

Inspection of The Knaphill Lower School

Chobham Road, Knaphill, Woking, Surrey GU21 2SX

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

The headteacher of this school is Victoria Harbridge. This school is part of The Swan Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Elaine Cooper, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Ian Girdler.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school fosters a strong sense of belonging for pupils. This helps to create an inclusive environment where pupils and staff feel valued. The mission to empower pupils to have a bright future is at the heart of the school. This begins in the nursery, where children are encouraged to be curious and inquisitive.

Playtimes are happy occasions. Pupils love to play together and share equipment. Adults help them to organise games and take turns using the resources available. Pupils understand the school rules and follow these diligently on the playground. They feel secure that staff will help them to resolve any fallings-out.

Pupils are supported well to understand how to stay safe. They eagerly discuss the ways to keep safe in different scenarios, such as when crossing the road, using computers and what to do if they hear a fire alarm.

Pupils enjoy the trips they attend, which have been carefully linked to what they are learning in class. The school's revised curriculum is helping to address previous weaknesses in how well pupils achieved in the past.

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

Since the last inspection, the school has entirely revised the curriculum. They have developed a well-sequenced curriculum which defines what pupils will learn throughout their time at the school. This work began with mathematics and English. The school has used support from the trust and beyond to help shape their plans for what pupils will be taught. This has enabled the school to make effective changes. A few subjects have been developed more recently. In these subjects, pupils have some gaps in their knowledge due to weaknesses in what they were taught in the past.

Staff are trained well to deliver the school's ambitious curriculum. Children in the early years get off to a flying start. There has been careful thought about what children need for the next stage of their education and how they will be supported to achieve this. The school has a sharp focus on developing children's vocabulary right from the start, so they have the language they need for their future learning. Staff use questioning well to deepen children's understanding. Beyond the early years, adults use successful strategies to check how well pupils have recalled previous learning, using this information to reshape lessons. Teachers model how to complete tasks so pupils know what is expected of them. The trust has provided support for staff to understand the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Sometimes, however, the work that pupils with SEND complete is not fully tailored to meet their needs.

Reading is given the highest priority. The school describes this as a 'gateway' skill, since being able to read helps pupils to access other areas of the curriculum. Staff support pupils to learn to read quickly. This begins as soon as children start in the

early years. Teachers expertly check that pupils have learned the intended sounds. Some pupils need more help to keep up with their peers. This is provided quickly and effectively. Pupils love to read books as well as listening to their teachers read to them. Books are a strong feature throughout the school and staff have carefully considered what books are available to pupils. There is a clear focus on pupils being able to see themselves in the books that they read while developing cultural and moral awareness.

There are high expectations for behaviour throughout the school. Pupils understand the three school rules and they know why these are important. The routines for school life begin in the early years. Children are supported to take turns, share resources and listen to one another. Throughout the provision, children rise to these expectations and are eager to learn. There is generally a calm atmosphere throughout the school. This helps pupils to focus on their learning.

The school has successfully revised the personal, social and health education programme. Pupils are taught how to stay safe, keep healthy and understand the school's values through lessons and assemblies. Pupils talk about why tolerance is important and ways to celebrate difference. Clubs are designed to match pupils' interests, which pupils, parents and carers all value. They appreciate the opportunities that the school provides.

The school has been through a period of significant change since the last inspection. The trust has prioritised staff professional development. Staff value the opportunities to improve their own practice. They feel well supported and comment positively on the changes that leaders have initiated.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Historic weaknesses in the curriculum have led to some pupils having gaps in their knowledge in some wider curriculum subjects. The school should continue to embed the changes made to how these subjects are planned and delivered, so that gaps can be addressed.
- Staff do not always make appropriate adaptations to the curriculum for pupils with SEND. This means that some pupils do not learn as deeply as they could. The school should continue to support staff to understand how best to meet the needs of these pupils.

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	147428
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10296453
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Ian Girdler
Chair of governing body	Dorothy Jackson Greentree
CEO of trust	Elaine Cooper
Headteacher	Victoria Harbridge
Website	www.knaphill-lower.surrey.sch.uk
Dates of previous inspection	30 November and 1 December 2021, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has been part of The Swan Trust since March 2024.
- Since the previous inspection, the headteacher commenced her substantive role. The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator started their role in May 2024.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

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.

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team met with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They also met with other school leaders, staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of governors. She met with four trustees and spoke to the chief executive officer of the trust.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, religious education and geography. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To inspect safeguarding, the inspection team checked the single central record of recruitment checks and talked to leaders responsible for safeguarding. The inspectors also talked to a range of staff and pupils informally.
- The inspectors considered the responses to the confidential staff survey and spoke to a range of staff and pupils about their views of the school.
- The inspectors took account of the 48 responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional 35 free-text responses. An inspector talked with some parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The inspection team met with a range of pupils to discuss their views about the school and talked to pupils informally during social times and in lessons.
- The inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school development plan and school self-evaluation.

Inspection team

Sara Staggs, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Jon Chaloner	Ofsted Inspector
Gareth Flemington	Ofsted Inspector

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