

Inspection of a good school: St. Joseph's Infant School

Orchard Street, Chichester PO19 1DQ

Inspection date:

9 November 2023

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a friendly and welcoming school. Pupils feel safe. They feel confident about reporting any concerns that they have, including bullying. If bullying occurs, leaders address it swiftly and effectively. One parent summed up the thoughts of many by saying: 'The school is a home away from home for my child.' This caring environment helps pupils to feel happy at school.

Staff have increasingly high expectations of pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, in a number of subjects, recent improvements to the curriculum are underdeveloped and the intended learning is not clear enough. This limits how well pupils achieve in these subjects.

Pupils in different year groups work well together. Most pupils behave well. Staff develop good relationships with pupils, helping them to be positive about their learning and feel valued. One parent reflected the views of others by saying: 'The staff are very welcoming and kind.'

Pupils enjoy a wide range of clubs, activities and visits that are on offer to them. For example, pupils take part in the popular choir and the illustrators' clubs, as well as gaining much from visits to places of historic value, such as the nearby Chichester cathedral.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils. In some subjects, they have designed a broad and well-sequenced curriculum that sets out precisely what pupils will learn. Plans make clear when pupils will learn the key knowledge in these curriculums across the academic year. For example, in reading, the phonics programme sets out clearly the expectations of where pupils should be in their phonics knowledge as they move through the term, year

and school. However, in other subjects, the curriculum is not sequenced well enough. In these subjects, pupils' learning is less secure. Leaders do not make clear the precise knowledge that they want pupils to learn or check the impact of the curriculum on pupils' learning thoroughly enough.

The reading curriculum has been designed well. Parents and carers attend workshops that help them understand how their children will learn to read. This enables parents to support their children at home. Children in the Reception class start to learn phonics as soon as they start school. Pupils in the early years and in Years 1 and 2 enjoy learning about letters and the sounds that they make. Staff provide prompt help for any pupils who fall behind with the reading curriculum. However, not all staff are effective in delivering the phonics programme. Some do not have high enough ambition of what pupils can achieve in their reading. Consequently, pupils do not learn as well as they could. Pupils' understanding is not checked well enough. As a result, misunderstandings are not identified and addressed effectively.

Teachers understand the importance of checking that pupils have remembered what they have been taught. They use what they know to help plan what pupils learn next. However, these checks on learning are not fully in place across all subjects. This means that staff do not have a clear picture of how well some parts of the curriculum are working.

The school places great importance on pupils' wider development. The personal, social, health and economic curriculum is used effectively to educate pupils about themselves as well as being aware of and understanding others. Pupils are supported effectively to learn about keeping healthy and safe. For example, pupils are helped to understand important aspects of road safety. Leaders have planned useful opportunities for pupils to play an active role in their school, local and global community. This helps pupils to develop a sense of empathy for other people.

Pupils are polite and respectful towards each other and towards adults in school. There is little low-level disruption in lessons. When this occurs, most teachers deal with it well.

The school identifies pupils with SEND well. Leaders ensure that strong relationships are built between the school, home and external agencies. Staff and parents benefit from expert advice and guidance from beyond the school. This helps the school to meet the needs of pupils who have SEND successfully. One parent, echoing the views of others, said: 'The environment in the school is kind and inclusive and pupils are enthusiastic about learning.'

Staff are happy at the school. They value the school's supportive environment. Staff appreciate leaders' consideration of their workload and well-being when making decisions about the curriculum.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The reading curriculum is not delivered sufficiently well. This means that pupils do not learn to read quickly enough. Leaders need to ensure that pupils experience consistently effective phonics teaching that builds on their prior knowledge and helps them achieve greater success with their reading.
- In some subjects, the school has not identified precisely enough the knowledge that pupils should learn and the sequence in which the knowledge should be developed. This hinders the systematic improvement in pupils' knowledge and skills. The school should ensure that every curriculum area sets out clearly what will be learned and the order in which this is taught.
- In some subjects, assessment strategies are not in place. This means the school has a limited view of how well pupils are learning across the curriculum, which impedes how well future learning matches pupils' needs. The school should ensure that routine checks are in place that enable pupils' progress through the curriculum to be monitored more closely, supporting staff to plan future work more precisely.

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 predecessor school, Lancastrian Infant School, to be good in May 2019.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	148286
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10288103
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	126
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Archdeacon Luke Irvine-Capel
Headteacher	Laura Turner
Website	www.stjosephsinfant.school
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The interim headteacher has been in post since September 2023, having previously been the deputy headteacher.
- The trust has appointed an associate headteacher to work with the interim headteacher.
- Leaders do not make use of any alternative provision for pupils at the school.
- There are five classes. Three of the classes have a mix of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the interim headteacher, the associate headteacher, subject leaders and the special educational needs coordinator. An inspector had a meeting with five governors and two trustees.

- Staff met with inspectors to discuss their workload.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and design and technology. 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.
- The inspectors also looked at information and pupils' work in other curriculum subjects.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with pupils and spoke with them about their views on learning, safety and behaviour.

Inspectors took account of the 13 responses to Parent View including the free-text comments. Inspectors also reviewed the nine staff survey responses and the five pupil survey responses.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

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