

# Inspection of Fleetville Infant and Nursery School

Royal Road, St Albans, Hertfordshire AL1 4LX

---

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 December 2023

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Outstanding**

---

The quality of education

**Outstanding**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Outstanding**

Personal development

**Outstanding**

Leadership and management

**Outstanding**

Early years provision

**Outstanding**

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Jennifer Gardner. This school is part of the Spiral Partnership Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Marcus Cooper, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Robin Douglas.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Fleetville Infant and Nursery School under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Fleetville Infant and Nursery School to be outstanding, before it opened as an academy.

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

Pupils thrive in this nurturing school. When children join the Nursery or Reception Year, well-trained staff take time to know each child's unique starting points. Consequently, children settle quickly into school life. They engage animatedly in their play and learning. Pupils love attending this school.

An exceptionally positive atmosphere threads through all aspects of school life. Pupils treat each other with the utmost respect and kindness. All pupils and staff bring the school values, 'the 4Bs', to life. Rewards motivate pupils to work hard. In class, pupils are eager to learn and do their best. Personalised, high-quality, emotional support is in place for any pupil who finds managing their emotions tricky.

The work to promote pupils' personal development is exemplary. Beyond the curriculum, there is a rich range of clubs, visits and other experiences. All pupils, regardless of background, get to take part in these. Exciting books thread through the curriculum. They teach pupils about different places and people. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum teaches pupils in an age-appropriate way about friendships or keeping safe. Pupils take on responsibilities through the 'caring school committee'. They raise money for local charities or make improvements around the school.

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

The school and trust have put in place a well-planned and ambitious curriculum. The curriculum starts from the Nursery and threads through, in a logical sequence, to Year 2. In the early years classes, high-quality learning experiences ensure children have exceptionally strong foundations needed for future learning. The curriculum covers a range of interesting subjects and topics that build pupils' knowledge over time. Sketchbooks in art, for example, show that by Year 2, pupils use a range of well-learned creative techniques.

The high-quality school curriculum is underpinned by robust staff training. Staff have excellent subject knowledge. They review their practice with peers to ensure that pupils get the best possible learning experiences. Staff check pupils' learning regularly. They choose learning activities that build on what pupils already know and understand. Across the curriculum, pupils of all needs and abilities progress and achieve exceptionally well.

The reading curriculum is a further strength of the school. A well-planned phonics curriculum starts as soon as children join the school. Children in the early years get to know a variety of different songs, rhymes and stories. Adults support children well to learn new words and build their communication skills. Pupils build their reading knowledge very effectively. Many read with confidence and fluency. Staff spot any pupil who has fallen behind. They act swiftly to help them catch up with their peers.

Staff captivate pupils' imagination through engaging storytelling. Pupils love the books that underpin the curriculum. They read regularly themselves. The school works closely with parents, so they can further help pupils at home. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school's work.

Staff know pupils well, particularly those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). This is because the school gives staff detailed information about pupils' backgrounds and what works best for them. Staff ably adapt and craft their lessons around pupils' needs. Pupils with SEND, like the rest of the school, learn exceptionally well.

The school's values are the backbone of school life. The school ensures that all staff know and use the most effective techniques to support pupils to behave well. Staff nurture pupils to enable them to become resilient, independent individuals. Children in the early years are often deeply engaged with their learning. Pupils are caring and demonstrate kindness towards each other and adults. Pupils behave incredibly well.

Pupils access a very wide range of experiences that complement the school's curriculum. The 'Junior Duke' programme, for instance, enables pupils to do something different. It builds their character and sense of responsibility. The PSHE curriculum covers important topics. It supports pupils to build effective friendships or helps pupils to know how to keep safe. Pupils help out in the school with reading or support their local community through fundraising. Each activity is carefully planned and mapped out. All pupils benefit from this work. They are being well prepared for life outside of the school gates.

Trustees and the local governance committee check and monitor the quality of the school's work effectively. The school continually evaluates and reviews pupils' experiences to help improve the school further. Workload is managed effectively so that staff can focus on getting the best out of pupils. High-quality professional development ensures that staff have the knowledge and skills to enact the school's vision of providing an excellent education for all.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138206
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211812
<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	314
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Robin Douglas
<b>CEO of the trust</b>	Marcus Cooper
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jennifer Gardner
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.fleetvilleinfants.herts.sch.uk">www.fleetvilleinfants.herts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school does not use the services of any alternative providers.
- In partnership with the trust, the school operates a wrap-around care facility before and after school called 'Spiral Faces'.
- The headteacher has been in place since September 2022.

## Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of the 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 leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The lead inspector held meetings with members of the trust, the local governing committee and the chief executive officer.
- Inspectors met with a range of leaders across both days of the inspection, including the headteacher, senior leaders and the school's special educational needs and disabilities coordinator.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following areas: art, history, mathematics and reading. In each area, inspectors met with leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and looked at evidence of pupils' work.
- 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 also scrutinised other curriculum areas, including science and PSHE.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school's behaviour systems, attendance information and records of behaviour incidents.
- Inspectors scrutinised education, health and care plans for pupils across different classes.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils from different classes across both days of the inspection. Inspectors spent time with pupils in unstructured times, including breaktimes and lunchtimes, to observe behaviour and speak to pupils about school life.
- The lead inspector spoke to several parents at the school gate. In addition, he considered the 155 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents, including 155 free-text responses.
- The lead inspector also considered 37 responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.

### **Inspection team**

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Michael Scott	Ofsted Inspector
Danny Wagstaff	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2023