

# Inspection of Castle Primary School

Castle Street, Portchester, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 9QQ

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Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

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

Pupils delight in coming to school. The reliable routines pupils follow from early years onwards support them to feel confident, happy and willing to take on challenges in lessons. Pupils work hard to meet the staff's high expectations for them to achieve well.

Pupils learn how to take care of their feelings and emotions. They show high levels of respect and demonstrate impressive levels of empathy for others. This is seen in the impeccable way pupils conduct themselves in lessons and at social times. As a result, pupils are happy and safe.

The high profile of values throughout the school helps pupils to become thoughtful and kind. Pupils celebrate diversity and are keen to extend a warm welcome to new people. Relationships between pupils and staff are highly respectful. Pupils and their parents value strongly the compassion and nurture pupils experience from the adults in school.

Pupils flourish in their personal development because their interests and talents are nurtured. Pupils are enthusiastic to take part in the school's extensive variety of clubs, from sailing to sign language and many more. These activities open opportunities to pupils regardless of their backgrounds or needs. They enable pupils to follow their interests, volunteer and develop resilience and independence.

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

The school has prioritised the development of the reading and mathematics curriculum. This sharp focus means that pupils from Reception onwards get off to a flying start and make sustained progress in both of these areas. At the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2, pupils achieve above-average outcomes.

Staff teach early reading in a well-structured way that ensures that pupils learn their sounds quickly. Children in early years develop their vocabulary by learning to retell favourite stories and rhymes. As a result, children are eager to write and to use their phonics knowledge. Staff notice quickly pupils who do not know the sounds they need. Precise, small-group teaching ensures that such pupils catch up quickly. As they progress through the school, pupils continue to be captivated by books. They are keen to complete reading 'blockbuster' challenges and receive prized house points. The daily 'library club' is extremely popular and as one pupil described 'you just read and then you are in another world'.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the school has made extensive changes to the curriculum and approaches to checking pupils' learning. This has had a positive impact on teaching and what pupils learn. In each subject, the school has considered the knowledge pupils should learn. Teachers are well trained and have good subject knowledge. They present information in interesting ways that help

pupils to understand. For example, in art pupils learn about colour and form through the study of 'My Dog Sighs' street art in Portsmouth.

Staff identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) quickly and accurately. Leaders make sure that pupils receive the support they need as soon as possible. Careful adaptations to teaching to support those pupils with SEND are a feature of every lesson. As a result, most of these pupils are supported to learn and achieve well. However, while the impact of curriculum changes on the achievement of the majority of pupils are notable across the school, some of the most disadvantaged are not yet achieving as highly as they could. Teaching is not adapted as well as it could be to meet these pupils' needs.

Behaviour is quite simply exemplary. Pupils know and understand the expectations and systems of the school because they are applied consistently by all staff. When things go wrong, the school works with pupils to put them right and help pupils to learn from their mistakes. Right from the start of Reception, pupils learn to take turns and show care for each other. Playtimes are joyful. Pupil play leaders organize games and their peers are keen to join in. Staff take time to get to know the pupils in their care. They use this knowledge to build strong and trusting relationships with families.

Pupils and staff are proud to be members of the school. They know their opinions are valued and that their well-being is prioritised. The school has designed an exceptional programme for the development of pupils' character from Reception to Year 6. Pupils access a well-designed range of high-quality extra-curricular opportunities. As well as clubs and residential trips, pupils benefit significantly from daily 'mindfulness' sessions. Pupils undertake leadership roles with enthusiasm. These contribute well towards pupils' own goals and aspirations.

The school makes sure that all staff are well trained. Mindful of workload, clear working practices, including email protocols and a 'guardian angel' scheme, are in place. These make sure staff can focus fully on teaching. Governors understand their roles well and bring a range of experiences to their work with the school. They challenge the school effectively and ensure that its vision and values are prioritised.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

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

- The curriculum over time has not had the desired impact for some of the most disadvantaged pupils. These pupils do not achieve consistently highly. The school has developed new approaches to address this and should ensure that these are implemented consistently well. The school should be rigorous in monitoring the impact of this work on these pupils' learning.

## 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 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>	116083
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10296214
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	394
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Alison Hodgson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Justin Bartlett
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.castleprimaryschool.co.uk">www.castleprimaryschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	15 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school uses two alternative providers, one of which is unregistered.

## 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 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 inspectors met with a range of senior leaders about their roles, including the school's headteacher. The lead inspector also met with representatives of the governing body and the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in: early reading, mathematics, art, physical education and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the

curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also reviewed a sample of the work of pupils in some other 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.
- The inspectors considered responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View, and parents' free-text comments. They spoke to parents at the school gate.
- The inspectors considered responses to the confidential staff and pupil surveys. Inspectors spoke to groups of staff and pupils to gather their views of the school.

### **Inspection team**

Lizzie Jeanes, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Judith O'Hare	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Foster	Ofsted Inspector

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