

Inspection of a good school: Smannell Field School

Smannell Road, Andover, Hampshire SP11 6JP

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Outcome

Smannell Field School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit, both academically and personally, from attending Smannell Field School. The school has very high expectations for how pupils will conduct themselves both in lessons and around the school. Pupils know exactly what these expectations are and meet them consistently well. Pupils in Year 11 are clear that being here has helped them to achieve the qualifications they need to fulfil their goals. Pupils trust and respect the adults in the school. They recognise that adults want the best for them.

A sense of calm and purpose permeates the school. Pupils feel safe and are clear that showing kindness to each other is important and do so consistently. They are well supported by adults in the school who understand the complexities of their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well.

Social times reflect the positive behaviour seen through the rest of the school. During these times, pupils engage well with each other and take part in a range of pursuits such as activities led by the school's sport coach, daily news discussions and various board games. Staff use these times to further develop their positive working relationships with pupils. They take time to get to know the pupils and show compassion and care towards them.

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

Much of the school's curriculum is well sequenced and ambitious. There are some subjects where the school is still mapping out the precise knowledge pupils will learn over time. Pupils who attend the school have a wide range of SEND. The school is effective in using assessment to identify what pupils already know and the specific support they need. From this, staff teach carefully thought through lessons which help pupils to build on their knowledge. These are effective. The school is highly ambitious for what pupils will achieve. The range of qualifications that pupils gain reflects this.

The school places high importance on reading. For many pupils, difficulty with reading is a barrier to their overall learning. There is a strong focus on reading across the whole curriculum. Staff check how well pupils can read and use this information to put in place effective additional activities as needed. This helps all pupils to become accurate readers. Most read with clarity and increasing confidence but there is still not the love of reading that the school aims for. The school is refining its approach to ensure that pupils develop an appreciation of reading and stories that goes beyond the functional.

The school has been relentless in its work to ensure that high attendance is an absolute priority. It works well with a range of agencies to support families where attendance is a concern. This work has been successful, and more pupils are attending well. From the moment pupils arrive, to the end of the day, their behaviour is excellent. They are highly motivated learners who want to achieve the best they can. Disruption in lessons is rare to see and does not impact pupils' learning.

The school has increased its focus on pupils' personal development. In safeguarding lessons, pupils learn about important concepts that prepare them for life in modern Britain. They take part in meaningful debates about world and local issues. Within these discussions, pupils use their oracy skills well to share their views positively, while respecting those of others.

There is a well-structured careers programme in place from Year 7 onwards. Through encounters with further education providers and employers, pupils learn about the various options available to them. However, the school's work experience programme is not yet providing opportunities for pupils to develop valuable employability skills. The school is aware and has plans to improve this.

This school plays a vital role in the local community. Extensive and effective outreach work means staff are supporting a large number of pupils within the local area. In doing so, the school aims to prevent further school exclusions. Staff are proud to be part of this school. They feel extremely well supported and valued by all school leaders.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school is developing the approach to careers education. Currently, pupils do not yet develop employability skills as well as they could. The school should now consider how it can create meaningful work experience opportunities, so that pupils are able to build these vital skills over time and be as ready as possible for life beyond school.
- The school is still changing the approach to ensure that pupils develop a love of reading. Currently, beyond their literacy lessons, pupils do not benefit from reading as

widely and often as they could. The school needs to continue to refine its strategies to further engage all pupils in reading a wide range of ambitious and rich texts.

- The school is still refining the overall sequencing of some curriculum areas. In these subjects, the expectations for what pupils will learn are not as ambitious as they could be. The school should make sure that staff have the knowledge they need to ensure that curricular thinking is precisely and coherently sequenced across the entire curriculum.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in March 2015.

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	115837
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10321805
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	32
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Headteacher	Amanda Edney
Website	www.sfs.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Smannell Field School is a pupil referral unit, meeting the needs of pupils within the Test Valley District Council boundary area.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school does not currently make use of any alternative provision.

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 inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team. They also met with the chair and vice chair of the management committee.
- The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics, safeguarding and art. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during play and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors considered a range of documents including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school improvement plan, and minutes from management committee meetings.
- The inspectors considered parents' responses to Ofsted Parent View.
- The inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- 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.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christine Bulmer

Ofsted Inspector

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