

Inspection of a good school: Fairlight Primary School

St Leonard's Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 3AJ

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2024

Outcome

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might be outstanding if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are warmly welcomed and safe in this nurturing and inclusive school. Adults understand pupils' academic and emotional needs deeply. Each pupil is understood and celebrated. They learn to value themselves and to deeply respect others. As one parent put it, 'This is a school full of heart and dedicated to making sure each child is valued and supported to achieve.'

Pupils feel involved in school life and behave exceptionally well. Social times are designed with their interests in mind. Pupils love having a choice over what to play with. As they build giant structures with tyres and wood, or take turns in the relaxing ball pit and on the rope swing, pupils learn how to play safely and responsibly. In lessons, pupils focus intently on their learning, determined to succeed. By the end of Year 6, they achieve well, catching up from starting points that are often below average.

School clubs encourage pupils to build a healthy appetite for outdoor interests. Early morning 'wake and shake' dance sessions in the playground invigorate and inspire pupils to be physically active and mentally positive. Pupils eagerly anticipate school traditions such as dancing, singing, and making props for the annual Brighton and Hove children's parade.

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

The school is resolute that every pupil will achieve the very best they can. It has developed a broad and ambitious curriculum from Nursery to Year 6. The curriculum is logically sequenced so that pupils' learning builds coherently over time. Teachers break the curriculum down into small steps. They have identified the important 'sticky' knowledge pupils must understand and remember. They have also identified key technical vocabulary, which pupils practise as they read a rich variety of texts across the curriculum.

A number of children enter the early years foundation stage with underdeveloped communication and language skills. These children are identified quickly and receive expert support through the well-designed curriculum and from adults who are experts in teaching speaking and listening. Despite this, a proportion of pupils do not meet the end of key stage 1 expectations. The school continues to support them, so that by the end of key stage 2 they make excellent progress through the curriculum and are ready for the next stage in their education. The school is vigilant in identifying pupils early who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers adapt their teaching highly effectively so that pupils with SEND learn the same ambitious curriculum as their peers.

Reading is taught exceptionally well. In the nursery, the curriculum supports children to develop their listening skills through a wealth of songs, rhymes and poetry, which children chant enthusiastically. Pupils practise speaking and listening through role play, talking with partners, and rehearsing new words or sentences. They are well prepared to start learning phonics as soon as they enter reception. Teachers understand pupils' needs well and make sure they get the right support. The books pupils read help them to practise the sounds they know. Pupils enjoy the daily stories read by their teachers.

Teachers use assessment skilfully, checking systematically for understanding, addressing misconceptions and challenging pupils to explain their thinking. They routinely help pupils recall what they already know, so they can make connections with new areas of the curriculum. For example, when studying the botanical artist Margaret Mee, teachers reminded pupils how to create texture and tone in their pencil drawings before learning how to mix paint to replicate the natural colours of plants. Adults revisit the most important knowledge pupils must understand and remember daily, through quizzes and familiar songs. Throughout the school, adults use consistent gestures and phrases which pupils repeat regularly, for example when using resources in mathematics. Pupils rehearse new learning through pre-teaching and discussion, which helps them to participate confidently in debate and discussion.

Pupils experience many inspirational artists and musicians who visit the school to widen pupils' understanding of the world. Pupils relish trips linked to the curriculum, such as their history visit to Preston Manor to find out what life was like as a Victorian servant. They learn about different faiths and to value each other's beliefs and opinions. They show great respect and maturity when sharing their experiences of how people respond to the world in different ways. Pupils learn how to recognise and manage their emotions. They are taught how to keep safe on the internet and how to look after their physical health.

Governors are passionately committed to supporting leaders in achieving the ambitious shared vision. They understand their statutory duties well. Staff are overwhelmingly proud to be part of this vibrant, diverse and happy school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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 December 2014.

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	114487
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10321796
Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	337
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chairs of governing body	Victoria Southwell and Nicola Yuill
Headteacher	Damien Jordan
Date of previous inspection	5 December 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school currently uses one source of 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. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and the senior leadership team.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in reading, mathematics and art. For each deep dive, they 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.
- In addition, the inspector looked at the impact of the school's wider opportunities and enrichment programmes in the science and design technology curriculums.
- 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 reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of local governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and at playtimes. They spoke with pupils about bullying, behaviour and leaders' expectations of pupils' behaviour.

Inspection team

Jo Brinkley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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