

# Inspection of Mayfield School

Mayfield Road, North End, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO2 0RH

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Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

## **Overall effectiveness**

**Inadequate**

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The quality of education

**Requires improvement**

Behaviour and attitudes

**Inadequate**

Personal development

**Requires improvement**

Leadership and management

**Inadequate**

Early years provision

**Good**

Previous inspection grade

Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils in the senior school are not always protected from bullying and harassment. Many older pupils told inspectors that discriminatory language is used often in the school. A number of pupils and staff feel unsafe due to the disorderly and sometimes aggressive behaviour of some pupils in corridors. The new headteacher has taken action to reduce the most significantly poor behaviour. However, this has not yet had a strong enough impact. Many pupils and staff feel that the approach to managing behaviour is unfair and that expectations are not high enough. Behaviour in the primary phase is mostly positive and respectful. However, sometimes, the behaviour of a small number of younger pupils is not well managed, putting others at risk.

Many pupils in the senior school want to learn and achieve well. However, they cannot always do so due to frequent disruption to lessons by pupils who do not want to engage in their learning. Pupils in the primary year groups are focused and follow the routines of the classroom well. Children in the early years make a positive start at the school.

The school's personal development programme has not ensured that all pupils in the senior school show tolerance and respect for one another. Some pupils do not fully understand the impact that discriminatory language has on others. Many pupils accept the use of homophobic and sexist language as 'normal'.

Secondary aged pupils receive high-quality careers advice and guidance. They are well prepared for making decisions about their next steps.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and broad, offering a full range of national curriculum subjects. However, too few pupils in key stage 4 achieve the English Baccalaureate. Leaders have recently implemented plans to ensure that this number significantly improves by increasing the uptake of languages at key stage 4. Most pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) access the same curriculum as their peers. However, a small number of pupils with SEND follow an adapted curriculum which is not ambitious enough to fully meet their needs.

The curriculum is well sequenced overall. In some subjects, however, curriculum plans do not carefully consider how learning in the early years prepares children for Year 1. In most subjects, leaders clearly identify the key knowledge that pupils must know and build on over time. However, in subjects other than physical education and early reading, learning activities are not sufficiently challenging to enable pupils to fully achieve the ambition of the planned curriculum. For example, pupils, including those with SEND, have few opportunities to apply their learning to new contexts or make links between their learning. Opportunities to develop ideas and

embed knowledge through extended writing are limited. The knowledge that pupils learn, therefore, is not always well remembered.

In some subjects, including in phonics, teachers make regular checks on what pupils remember. They use this information to address misconceptions and gaps in learning. Approaches to assessment, however, are not embedded consistently across all subjects. Some pupils are not fully ready to learn more-complex information as a result.

Children in Reception enjoy a caring and warm environment where staff know their needs well. Children have opportunities to practise their phonics learning during child-led activities at the writing table. They use their knowledge of early number to count candles on a cake and legs on a spider. Staff support children to develop their language and communication skills so that they are well prepared for learning in Year 1.

Reading is prioritised across the school. Staff use their expert subject knowledge to teach phonics well. Pupils who are learning to read use their phonics strategies to read confidently and fluently. Those who find it more difficult to read receive the support that they need to keep up. Pupils in key stage 3 enjoy their extra reading sessions which help them to access the wider curriculum.

Pupils learn about anti-bullying through assemblies. However, pupils in the senior school report that some bullying does occur but is often unreported. This is because some pupils do not feel that staff will take effective action to make it stop. New routines and expectations for managing relationships have been introduced by the new headteacher. However, there are still substantial improvements to be made in the senior school. A significant number of pupils do not come to school often enough. Leaders have not previously been robust in addressing this. The new headteacher has recently put appropriate measures in place to rapidly increase the attendance of all pupils.

The personal, social and health education programme is well sequenced so that pupils revisit learning, for example healthy relationships, in an age-appropriate way. However, not all pupils fully understand the importance of being inclusive and accepting of difference. Leaders have worked hard to raise the profile of positive mental health across the school. They have ensured that physical health has remained a priority despite the reduced outside space during the school re-build. Pupils have access to a wide range of clubs, including rock band and diversity club.

Leaders' actions in the past have not adequately addressed poor behaviour and attitudes in the school. Governors and senior leaders have confidence in the new headteacher to make rapid improvements. Recent actions taken by the new headteacher have not yet had time to embed so that all pupils can thrive in a calm and safe environment. Staff have access to a range of professional development opportunities. They say that leaders are mindful of their workload.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Leaders do not always take swift and decisive action to report concerns to external agencies. Therefore, some pupils do not receive the support that they need so that they, and others, are kept safe. Leaders do not always carry out their statutory duties to ensure that pupils who attend alternative provision are safe.

Many pupils report bullying, violent behaviour and derogatory comments. Therefore, some pupils remain at risk of discrimination and, sometimes, physical harm from their peers.

Leaders perform the necessary checks so that they are sure all adults are safe to work in the school. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online through the curriculum.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Leaders do not always take swift and decisive action when concerns are raised about the most vulnerable children. This means that leaders cannot be sure that all pupils are safe. Leaders and governors need to improve communication systems so that those with responsibility for safeguarding act, without delay, so that pupils at risk of harm receive the most appropriate external support quickly.
- Learning activities in several subjects are not ambitious enough to ensure that pupils achieve the aims of the planned curriculum. As a result, some pupils do not embed knowledge securely. They do not always know and remember more across all subjects. Leaders need to ensure that subject leaders and teaching staff receive the time and training that they need to review and revise their resources, so that all pupils are supported to learn well.
- Expectations are not currently high enough and behaviour strategies are not fully understood and applied by all. This means that some staff and pupils feel unsafe due to significantly disruptive and sometimes violent behaviour, particularly in the senior school. Leaders need to strengthen the plans they already have in place, and provide necessary training for staff, so that a more consistent and robust approach to improving behaviour is adopted across the school. This should include a particular focus on pupils with the most significant behavioural needs, so that the school is a safe and calm environment for all.
- The school's personal development offer is not currently effective at helping pupils understand the impact and consequences of derogatory and discriminatory language. This means that some pupils experience bullying and harassment in school. Leaders need to review their whole school approach to the curriculum, so that pupils develop a strong understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect from the start.

- Some groups of pupils miss too much school. Recent actions taken by leaders have only just begun to address this. Leaders need to remain sharply focused on the impact of newly implemented strategies, so that attendance rates for all are swiftly improved.

## 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](#)' 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116463
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10240277
<b>Type of school</b>	All-through
<b>School category</b>	Community school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,477
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Kelly Perrett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ashley Howard
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk">www.mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	10 and 11 November 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school uses alternative provision from two registered providers.
- There is a nursery on site that is run by a separate registered provider.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in early reading, mathematics, science, physical education, history, and Spanish. To do this, they met with subject leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons, and looked at pupils' work.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers, and support staff.
- Inspectors spoke with the local authority school improvement partner. They also met with members of the governing body, including the chair and vice chair.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents, and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's surveys.

### **Inspection team**

Zoë Harris, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Gareth Flemington	His Majesty's Inspector
Simon Woodbridge	His Majesty's Inspector
James Freeston	Ofsted Inspector
Paul James	Ofsted Inspector

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