

Inspection of a good school: Elson Infant School

Elson Lane, Gosport, Hampshire PO12 4EU

Inspection dates:

19 and 20 March 2024

Outcome

Elson Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a highly inclusive school. All pupils are welcomed. Pupils arrive to the school and are greeted by smiling staff and music that builds excitement for the day ahead. The school's learning superheroes are a golden thread that runs through the school. Pupils embody 'Can do Connie' by trying their best and living up to teachers' high expectations for their learning. Pupils are enthusiastic about discovering different subjects. One pupil reflected the views of many when they said, 'The best thing about school is learning.'

Pupils feel safe. Most behave very well. In lessons, pupils sit in their 'strong gorilla' pose, showing they are paying attention. Pupils enjoy being rewarded for being like 'Respectful Rubin'. They are proud of the badges and certificates they receive in recognition of their kind behaviour and achievements. Pupils acknowledge that sometimes bullying might happen. However, they know that adults will help them. During lunchtime, pupils play sociably together.

The range of experiences pupils have while attending this school is impressive. Local visits, live performances and frequent visitors provide numerous opportunities to learn beyond the curriculum. Pupils have enjoyed working with the local community to design allotment boxes. These broad experiences significantly enhance pupils' cultural understanding.

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

The school is ambitious for all pupils to learn well. The curriculum is broad and interesting. It is well sequenced, ensuring that understanding builds over time. Teachers revisit previous topics and provide regular opportunities for pupils to practise what has been learned. For example, in early years, time is devoted to learning and rehearsing number bonds. This helps children to be able to recall these important mathematical facts automatically. In many subjects, the school has set out the knowledge and skills it wants pupils to know. However, in some areas of the wider curriculum, the school is still refining

exactly what should be taught and when. This means that teachers are not always clear on the precise knowledge that pupils should learn and when they should learn it.

The curriculum is taught well by expert staff. The activities that pupils complete are carefully selected. In early years, the purposeful nature of planned activities helps children to secure new learning. Lessons are resourced with high-quality materials. For example, in mathematics, pupils make effective use of learning aids when solving more complex problems. Staff have a good understanding of what pupils know and can do. They intervene to ensure any gaps in understanding are addressed rapidly. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have precise targets. Staff know these targets well and adapt learning appropriately to meet pupils' needs. Those pupils who need more bespoke help benefit from targeted intervention and work with specialist teachers and services to support their learning.

Reading is a priority in the school. High-quality texts have been carefully identified for each year group to learn from. These include a variety of fictional genres and poetry. From the start, children in the early years receive effective phonics teaching. This helps children to recognise sounds and blend these into words. The books that pupils have are well matched to the sounds they know. Through practice, this helps pupils to become increasingly confident readers. Pupils who fall behind have daily additional support to help them catch up.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Classroom routines are well established. Pupils move between the carpet and their tables quickly and quietly. Most pupils behave in a calm and orderly fashion. In early years, children confidently make use of all the inside and outside spaces available to them. Those who lose focus are quickly redirected by their teachers. The school carefully tracks pupils' behaviour and attendance, putting in place further support where needed.

The school supports pupils' personal development very successfully. An appreciation for equalities and diversity is threaded through the curriculum. Pupils know that everybody should be included. Key learning opportunities have been carefully identified that provide exposure to modern British culture. Opportunities to develop an understanding of the local area are well considered and inspire a love of learning in pupils. The school thoughtfully prepares pupils for the future. It ensures that pupils learn about healthy relationships and respectful attitudes at the right time.

Leaders have driven improvement at the school with determination. They carefully check how well the curriculum is taught and put in place training and support where needed to maintain high standards. Staff are proud to work at the school. They appreciate the way in which leaders support them and consider their workload. This ensures staff are motivated to do their best for the pupils in their care. Governors have a secure understanding of the strengths and areas to continue to develop. They hold school leaders to account appropriately to support the school improvements that are being made.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of subjects, leaders have not yet precisely identified and sequenced the detailed knowledge that they want pupils to learn. This means that teachers do not always know exactly what knowledge and skills need to be taught and in what order. The school needs to ensure that the curriculum is coherently planned and sequenced across all 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 June 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

Unique reference number	116163
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296218
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	230
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Matthew Dixon
Headteacher	Sarah Duffy (Executive Headteacher)
Website	www.elsoninfantschool.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	19 and 20 June 2018, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, there have been a number of changes in staff. The executive headteacher was appointed to their role in 2021. The head of school was also appointed to their role in 2021.
- The school currently uses two unregistered alternative providers to support the education of a small number of 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in his evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the executive headteacher, the head of school, senior leaders, subject leaders, the leader responsible for pupils with SEND, other teachers and support staff.

- The inspector met with governors and had a conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and geography. For each deep dive, the inspector 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.
- 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.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils and staff to hear their views.
- The inspector considered the responses to the confidential Ofsted surveys for staff and pupils and to Ofsted Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents.

Inspection team

Martin Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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