

Inspection of a good school: Ashley Junior School

Normans Way, Ashley Road, Ashley, New Milton, Hampshire BH25 5FN

Inspection dates:

5 and 6 December 2023

Outcome

Ashley Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are well motivated by the school's high expectations and regular celebration of achievement. Pupils understand that trying hard and working together are important ingredients for learning. They excitedly look forward to the weekly celebration assemblies where individuals are recognised for their efforts and successes. They actively seek to earn points for their 'houses', which is a hotly contested competition.

Pupils are kind and supportive towards each other. Around the school, pupils show consideration and seek to help others. At playtime, they share the broad range of games equipment and safely play together on the 'trim trail'. Across the year groups, pupils behave responsibly. Older pupils act as role models as they oversee the running of games and look after equipment in the playground. Pupils' attitudes strongly reflect the school values of 'Ready, Respectful and Responsible'.

Pupils appreciate the close, caring school community where everyone is welcome and new arrivals quickly make friends. Pupils happily chat with staff and feel they know them well. They value the way that staff will always listen and quickly act to support them when needed. This means pupils feel confident about reporting any worries they have. The helpful nature of the school community is captured by a parent saying: 'It's a very nurturing, supportive school.'

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

The school has an ambitious and broad curriculum which meets the national curriculum requirements. There has been considerable curriculum development so that it provides carefully constructed 'learning journeys'. Detailed plans identify and arrange the important knowledge and skills that pupils need to learn. A robust response to the low outcomes of 2023 means the curriculum directly addresses areas of lower performance. Current pupils achieve well through the planned curriculum because of decisive improvements to the curriculum, teaching and assessment.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge which they use to provide clear explanations of new knowledge. Across subjects, they model new ideas using appropriate visuals and objects which support pupils to gain understanding quickly. A focus on revisiting earlier learning means that, except for in a few foundation subjects where this is not yet established, pupils confidently talk about their earlier learning and how they can use it with current learning.

Teachers assess pupils' work carefully in order to identify errors and improvements. In the majority of lessons, when explaining ideas, teachers check pupils' understanding promptly and tackle misunderstandings. In a few lessons, teachers do not do this routinely, which means that some pupils retain insecure understanding.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective. Teachers use their knowledge of individuals' needs to provide appropriate adaptations for their work so that they achieve well. The skilled staff in the specialist resource provision for pupils with SEND ensure that pupils' knowledge, confidence and independence are developed so that all are equipped for their next stage of education.

The school's approach to reading is effective. All pupils starting at the school are assessed and those in the early stages of reading quickly receive phonics catch up. These pupils quickly become fluent and confident readers. The reading curriculum generates real enthusiasm for reading. Pupils commonly read a rich variety of books and keep 'reading rivers' journals where they record their reflections.

Pupils behave with courtesy and consideration across the school. In lessons, pupils are focused on learning and follow teachers' clear routines. Teachers quickly correct pupils when they lose focus so little learning time is lost. At playtime pupils show kindness and willingly share play equipment with others and all pupils happily play together.

The broader curriculum prepares pupils well for 'life beyond Ashley'. They learn about different world faiths and significant local and global events. This means pupils are aware of how different circumstances affect the lives of others, alongside ways their actions can contribute to change. Pupils have high regard for diversity, which they show through their respectful attitudes towards others.

The school's development is rigorously overseen by leaders, which has driven considerable improvements in recent years. Staff feel well supported including with workload, which means they can focus on teaching well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a small number of foundation subjects, teaching does not routinely revisit earlier learning. This means some pupils do not remember important knowledge in these subjects over time. The school needs to ensure it develops the planning for the retention of knowledge in these subjects.
- Pupils' understanding of new knowledge is not checked consistently well. This means pupils are not always clear about how to complete activities. The school needs to ensure that all staff routinely check pupils' understanding and adapt their teaching so that all pupils develop secure knowledge over time.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. 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 would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which 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 first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2018.

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	116488
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296243
Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elizabeth Ward
Headteacher	Charlotte Bartolomeo
Website	www.ashleyjuniorschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	22 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational need and/or disabilities. This is for 15 pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This is the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, leaders and teachers. The inspector also met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body, and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspector carried out deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics and religious education. For each deep dive, 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 inspector further explored other curriculum thinking, including for writing and foundation curriculum areas. As part of this, he undertook work scrutiny and talked to pupils about geography and history.
- The inspector observed playtime activities.
- 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 responses to the staff survey and spoke to a range of staff about their views of the school. They looked at the school's self-evaluation documents and school improvement plan.
- The inspector took account of the responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the additional free-text responses. The inspector also spoke to parents at the gate.

Inspection team

Phillip Blagg, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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