

Inspection of Portway Junior School

Upper Drove, Andover, Hampshire SP10 3NA

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| Inspection dates: | 15 and 16 October 2024 |
| The quality of education | Good |
| Behaviour and attitudes | Good |
| Personal development | Good |
| Leadership and management | Good |
| Previous inspection grade | Good |

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils achieve well, as the school continues to raise expectations of what pupils should know and understand. Pupils take pride in their learning. They enjoy taking on responsibilities within the school, such as being a house captain. Pupils' voice is heard in and makes a difference to school life. The school recognises and celebrates pupils' achievements through weekly assemblies and certificates. This strengthens the positive and supportive culture within the school.

The 'Portway Code' sets clear expectations for pupils' behaviour. This helps them to make the right choices in class and around the school. Classrooms are settled and focused. Rare instances of bullying are dealt with effectively. This helps pupils to feel confident in talking to staff about any concerns.

Pupils appreciate the opportunities that the school provides for learning beyond the classroom. Raft-building, survival skills and BMX riding help to develop their confidence. Residential trips help to foster pupils' teamwork. Visitors help pupils to learn about unusual themes like the geography of chocolate. As well as providing enjoyable and memorable experiences, these opportunities help pupils to think about different perspectives. In turn, this helps with ideas for their writing and learning across the curriculum.

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

The school's curriculum is aspirational and well-designed. Leaders have made well-considered changes to many aspects of the curriculum. As a result, it is both challenging and accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Teachers have a strong understanding of the knowledge and skills set out in the curriculum. This helps them to explain new learning in ways that pupils understand well.

The school's ongoing programme of training for staff is helping to establish consistent approaches to teaching. Staff have the expertise to deliver much of the curriculum well. In subjects where this is most secure, for example in mathematics, teachers make sure that pupils' learning builds on what they have learned previously. As a result, pupils learn and achieve well, including disadvantaged pupils. In a few subjects, the tasks that pupils complete do not always enable them to connect new learning with what they already know. This is most noticeable in subjects that have had more recent changes to the curriculum. Where this is the case, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

There is a strong emphasis on reading throughout the school. Staff are skilled at identifying pupils who need help with their reading and what this help should be. Targeted support helps weaker readers to catch up effectively. The school's approach to identifying individual needs also helps to make sure that staff understand the starting points of pupils with SEND. However, there are instances when teachers are not as thorough in checking

on pupils' understanding within lessons. This results in some errors or gaps in pupils' learning not being spotted or addressed.

The school's work on attendance is highly effective. Staff work in partnership with families to address potential barriers to attending. There is a consistent emphasis on the importance of pupils being in school every day. This has led to sustained reductions in persistent absence, especially for disadvantaged pupils.

The school has a real focus on supporting pupils' behaviour. A small cohort of pupils sometimes find it hard to manage their behaviour. The school provides them with a range of targeted strategies. Over time, these help pupils to be ready to learn independently.

The school works with parents as well as taking account of emerging local needs when putting the personal, social and health education provision in place. Pupils learn about how to keep safe online and in their community. All pupils benefit from the school's promotion of mental health and wellbeing. The school enhances pupils' cultural awareness, both through academic learning and wider opportunities. They develop a strong understanding of a range of faiths and heritage backgrounds, for instance through the school's links with the Nepalese community in the local area. This helps pupils to be tolerant and welcoming of others.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

[If the school has judgements that are not outstanding] What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers are not systematic enough about checking and correcting what pupils understand within some lessons. When this happens, pupils' gaps in learning, errors or misconceptions are not addressed well enough. The school should make sure that all staff have the expertise and knowledge to support pupils to secure their understanding and achieve well.
- Sometimes, the work set for pupils does not enable them to fit new learning into their wider understanding within a subject. As a consequence, some pupils find it difficult to connect what they are learning with what they have learnt before. The school should make sure that teaching is building pupils' understanding over the long term by integrating new learning into larger ideas.

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

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| Unique reference number | 115853 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 10341352 |
| Type of school | Junior |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 7 to 11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 384 |
| Appropriate authority | Local authority |
| Chair of governing body | Gemma Merritt |
| Headteacher | Vicky Windross |
| Website | www.portwayjunior.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 12 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.
- The school run a breakfast club and after-school club on the school premises.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024, will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- 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 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 school leaders including the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The inspectors also met representatives from the governing body and spoke with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, art and design, geography and English. For each deep dive, the 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. The inspectors also discussed the curriculum and provision for pupils with SEND, and sampled work from other areas of the curriculum.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, governors, staff, parents and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts the pupils' interests first.
- As part of the inspection evidence, inspectors also considered responses to Ofsted's Parent View survey, and Ofsted's online survey for school staff.

Inspection team

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