

Hassocks Infant School

Address: Chancellors Park, Hassocks, West Sussex, BN6 8EY

Unique reference number (URN): 125933

Inspection report: 14 April 2026

Exceptional	
Strong standard	
Expected standard	
Needs attention	
Urgent improvement	

Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, pupils are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect schools for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- **Met:** The school has an open and positive culture of safeguarding. All legal requirements are met.
- **Not met:** The school has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed the curriculum, approaches to teaching and the school environment to enable all pupils to achieve very well. Children who join in the Reception class with gaps in key knowledge and skills are supported to catch up rapidly. This is especially the case in communication and language, as well as social and emotional development. Pupils acquire a depth of knowledge around essential content and skills in reading, writing and mathematics. This includes disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. High levels of reading fluency are also reflected in the published data for phonics at the end of Year 1.

Pupils enjoy learning new vocabulary. They use it confidently throughout their activities in Reception and in structured discussions in key stage 1. Pupils remember a great deal of what they have learned across a range of subjects. They are very well prepared to hit the ground running when they transition into key stage 2.

Attendance and behaviour

Strong standard ●

Pupils love coming to this school and happily attend regularly. Leaders communicate effectively with families so they understand the value of regular attendance. Leaders understand the barriers to attendance which some families experience. They work very well with external agencies so that families get the help they need. Leaders are tenacious in their approaches to improve pupils' attendance. Their work has had an excellent impact on securing high levels of attendance over many years.

Leaders' approach to behaviour is highly positive. Policies and procedures to manage behaviour are well understood and consistently applied by staff. Pupils' voices are heard through their contribution to class behaviour charters which pupils agree together. Any pupils in need of support get effective help to meet the school expectations for behaviour. Pupils relish showing how they can behave like Ready Rex, Respectful Rabbit or Safe Spike. Pupils fully engage with the deeply embedded daily routines of school life. They live up to leaders' high expectations of them. When rare incidents of misbehaviour occur, leaders deal with them straight away and use them as an opportunity to further teach the school values. Pupils are engrossed in their learning. They listen respectfully to staff and cooperate kindly with each other.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a broad curriculum which is set out in a logical order towards ambitious goals. Leaders have further refined the curriculum and identified the most important skills and knowledge that pupils must learn. Staff have a depth of subject knowledge. They understand how the curriculum builds from Reception to the end of key stage 1. They consistently teach the curriculum with skill. Staff use highly effective teaching approaches. Carefully selected resources enhance pupils' learning. Staff check pupils' understanding routinely. They adapt their teaching with precision so that pupils do not fall behind. Pupils are helped to secure their learning through deliberate and well-placed

opportunities to revisit prior content. Pupils express their thinking confidently and make connections across the curriculum.

Leaders keep reading high on everyone's agenda. Pupils throughout the school enjoy a wide range of books and acquire ambitious vocabulary. Leaders ensure that learning activities are highly effective in helping pupils acquire key knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics. When required, teachers are highly effective in adapting approaches to teaching for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are disadvantaged. This ensures that pupils fully access the same learning as their peers.

Early years

Strong standard 

Leaders have developed an early years curriculum which highlights and seamlessly sequences the most important knowledge and skills. Effective transition processes enable staff to quickly get to know children well. As soon as they start school, children learn the schools' values and high expectations.

The curriculum is taught through highly effective means. Language and communication is at the heart of the curriculum. Pupils learn phonics as soon as they start in Reception. They are immersed in stories, songs and rhyme throughout the day. Leaders have identified the key vocabulary children need. Staff skilfully help children to practice using new and interesting words.

Staff have expert subject knowledge in how young children learn as well as a detailed understanding of the curriculum. They understand individual needs and teach the curriculum through children's interests. Staff skilfully revisit the key areas of knowledge with children during their play. Expertly chosen resources support children to enhance their knowledge and understanding as they progress through the curriculum. As a result, children from all starting points, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, achieve tremendously well. By the end of Reception, children are very well prepared to progress to the key stage 1 curriculum.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders take every opportunity to get to know pupils and their families at the start of the Reception Year. Staff tailor provision for pupils meticulously so that pupils' learning experiences are deliberately engineered for success. They notice if any pupils fall behind. Staff are swift to identify any pupils who may have barriers to learning or wellbeing, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. If a pupil finds any aspect of their learning difficult, their provision is changed swiftly to give them the tools, resources and strategies that they need to achieve both academically and personally.

Leaders ensure that staff have the training they need to adapt their teaching, the environment and the curriculum to meet pupils' needs. Staff work well with external agencies to develop highly effective support for pupils. Leaders systematically and skilfully monitor, measure and adapt their provision for pupils with barriers to learning or wellbeing. This ensures that pupils' needs continue to be met. Leaders use additional funding such as the pupil premium grant with great effect to ensure that disadvantaged pupils fully benefit from all the school has to offer. Pupils known or previously known to social care are well

supported. All pupils access the curriculum, relish learning and achieve very well from their starting points.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard ●

Governors understand their statutory duties well and carry them out diligently. They are deeply committed to ensuring that the provision for disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is precisely tailored to their needs. Leaders and governors have a detailed understanding of the schools' priorities and make well considered changes in the best interest of pupils.

