

Inspection of Meon Infant School

Shelford Road, Milton, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 8NT

Inspection dates:	8 and 9 July 2025
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 Ruth Vonk. This school is part of the Thinking Schools Academy Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Stuart Gardner, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Gerard Newman. There is also an executive headteacher, Sara Paine, who is responsible for this school and two others.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy coming into school. Teachers greet pupils warmly as they walk into class. Staff support pupils to stay focused on their work and encourage them to ask for help if they feel unsure or worried about something. As a result, pupils know they are safe. Teachers encourage everyone to 'be your best self' from the moment they arrive. From an early age, pupils develop a secure sense of independence.

The school has high expectations of pupils. Pupils learning to read is a priority, and they read every day. The school strives to make sure that 'every child is a reader' by the time they finish Year 2. For most, this goal is securely achieved. Pupils share their love of learning and talk about their favourite lessons. Pupils learn well, know more and remember more.

Pupils benefit from strong relationships with staff. The school's investment in building positive relationships has a strong impact on the school's ethos. Warm, positive interactions between pupils and staff foster a sense of belonging and trust. This supports positive behaviours for learning. Pupils benefit as a result of the partnerships the school forges with their parents. There is a strong, growing sense of community.

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

The school has a well-designed curriculum that is ambitious and meets pupils' needs. Teachers are well trained and have thought carefully about how to deliver this curriculum to their pupils. As a result, pupils learn the necessary skills and knowledge to progress their learning. Effective work with other schools has meant that the curriculum is continually reviewed and ensures it prepares pupils for the next steps in education. Pupils learn the curriculum well.

From early years through to Year 2, teachers place a sharp focus on language and vocabulary. Teachers model the appropriate use of key, subject-specific vocabulary well. Pupils copy this and improve their own use of language. Pupils are clear about what they are learning because teachers deliver lessons with clarity. The school makes sure that resources and approaches to teaching support all pupils. Teachers identify pupils who need additional support, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and make sure appropriate help and adaptations are in place.

Teachers successfully teach children to read. Highly trained staff teach phonics daily. If any pupil starts to fall behind, staff are quick to respond and offer further support. The school develops a love of reading through sharing stories. Staff use these, as well as real-life experiences, to give purpose to writing tasks. As a result, pupils show a desire to write from an early age.

Staff check pupils' learning during lessons. They use these checks to make adjustments to their teaching when required. When done successfully, these checks help address misconceptions and enable pupils to learn more deeply. However, in some subjects, these are not as effective and pupils do not achieve as well. The school is refining how it uses

periodic and formal checks on pupils' understanding to identify whether pupils have learned the key knowledge or skills.

The school promotes a culture of positive attendance. It celebrates pupils' regular attendance and punctuality. For example, pupils are proud to win the 'Attendance Audrey' and 'Punctuality Pedro' bears. If a pupil's absence rate begins to rise, the school takes swift action. It works supportively with families to address any barriers to attendance. Pupils show respect towards one another, and teachers help them to understand why respect is important. The school has created an open culture where everyone feels welcomed and supported. Pupils appreciate diversity. Teachers help pupils learn how to stay healthy. Pupils know this relates to their physical and mental health. The school has considered the most effective ways of supporting young pupils develop body and mind. They have used funding effectively to offer pupils a wide range of experiences during lunch and playtimes. The playground is a hive of excited activity, and pupils enjoy learning through play.

The school offers pupils wider experiences that they may not have had before. Trips, including visits to an aquarium, country park and museums, support and enhance the curriculum. These experiences help pupils to deepen their learning and broaden their understanding of the world outside of the school gates.

Leaders' passion for education and the community sits at the heart of all they do for the pupils at Meon Infant School. With support from the trust, the school continually develops its staff. Staff value the development the school provides. Leaders and the trust share the value that school is a place where everyone is learning all the time.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects in the wider curriculum, staff do not always check whether pupils have learned the key knowledge required. This means that staff cannot adapt their teaching or the curriculum to help pupils who fall behind. The school should continue to refine the processes of checking pupils' outcomes, using what they find to adapt lesson plans and provide pupils with the most important knowledge and skills to prepare them for the next stages of learning.

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	146135
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10379928
Type of school	Infant
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	171
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Gerard Newman
CEO of the trust	Stuart Gardner
Headteacher	Sara Paine (executive headteacher) Ruth Vonk (head of school)
Website	www.meonwayfederation.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 November 2022, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of Thinking Schools Academy Trust
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

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 evaluation 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.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of trustees, a group of governors and representatives from the Thinking Schools Academy Trust.
- The inspection team carried out deep dives in the following subjects: reading, mathematics, history and music. 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. Inspectors also discussed the curriculum in some other subjects.
- The lead inspector considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View. The inspectors spoke to staff and pupils during the inspection and took account of staff responses to Ofsted's 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

Ian Howie, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Vanessa Hickey

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
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