

Inspection of Pound Hill Infant Academy

Crawley Lane, Pound Hill, Pound Hill Infant Academy, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7EB

Inspection dates:	21 and 22 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

The headteacher of this school is Thomas Jordan. This school is part of The University of Brighton Academies Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Dr John Smith, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Siobhan Denning.

Ofsted has not previously inspected Pound Hill Infant Academy under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. However, Ofsted previously judged Pound Hill Infant School to be outstanding for overall effectiveness, before it opened as Pound Hill Infant Academy as a result of conversion to academy status.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils blossom emotionally and academically in this successful school. The values of care, respect, independence, success and perseverance are embedded in all aspects of school life. Children make a wonderful start in early years, where the school's high expectations and impressive nurture begin. From this secure foundation, pupils learn to treat each other with kindness and respect throughout the school. Behaviour is excellent from the classroom to the playground. Pupils are keen and proud to meet the high aspirations of caring and dedicated staff and leaders.

Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is a strength of this highly inclusive school. Pupils achieve well across the curriculum. By the end of Year 2, pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

Pupils celebrate diversity through thoughtful assemblies and curriculum activities. Events such as 'unique week' showcase what is special about each individual pupil. Inspirational visits from faith leaders, authors and a space dome enrich school life. Educational trips offer valuable life experiences. Highlights include trips to the aquarium and the London Eye. Sport, music and creative clubs celebrate pupils' talents further. Every opportunity is accessible to all because the school ensures that nobody misses out.

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

Reading is highly prioritised from the start in early years. Children learn sounds and letters with expert guidance from staff. Story time excites and inspires children to participate and make predictions about what could happen next. Staff give precise and effective catch-up support to pupils who need it. This extends to supporting families to help at home. Pupils learn to become motivated, fluent and confident readers as they move through the school.

The school is rightly proud of how it embraces multicultural diversity. Families speak a rich range of languages, and many pupils speak English as an additional language. The school is proactive to teach essential English vocabulary to help unlock learning for all. This begins well in early years, where staff identify and practise key language with children to help them to communicate with confidence and clarity. This work helps everyone to access rich opportunities for learning. By the time pupils reach the end of key stage 1, they produce accomplished writing to showcase their skills further. Pupils also use and apply their mathematical skills with success, setting them up strongly for their next stage of learning.

Every subject has been carefully thought through with knowledge, skills and vocabulary. The school has engaged with excellent support from the trust to develop the curriculum and teachers' expertise. As a result, staff show secure subject knowledge across the classes. This expertise extends to the way that the school adapts learning to include everyone. Staff communicate and collaborate together to identify pupils' needs swiftly. The school helps pupils to thrive with personalised support. As a result, pupils with SEND make strong progression through the curriculum. Teachers check what pupils know to

identify and address any gaps in pupils' knowledge. Most pupils learn and remember essential content well, but some pupils' recall of knowledge over time is less secure. At these times, lesson activities do not build on pupils' understanding with enough precision.

Behaviour is highly positive across the school. From early years onwards, children share, collaborate and learn with joy and enthusiasm. Relationships are respectful, warm and supportive. Pupils feel part of a caring community. Attendance is better than the national average and continues to improve. This is testament to impressive work by the school to help families overcome barriers to attending school.

Personal development is exceptional. Pupils thrive with responsibilities on the 'eco committee', 'charity committee' and 'pupil parliament'. These roles help pupils to understand fundamental British values when they vote for their peers. Spirituality is nurtured through links with a range of faiths. Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to stay safe, including when online. Pastoral care is transformative. The school offers therapeutic interventions and sensory support to help pupils through tricky times. This excellent work prioritises mental health and well-being for all.

Leaders are unwavering in their determination to seek the best for every child. They are ambitious, dedicated and compassionate. They ensure that staff's workload and welfare are managed thoughtfully. Trustees fulfil their duties with diligence. Governors and trustees are knowledgeable, and they offer purposeful support and challenge to uphold the school's vision and values. Parents and carers are thrilled with the school's provision. One represented many when sharing, 'This is not just a school, but a community where children thrive and grow.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- At times, teaching activities do not help pupils to learn key knowledge securely. As a result, some pupils do not recall essential content over time across the curriculum. The school should ensure that learning tasks are designed to help pupils to learn and remember essential knowledge long term in every subject.

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	142290
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10341792
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	269
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Siobhan Denning
CEO of the trust	Dr John Smith
Principal	Thomas Jordan
Website	www.poundhillinfantacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is part of the University of Brighton Academies Trust. This is the first inspection since it opened as Pound Hill Infant Academy as a result of conversion to academy status. Ofsted previously judged the predecessor school, Pound Hill Infant School, to be outstanding for overall effectiveness.
- The school shares a site with Pound Hill Junior School.
- The school does not currently use 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.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, assistant principals, subject leaders, trust leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with three governors and one trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, geography, and science. For deep dives, 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 considered other subjects.
- The lead inspector listened to a range of pupils read. The inspector observed catch-up interventions to evaluate how staff provide extra support to pupils.
- 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.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of pupils to learn their views about the school.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the free-text responses.

Inspection team

Scott Reece, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mary Ellen McCarthy

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