each other.'

The school is exceptionally well led. Leaders, governors, and the community trust share the same vision of providing every child with equal opportunity to flourish. Leaders at all levels are clear in their understanding of how to translate ambition into high-quality education for all. They work collaboratively with stakeholders and equip staff with the knowledge and understanding that they need through a highly effective programme of professional development.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The safeguarding culture in the school is very strong. Staff are thoroughly trained which means they can spot signs of harm. This includes training on local risks. Staff know how to act if they have a concern. Leaders ensure all concerns are carefully managed and take swift action to get pupils the help they need. Leaders are persistent in following up their concerns. They keep meticulous records of actions and outcomes. Effective systems are in place to ensure thorough pre-employment checks are completed, to ensure that only suitable people work at the school.

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	116092
Local authority	Southampton
Inspection number	10268311
Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	355
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Rashid Brora
Headteacher	Emma Kerrigan Draper
Website	www.mpjs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 September 2019

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Aspire Community Trust.
- At the time of the inspection, the school was not using any alternative provision.
- A significant proportion of the pupils at this school speak English as an additional language. Many of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- 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 senior leaders, staff, pupils, and governors. An inspector also spoke with representatives from the community trust and local authority.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, English, mathematics, music, and science. They discussed the curriculum with

subject leaders, teachers, and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work. They also considered evidence about other subjects.

- Inspectors considered 22 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire. They also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey, as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors viewed the school's website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leaders, spoke with pupils and staff, checked the school's records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with governors.
- Inspectors met with the school special educational needs and/or disabilities coordinator (SENCo).

Inspection team

James Stuart, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Jon Hills

Ofsted Inspector

Carl McCarthy

His Majesty's Inspector

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