

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Poulner Infant School and Nursery

North Poulner Road, Ringwood, Hampshire BH24 3LA

Inspection dates:

15 and 16 October 2024

Outcome

Poulner Infant School and Nursery has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at the previous inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils thrive here. At the start of each day, they hurry happily into school. Pupils state confidently that 'everyone is welcome here'. Their kind and respectful manner towards each other and to adults shows that this is truly the case.

The school is ambitious for all pupils to achieve well. Pupils have a real thirst for knowledge. They are excited to learn new information. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), speak confidently about what they know and can do. This includes the youngest children in early years, where adults support children well to talk about their learning and develop their thinking.

Pupils behave well. They strive to try their very best. In lessons pupils listen carefully to their teachers and focus sensibly on learning. At breaktimes they play harmoniously together, readily inviting each other to join in with their games.

Pupils enjoy many opportunities to make a difference to both their school and to the wider community. For example, pupils have promoted anti-pollution initiatives outside their school and have improved the school environment through planting trees. Furthermore, pupils are determined to offer strong support to local food bank by collecting food at harvest time.

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

The school has developed an ambitious curriculum which identifies the important knowledge that pupils must learn from Nursery to the end of Year 2. In many subjects, the knowledge that pupils must remember is identified precisely. This means that teachers know exactly what to teach and when to teach it. This enables pupils to build their understanding step by step and achieve well. In a few subjects, the school is refining the

curriculum. For these subjects, the important knowledge that pupils must learn is still not identified in sufficient detail or set out in the most sensible order. When this is the case, pupils do not always learn the intended curriculum effectively.

Generally, teachers have strong knowledge of the subjects they teach. They present information clearly and use effective strategies to deepen pupils' understanding. This includes enabling pupils to make helpful links both within and between subjects. For instance, in Reception, children build their mathematical understanding of pattern through a wide range of practical activities which increase in complexity over time. Pupils with SEND benefit from effective identification of their needs. Bespoke interventions enable pupils with SEND to access the curriculum in a way that is right for them so that they can learn effectively.

The school has developed clear approaches for checking what pupils know and can do. This includes ensuring that errors are identified and addressed before moving on to new learning. When this is the case, pupils tend not to repeat mistakes. However, sometimes pupils' errors are not picked up quickly enough and gaps in pupils' understanding are left for too long. This can prevent pupils from achieving as well as they could.

The school prioritises teaching pupils to read. Pupils learn phonics using a well-structured programme. Pupils who need additional help with reading, including those with SEND, receive bespoke support. Most pupils learn to read fluently by the time they leave the school. Children in early years enjoy developing their understanding of how language works through learning a wide range of traditional tales and nursery rhymes.

Children in the early years have a positive start to their education. Strong, nurturing relationships help children feel safe and secure. In Nursery, the very youngest children learn well through a range of thoughtfully planned activities.

The school is determined to prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Pupils learn about their wider locality through trips to places of interest, including larger towns and cities such as Bournemouth and Southampton. Visitors, including water safety and fire safety officers teach pupils about keeping safe in the community. Furthermore, children in Reception learn about money through buying cooking ingredients from the local shop. In addition, pupils enjoy learning about the natural world in the school's forest area and developing skills of collaboration and perseverance through using the low ropes course.

All leaders, including governors, work well together to continue to improve the school. They know exactly what they need to do to make the school even better. Furthermore, when they have needed to act quickly to make important changes, they have not hesitated to do this. Staff enjoy working at the school. They appreciate the strong professional relationships that exist between all adults. Staff feel supported well to do a great job and to achieve their very best for the pupils.

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, the curriculum does not identify what pupils should learn and when they should learn it precisely enough. Teachers do not know what knowledge pupils must remember to be ready for their next steps. Therefore, pupils do not learn as well as they could. The school should continue to refine the curriculum content and sequencing to ensure that pupils learn sufficiently detailed knowledge to achieve well in all subjects.
- Sometimes pupils' misconceptions are not identified swiftly enough. Pupils develop gaps in their understanding which are not addressed before they move on to new learning. The school should ensure that pupils' understanding is checked and addressed consistently in all subjects so that pupils are supported effectively to secure their knowledge across the curriculum.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 for overall effectiveness in March 2015.

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	116031
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10341389
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	209
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michelle Buckler
Headteacher	Jo Conner
Website	www.poulnerinfantschool.com
Dates of previous inspection	6 March 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school has nursery provision for two- to four-year-olds.
- The school offers before- and after-school wraparound care.
- This school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- 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.
- During the inspection, the inspector met with the headteacher and senior leaders. The inspector also met with members of the board of governors, including the chair of governors and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- 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 considered the views of parents and carers through their responses to the online survey for parents, Ofsted Parent View. They also gathered the views of pupils and staff through Ofsted's online staff and pupil surveys, as well as in-person discussions conducted throughout the inspection.
- The inspector reviewed a range of the school's documents, including self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.

Inspection team

Sue Keeling, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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