

Inspection of a good school: Hove Junior School

Portland Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 5JA

Inspection dates:

5–6 February 2020

Outcome

Hove Junior School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like their school. They believe that they get a good education and that teachers help them to learn well. Pupils know that their opinions count. They are keen to take an active part in school life. They are confident and considered and communicate well. This helps them to get along together, although they feel supported by the many staff who are on hand to provide advice if they need it. Pupils feel safe. They do not worry about bullying because they have confidence in staff to resolve problems.

Staff are utterly committed to the school and its pupils. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. They are excited to see what pupils can do. Pupils work hard in lessons and focus on their learning. Leaders have worked hard to unite staff across both sites so that the team ethic is strong. Everyone learns from each other.

Frequent visits and visitors ensure that the school makes the best of the many talents and opportunities for learning that are nearby. These opportunities, such as working with local artists, have been carefully developed to enrich the curriculum. Leaders make sure that pupils are both fully involved in their community and can travel safely around it.

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

Provision in reading, writing and mathematics is of high quality. Teachers carefully plan learning which builds well on what pupils know and can do. This helps pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported, particularly in reading and writing. Their needs are regularly reviewed and support is carefully tailored so that they grow in confidence and experience success.

Leaders ensure that securing strong reading skills is a top priority. For example, they insist that learning topics are built around high-quality texts. Pupils read regularly and are encouraged to recommend titles to their classmates through displays such as 'Bookflix' and celebrations of reading. Those pupils joining the school in Year 3 who need to catch

up are identified even before they join. Intensive support from skilled staff helps them to catch up quickly and become confident, fluent readers. This includes a focus on phonics where it is needed.

Leaders ensure that staff benefit from high-quality professional development. This helps them to plan well for their classes. But, importantly, leaders also ensure that this learning is shared and built on. Many staff have opportunities to learn and lead. This focus on continued learning is valued by staff, who explained, 'We want to do the best we can, and everything is in place to support this.'

Leaders have developed plans in all subjects that ensure that the national curriculum is delivered. However, pupils' learning in other subjects is not as secure as it is in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because pupils do not revisit, refine and build on their knowledge as effectively. For example, pupils learn about all the specified periods they should in history, but they do not use their knowledge about one period to help them when learning about another. This limits the extent to which their learning is retained and deepened over time.

Pupils benefit from a clear focus on their personal development, both through the curriculum and in other aspects of school life. They know that they are expected to behave well and work hard. They strive to meet leaders' high expectations. Leaders have ensured that respect for and celebration of diversity are evident throughout the school. Everyone is included and valued. Pupils drive aspects which are important to them, such as the 'green agenda'. Staff work alongside them to help them to realise their ambitions, which both empowers and inspires them. Pupils are well prepared both for the next stages of their education and life beyond.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are comprehensively trained in safeguarding. They have a strong and secure knowledge of how to keep pupils safe. Leaders constantly review and refine processes to protect the most vulnerable pupils and ensure that they are strong. These include working with other agencies to generate and review plans and ensuring that some pupils have additional life skills training.

The curriculum contains regular safeguarding work on key aspects, such as e-safety. Pupils are involved in assemblies, visits and projects with a focus on staying safe. Governors are well informed about safeguarding. They keep a watchful eye on things, checking all is as it should be.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Pupils do not always build on their knowledge in all subjects as well as they do in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teaching does not always emphasise and revisit key knowledge and focuses too much on skills. Leaders need to ensure that teaching in all subjects helps pupils to acquire and use subject-specific knowledge that builds and deepens over time so that their learning involves a logical progression as they move through the school.

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 school or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or that standards may be declining, 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 convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 15–16 November 2011.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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	114403
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10133191
Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	825
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jeff Nixon
Headteacher	Maddie Southern
Website	www.hovejuniorschool.co.uk/
Date of previous inspection	7 September 2016

Information about this school

- The school operates over two sites, one on Portland Road and the other on Holland Road. The Holland Road site has been gradually expanding and now contains classes throughout Years 3 to 6.

Information about this inspection

- I met with senior leaders, a representative from the local authority and members of the governing body, including the chair.
- We did deep dives into these subjects: reading, writing, art and history. This involved meeting leaders who are responsible for these subjects and visiting lessons to observe learning. We held meetings with pupils to talk about their learning and to look at their books and with teachers to discuss pupils' understanding and look at plans.
- We gathered a range of evidence regarding safeguarding through discussions with pupils and staff and examining safeguarding records.
- In addition to talking to parents and carers at the school gate, we considered 145 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 143 free-text responses.

- We also took account of the views of 47 staff and the 99 responses to the pupils' survey.

Inspection team

Deborah Gordon, lead inspector

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