

Inspection of a good school: Moorings Way Infant School

Moorings Way, Milton, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 8YJ

Inspection dates:

21 and 22 September 2021

Outcome

Moorings Way Infant School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are kind and welcoming to everyone who comes to their school. They keenly express their views about their learning and the world around them. Staff provide an exceptionally nurturing environment that ensures each pupil's individual interests and talents are known and celebrated.

The school's vision of 'Being Our Best Self' is considered daily. Pupils are encouraged to be resilient and to always try their very best. Everyone's physical and mental well-being is also prioritised. Opportunities to think and reflect are balanced with being active and staying fit. This includes time exploring the outdoors on fun 'welly walks' and exciting trips to the local area.

Pupils behave well, knowing their role in helping everyone to learn. At playtimes, pupils have fun with their friends playing with the different equipment on offer. If there is the odd scraped knee or a falling out with a classmate, trusted adults are on hand to provide a listening ear.

Parents know that staff combine the highest expectations for every pupil with real care. As one parent commented, 'I am extremely confident that my son is in the safest hands and will learn to the best of his ability thanks to the Moorings Way team.'

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

Leaders are determined that every single pupil at Moorings Way will make a strong and confident start to their education. This ambition focuses on pupils' academic success and beyond. Throughout the school, there is a clear emphasis on pupils developing the social skills they need for life outside of school. The pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) particularly benefit from this broad and balanced curriculum. Their needs are clearly identified and the support in place means they learn and achieve well.

Leaders have carefully planned each subject so pupils can build the knowledge and skills they need to be curious and creative. This begins with what children learn in Reception. Leaders have identified the 'sticky' knowledge that they want pupils to know by the end of each topic. This information is shared with parents so that learning can continue at home. The embedding of the curriculum in some subjects is ongoing. This means that pupils cannot confidently recall and use all of the key knowledge they have learned. Leaders are aware of this and are also considering any gaps that may have emerged due to the disruption caused by COVID-19 (coronavirus). Leaders are working closely with teachers to regularly check what has been remembered and to identify where further support may be required.

Pupils know that learning to read is very important. Well-trained staff ensure that the majority of pupils can read appropriately for their age. The teaching of phonics begins in the early weeks of Reception. Here, staff provide numerous opportunities for children to explore letters and sounds. All pupils take home books to read that match the phonics they are learning. There is intensive support for pupils who find reading more difficult. This includes small group and individual teaching. In addition, pupils with SEND receive thoughtful and personalised classroom support. Resources are appropriately adapted to help these pupils learn to read alongside their peers.

Leaders think very carefully about the wider personal development of pupils. There is a focus on developing the language pupils need to confidently discuss their learning. For example, in mathematics, pupils construct full sentences to explain their answers to mathematical problems. This is developing pupils' understanding of number and mathematical processes. In art, pupils are encouraged to form their opinion about the work of famous artists. This emphasis on vocabulary can also be seen in Reception. In these initial weeks of their schooling, staff are taking time to find out what interests the children and to explore words and phrases around these.

Pupils are also provided with many interesting trips and visits. Local artists come into school to work with pupils. They also provide artwork that pupils can appreciate in the school's art exhibition. There are regular trips into the city of Portsmouth where pupils can find out more about where they live. These valuable opportunities extend learning outside of the classroom.

Learning in lessons is calm and purposeful. Pupils quickly follow the established routines such as '1, 2, 3. Track me.' Leaders have put in an extensive amount of training to ensure that all adults have the knowledge they need to help any pupils who find controlling their behaviour more difficult. This includes guidance from specialist agencies to ensure that each pupil has the support they need to succeed.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff receive regular and comprehensive training. This means that adults swiftly identify and report any concerns about the well-being of pupils. Leaders work closely with external agencies to give families support when this is needed.

Staff provide many opportunities that help pupils learn how to stay safe. This includes road-safety as well as what pupils should be aware of when they are online. Priority has also been given to swimming and water safety because pupils live close to the sea. While this has been paused because of COVID-19 restrictions, leaders are eager to reinstate this over the coming year.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have a carefully planned and sequenced curriculum in place, this is yet to be securely and consistently embedded across all foundation subjects. This means that pupils are not always confident in recalling and using the identified key knowledge and skills. Leaders should continue to monitor the full implementation of the curriculum to ensure that all pupils acquire the knowledge they need in readiness for the next stage of their education.

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 a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Moorings Way Infant School, to be good on 3 February 2016.

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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	144582
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10200854
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	152
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Martin
Headteacher	Sonia Nickerson (Executive headteacher)
Website	www.mooringswayinfantschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school joined the Thinking Schools Academy Trust in 2017.
- The school offers wraparound care for pupils at the school. It is managed by school leaders and run by non-teaching members of staff.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and took this into account in their evaluation.
- The inspector met with school senior leaders, staff and pupils. She also met with staff from the multi-academy trust as well as representatives of the board of trustees and the local governing bodies.
- The inspector did deep dives in early reading, mathematics and art. She discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, teachers and pupils, visited lessons and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector scrutinised documentation including the school’s plans for improvement and reports written by representatives from the multi-academy trust.
- The inspector considered the 44 responses to Ofsted’s Parent View questionnaire, including 32 free-text comments. She also took account of the responses to the confidential staff survey as well as the views of pupils that were gathered throughout the inspection.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspector viewed the school’s website and policies, met with the designated safeguarding leader, spoke with pupils and staff, checked school records of safeguarding checks carried out on adults working at the school and spoke with trustees and governors.

Aimee Floyd, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

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