Leaders ensure that staff have an expert understanding of the curriculum. Staff training includes evidence informed research about how young children learn. Leaders provide staff with training and accurate information to help pupils to overcome barriers to learning or wellbeing. Staff are proud to be part of the ambitious shared vision and are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

Leaders place an emphasis on listening to parents' and carers' views. Everyone feels valued and know that their voices are heard. Leaders build positive relationships with families and ensure that they get the support they need. Leaders carefully consider any impact that changes may have on staff wellbeing and workload. Staff are overwhelmingly proud to work at the school and play their part in its exciting vision.

Personal development and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Leaders have developed a personal, social and health curriculum which supports pupils very effectively to look after themselves and recognise healthy relationships. Pupils learn how to take care of their bodies through exercise and eating a balanced diet. Pupils are taught how to recognise different emotions and employ strategies to help themselves feel calm if they experience anger or sadness. They know never to share personal information when using the internet and how to report any concerns.

Pupils are taught about people from different cultures. Through the curriculum, school assemblies and the books they read, pupils learn about a wide range of notable historians, artists and scientists from different backgrounds. Pupils learn to respect each others' beliefs and opinions. For example, pupils celebrate a faith day termly and speak with clarity, confidence and understanding about religions and their traditions. Pupils learn about what life is like for children at schools in different countries around the world.

The school environment is designed with purpose to develop pupils' talents and interests. For example, at social times, the mud kitchen, bikes and other well-chosen resources enable pupils to develop gross and fine motor skills as they play. Areas for reading, writing and drawing provide calmer spaces for pupils to enjoy. Staff interact with pupils at social times, helping them to develop language and social skills. Leaders carefully track pupils' participation in music and sport clubs offered beyond the curriculum. They ensure that any pupils with barriers to learning or wellbeing are included in highly effective, bespoke opportunities to nurture their confidence and interests.

The school prepares pupils well for active citizenship in modern Britain. Pupils relish opportunities to stand in democratic elections to be school councillors. They contribute to the wider community by fund raising for charities and visiting a local residential home.

What it's like to be a pupil at this school

Pupils develop confidence, resilience and enthusiasm for learning in this school's welcoming and purposeful environment. Pupils independently start each morning with activities which are designed by staff who understand pupils' individual needs. Staff empower pupils by listening to their opinions and valuing their ideas. For example, pupils vote daily for which story will be read to the class. Pupils thrive in this school. They have a powerful sense of belonging and rightly trust adults to help with any concerns.

Pupils come to school happily and their attendance is high. Leaders work closely with families. Leaders' positive relationships with families helps pupils to overcome their barriers to attendance. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Staff explicitly teach the school values and encourage pupils to live up to them. Pupils enjoy the well-embedded daily routines, taking part in them enthusiastically. During lessons, pupils concentrate well. Bullying is not tolerated and hardly ever happens. If there are any behaviour concerns, staff address them swiftly.

Classrooms buzz with excitement as pupils focus intently on their learning. Leaders and staff have honed, over time, a coherently sequenced curriculum and highly successful approaches to teaching. Staff use their expertise to identify any barriers to pupils' learning or gaps in their understanding. Staff have expert subject knowledge and teach the curriculum consistently well. Pupils build a secure understanding of reading, writing and mathematics. This means that all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils, achieve highly from their starting points. By the end of Year 2, pupils are very well prepared to transition to the key stage 2 curriculum.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should continue to drive the ongoing refinement of the curriculum implementation, to achieve and sustain exceptional standards of teaching, which has a transformational impact on the achievement of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
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About this inspection

The co-chairs of the board of governors in this school are Jenny Doyle and Richard Hind.

Inspectors carried out this full inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Following our renewed inspection framework, all inspections are now led by His Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) or by Ofsted Inspectors (OIs) who have previously served as HMIs.

Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator, members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority during the inspection.

The inspectors confirmed the following information about the school:

The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Headteacher: Adrian Bates-Holland

Lead inspector:

Jo Brinkley, His Majesty's Inspector

Team inspectors:

Kate Owbridge, Ofsted Inspector

Marian Feeley, His Majesty's Inspector

Facts and figures used on inspection

The data was used by the inspector(s) during the inspection. More recent data may have been published since the inspection took place.

 This data is from 14 April 2026

School and pupil context

Total pupils

268

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils currently at this school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 272

School capacity

270

Close to average

What does this mean?

The total number of pupils who can attend the school and how this compares to other schools of this phase in England.

National average: 300

Pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM)

4.85%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years.

National average: 26.3%

Pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan

1.49%

Below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan. This covers pupils with more support than is available through special educational needs support.

National average: 3.5%

Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) support

7.84%

Well below average

What does this mean?

The proportion of pupils with reported special educational support needs at the school.

National average: 15%

Location deprivation

Close to average

What does this mean?

Based on the English Indices of Deprivation (2019) and the school's location, we have calculated whether the school is located in a more or less deprived area.

Resourced Provision or SEND Unit (if applicable)

No resourced provision

What does this mean?

Whether school has Resourced Provision or SEND unit (if applicable).

Absence

Overall absence

The percentage of all possible mornings and afternoons missed due to absence from school (for whatever reason, whether authorised or unauthorised) across all pupils.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	3.9%	5.2%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	4.1%	5.5%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	4.0%	5.9%	Below

Persistent absence

The percentage of pupils missing 10% or more of their possible mornings and afternoons.

Year	This school	National average	Compared with national average
2024/25 (2 term)	2.8%	13.3%	Below
2023/24 (3 term)	5.5%	14.6%	Below
2022/23 (3 term)	6.6%	16.2%	Below

Our grades explained

Exceptional

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other schools can learn from it.

Strong standard

The school reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard

The school is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement

The school needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

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