

# Inspection of a good school: Carlton Hill Primary School

Sussex Street, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 9HS

---

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 January 2024

## Outcome

Carlton Hill Primary School continues to be a good school.

## What is it like to attend this school?

Everyone receives a joyful welcome at this nurturing and successful primary school in the heart of Brighton. Parents describe the school as 'supportive, loving and caring'. Pupils understand and uphold the school ethos that 'fair means everyone gets what they need, not that everyone gets the same'. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are thriving because of the help they receive. Expertise is impressive across the school to support pupils' mental health and well-being. A caring culture and well-established approach to behaviour ensure success for all.

Expectations are ambitious, inclusive and well met. Pupils make strong progress and achieve very well by the time they leave this school. By the end of Year 6, pupils' achievements in reading, writing and mathematics are significantly above national averages.

Pupils are kind, respectful and polite. Relationships across the school are a strength. Pupils develop impressive moral understanding and embrace different cultures, faiths and values. They are thrilled to share their learning during '10 minutes of fame' in the hall each week. Assemblies and curriculum activities are well designed to prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. They are proud to represent Carlton Hill in events including the local athletics competition. Pupils love their school.

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

The school has developed a rich curriculum. Pupils learn to be inquisitive, reflective and engaged. They make very strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has achieved this with relentless determination to provide the best support for all pupils. Pupils with SEND enjoy success through well-considered adaptations to learning. Leaders work closely with teachers, pupils, parents and external agencies to support individual challenges that pupils experience. Resources, tasks and adult help are deployed expertly to address specific learning characteristics. Pupils who require additional support

for their specific needs, including anxiety, autism and sensory needs, are thriving and achieving well.

Pupils love reading. Phonics teaching is effective from early years, where children show sustained concentration. They learn sounds well, and staff identify gaps by checking individual progress routinely. The school provides one-to-one catch up led by skilled staff. Books usually match the sounds that pupils need to practise, and support is regularly reviewed to ensure that it is impactful. In older year groups, pupils develop fluency and impressive comprehension by analysing texts and exploring themes in depth. Teachers and support staff share a diverse range of books to inspire and represent everyone.

Children make a happy start in early years. They develop an interest in learning, which continues throughout the school. Transition is positive, and the school's nurturing strengths begin in Reception. Mathematical and language skills develop strongly. Science and geography are also highly developed across the school. A beach study developed pupils' understanding of human geography and inspired them to reduce waste. Leaders are sharply focused on where to make further improvements, as some subjects are not as fully developed in every class. Occasionally, while lesson activities are exciting for pupils, tasks are not precisely designed to ensure that key knowledge is remembered long-term. In these instances, pupils are engaged but do not fully understand and retain curriculum content.

Behaviour is positive, and learning is not disrupted. If pupils make mistakes, they have opportunities to make amends. Pastoral care is exceptional. Caring staff offer support for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, in spaces such as the mentoring room and calming lunchtime library club. The school has faced challenges with attendance since the pandemic. However, the school's actions have reduced absence rates successfully each year. Attendance is now closer to the national average and continues to be prioritised by leaders and governors.

Pupils are inspired by extra-curricular trips, such as residential visits, fieldwork and museum trips. Pupils elect school councillors, who seek their views to improve school life further. Older pupils value their leadership roles to help the school run smoothly. Everyone adores the 'buddies' system. Pupils develop strong bonds with each other, regardless of age, gender or background. Parents also appreciate the impressive enrichment that after-school clubs offer. The school ensures that nobody misses out. Opportunities are always affordable, or free of charge, to ensure strong take up by all.

Leaders are reflective, compassionate and inspirational. They have nurtured a joyful community, which aims high and achieves strongly. Parents feel that 'no problem is too big or too small'. They trust that the school will help their children to thrive in a happy, safe and creative environment. Staff morale is excellent, with no concerns about workload or well-being. Teachers' subject knowledge is highly developed and shared with other schools. Governors are knowledgeable, diligent and dedicated. They fulfil their responsibilities expertly, providing an effective balance of support and challenge.

## Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Sometimes, lesson tasks do not support pupils to understand fully the knowledge and vocabulary identified in curriculum plans. As a result, pupils may not learn and remember key curriculum content long-term. The school must ensure that activities are precisely designed to help pupils securely learn content successfully in all classes and subjects.

## 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 2018.

## 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>	114381
<b>Local authority</b>	Brighton and Hove
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296178
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	212
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Christine McNeill
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tamsen Beer
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.carltonhill.brighton-hove.sch.uk">www.carltonhill.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school currently uses no alternative provision.
- The school offers a before-school breakfast club, overseen by the governing body.
- After-school childcare is led by an external provider.

## 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.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, inclusion coordinator, school business manager, teachers, and governors, including the chair of the school governing body.
- The inspector spoke with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector held discussions about the curriculum, visited lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspector discussed with leaders and evaluated pupils' work in personal, social, health and economic education.
- The inspector listened to a range of pupils read. The inspector observed catch-up interventions to learn how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- The inspector gathered evidence to explore the impact of pupils' behaviour, the school's wider curriculum offer and how leaders support staff with their workload.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector: 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.
- The inspector considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including the free-text responses.
- The inspector spoke with a range of pupils to gather their views about the school. The inspector also considered responses to the pupil survey.

### **Inspection team**

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's 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 2024