

Inspection of a good school: Niton Primary School

School Lane, Niton, Ventnor, Isle of Wight PO38 2BP

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 June 2023

Outcome

Niton Primary School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well cared for in this school. There is a focus on nurturing their potential and a strong emphasis on valuing everyone for who they are. Pupils feel proud to celebrate difference. They state that being unique is what makes them special. The school values of love, courage, truth, respect and friendship are deeply rooted in all the school does. Pupils are keen to nominate their peers for the awards linked to these. Leaders ensure that pupils have opportunities to share their own thoughts and opinions. The pupil parliament plays an important role in decision making.

The high value placed on reading is noticeable in every corner of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about the range of diverse books in the library and the top 100 books in their classrooms. They are grateful to have such a wide range of texts to choose from. They eagerly talk about the books they are reading. Pupils achieve well due to the carefully thought-through curriculum.

Pupils do not need to worry about the behaviour of others. There is a calm and respectful atmosphere in class and at playtimes. Play leaders help to organise games. They make sure everyone is included.

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

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. Activities are carefully chosen to develop children's knowledge. Leaders have designed a curriculum which begins here and builds throughout the school. A few subjects are being refined and are not yet fully embedded. In these areas, pupils do not always learn as well as they could. Leaders have clear plans in place to address this. Staff place great emphasis on knowing every child. Revised systems for the identification of special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) mean there is an accurate understanding of each pupil's needs. Teachers use this information to tailor learning for pupils with SEND.

Teachers provide effective opportunities for pupils to revise key concepts. This helps pupils to remember the most important information. Teachers check that pupils understand. They generally identify misconceptions and provide in-the-moment support to help pupils gain a deeper grasp of their learning. This is further strengthened through the use of well-chosen resources.

Reading is given the highest priority. Leaders have invested in books throughout the school. This has ignited pupils' passion for reading. The reading spine has been carefully designed to cover increasingly challenging content and a diverse range of themes. Pupils are excited to talk about the books they choose from the library. Leaders identified that outcomes in phonics last year were too low. They have taken swift action to ensure that pupils learn to read quickly. Rigorous tracking of the sounds pupils know means that teachers know who to target so that they catch up. Pupils who are still acquiring early reading skills read books that are matched to sounds they have learned. This helps them to build confidence in reading.

Behaviour is exemplary. Everyone has high expectations. Pupils rise to these and are proud to be recognised for their positive attitudes. They are keen to explain why they have received a Niton star badge. Relationships are based on mutual respect. This is seen throughout the school. Staff model this through their interactions. Pupils understand the importance of listening and following instructions. Due to the shared understanding of expectations, there is a productive environment where everyone can learn.

There is a wide extra-curricular offer for pupils. Pupils confidently talk about their personal, social and health education. They show mature attitudes when discussing complex themes such as the importance of being mentally and physically healthy. Pupils are proud to have responsibilities within school. House captains take their role seriously and organise fundraising activities across the school. In assemblies, leaders encourage pupils to celebrate their achievements from outside school.

Leaders, including governors, have a sharp focus on well-being. This applies to everyone within the school community. There is a collaborative approach and the strategies which began during COVID are now embedded. Some pupils benefit from bespoke well-being support and a weekly well-being club. Staff feel valued and report that their opinions are respected.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have prioritised safeguarding throughout the school. Staff are well trained. As a result, there is a strong sense of safeguarding being everyone's responsibility. Staff understand the school procedures. They know the signs to look out for which may indicate a pupil is at risk.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe in numerous ways. This includes a deliberate consideration for the context of the school and the specific dangers pupils may encounter.

Pupils learn about water safety, being safe online and what to do if something makes them feel uncomfortable.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, refinements are still being made to the curriculum. These changes are not fully embedded. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders must continue to develop these areas of the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners.

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 May 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 | 118165 |
| Local authority | Isle of Wight |
| Inspection number | 10227909 |
| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Maintained |
| Age range of pupils | 5 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 208 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair of governing body | Peter Higgin |
| Headteacher | Duncan Mills (Executive headteacher) |
| Website | www.nitonprimary.org |
| Date of previous inspection | 3 and 4 May 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Cornerstone Federation.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- Since the last inspection, there has been a new head of school. She commenced her role in September 2022.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in the evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and the head of school. She also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The inspector met with five governors, including the chair of the governing body, and spoke to a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector 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. She also spoke to leaders about religious education, English and French.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspector checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspector also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school. She also took account of the 65 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 39 free-text responses.
- The inspector met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- A range of documentation, including the school improvement plan and school self-evaluation was reviewed.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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