

Mayfield School

Mayfield Road, North End, Portsmouth PO2 0RH

Inspection dates

21–22 September 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The actions taken by leaders and governors in the last two years have focused effectively on ensuring that all pupils in the school make good progress.
- Across Years 7 to 11, pupils make more rapid progress than previously across the curriculum. GCSE results in 2016 were much better than in 2015. Consequently, pupils are now better prepared for their subsequent education, training and employment.
- The most able pupils are not always given work that challenges them regularly enough. This is because teachers do not have consistently high enough expectations of pupils' capabilities.
- In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve well particularly in their reading and writing. Overall performance was above average in the phonics screening check in the last two years. Opportunities for pupils to apply their skills further are not fully provided.
- Early years provision is good, as its leadership and quality of teaching are effective. Children make good progress and are well prepared to start Year 1.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar good progress to other pupils in the school.
- Attendance improved last year and is now in line with national averages.
- Middle leaders have developed their skills in checking the progress that pupils make. However, this is not consistently and rigorously applied across the whole school.
- While the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved well in the last two years, what pupils should be learning is not always made explicit by teachers.
- The governing body is exceptionally well informed, highly ambitious and uncompromising in its challenge and support for improving pupils' achievement and personal development.
- Pupils feel safe in the school. The school has effective safeguarding procedures in place.
- Pupils are polite, well mannered, cooperate well with each other and show pride in their school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is usually good.
- The vast majority of parents and carers, particularly those with children in key stage 1, are positive about the quality of education the school provides.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Pupils have a good understanding of British values and the nature of life in modern Britain.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes for pupils further by:
 - extending the school’s training programme for teachers to ensure that teachers concentrate on what all pupils are expected to learn through activities that challenge and motivate them
 - ensuring that the most able pupils always have tasks set for them that raise their expectations of what they can achieve
 - setting tasks for pupils in Years 1 and 2 that allow them to apply more of the skills learned previously.
- Ensure that:
 - middle leaders are more consistent in how they use information about the progress that pupils make to monitor how effective overall provision is
 - senior leaders coordinate this work regularly and rigorously across both subject and pastoral teams.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school motto – ‘Your only limitation is your ambition’ – has been an important focus in bringing about the recent improvements in the school. The high expectations set by the headteacher, well supported by senior leaders, for how the school had to improve in the last two years have been largely successful. Pupils now make better progress than in 2014. Teaching has improved, although the headteacher recognises that this must now be built on.
- While the school’s self-evaluation is a little overgenerous, senior leaders know the work of the school well. Although they have accurately identified weaknesses, they accept that the current action plan, based on the recommendations made in the last inspection, must now reflect more accurately the next steps in improvements needed to take the school forward. The local authority, in its effective support of the school, has also made this point in its monitoring work.
- Despite difficulties in recruiting teachers to some posts, the headteacher has been resolute in only employing staff of the right quality. Morale among staff is generally high. Those staff who worked in the school during the last inspection recognise how the school has improved.
- A comprehensive staff training programme has been the key driver in improving teaching in classrooms over the last two years. Classroom organisation and giving pupils clear guidance about their work have been successful. However, not enough attention has been paid to ensuring that all teachers emphasise what pupils should be learning.
- The introduction of a primary department, currently with younger pupils in early years and Years 1 and 2, has been managed effectively. Key stage 1 leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas that need to be improved, especially how they judge pupils’ performance in areas other than mathematics and English. Staff working in the primary department feel integrated into the whole school and have welcomed being fully involved in whole-school developments.
- Middle leaders check the success of the areas for which they are responsible. They use information from observing lessons, looking at pupils’ work and analysing progress information for different groups of pupils. In most cases this is effective in raising standards and enables leaders to make effective plans to improve if learning falls short of expectations. However, a minority of middle leaders do not rigorously monitor the impact of their plans for improvement to enable pupils’ more rapid progress.
- Leaders and governors have ensured that teachers’ professional development is targeted so that school priorities are achieved while supporting individual ambitions. Pay progression is closely linked to pupils’ performance, and appraisal helps to identify specific training that teachers, including those new to the profession, value strongly. This has made a significant contribution to the improvements in teaching, learning and assessment.
- The special educational needs coordinator successfully identifies the specific educational needs of pupils so these pupils do well. Well-trained adults are deployed effectively to meet pupils’ learning needs.
- The school’s curriculum prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain, developing key skills and knowledge through a broad range of subject-based and extra-curricular

options, especially in school drama and music productions which boost pupils' confidence well. Leaders' review of the curriculum has aligned key stages 3 and 4 to make the best use of time as pupils work towards GCSE examinations. Virtually all pupils continue into education, training and/or employment when they leave school.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is integrated into the school's curriculum. Assemblies, tutorial programmes, enrichment activities and learning opportunities in lessons provide effective and rich experiences for pupils, as do organised trips both in Britain and abroad, particularly for fieldwork on history and geography, theatre visits for English and drama, and European visits to several countries. Pupils understand the nature and responsibilities of citizenship in modern Britain and they demonstrate high levels of respect for and tolerance of diversity, with the growing understanding of how different religions and cultures enrich pupils' lives.
- Leaders use the Year 7 catch-up funding (additional government funding for pupils who did not reach the expected levels in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6) well. For example, pupils in Years 7 and 8 benefit strongly from the 'Resilience' curriculum which is improving pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy effectively.
- The additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged (pupil premium) has been successfully used to ensure that these pupils make better progress. Disadvantaged pupils' progress is very close to that of other pupils nationally, although leaders have identified that more needs to be done to ensure that any differences are fully eliminated.
- The use of the primary school sports funding is at an early stage, and the school plans to emphasise the need for pupils to become more active and engaged in a good range of sporting activities.
- Parents are supportive of the school generally, with 90% of those responding to the Parent View online questionnaire recommending the school to other parents. Indeed, one parent summed up their view by saying, 'Mayfield School is now a school of choice thanks to the hard work and determined dedication of the staff, governors and parents'. Another said, 'I know my child will leave Mayfield and she will be set up to begin her career. I couldn't be happier.'
- School leaders' monitoring of the small number of pupils who attend off-site provision is good. They make regular visits to the provision, give effective support to pupils and receive regular updates on their progress. Pupils' progress is similar to that in the mainstream school. In a growing number of cases, reintegration into school is achieved.

Governance of the school

- Governors form a dynamic and supportive body which has undergone good-quality training to support its role. They have detailed knowledge of the school and a clear vision for its future developments. They have rigorously monitored the school's action plan, indicating where they would expect further improvement. Governors have been tireless in their pursuit of improvement, ensuring that leaders, including middle leaders, are able to identify how their actions are improving pupils' outcomes. Leaders are held firmly to account and governors are stringent in their challenge of underperformance, often through its Scrutiny committee.
- Governors monitor thoroughly the effectiveness of pupil premium funding. They know how well the performance of different groups of pupils compares with other pupils nationally. They scrutinise carefully the way in which extra funding for disadvantaged

pupils is used to improve outcomes, especially the small number identified as most able within that group.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All staff have received appropriate training related to safeguarding and so understand their responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. Staff can identify pupils who may be at risk and act swiftly, involving external agencies where necessary.
- Leaders ensure that pupils receive relevant and appropriate information through the curriculum about how to keep themselves safe, especially online. As a result, pupils feel safe and parents agree with this view. During the inspection, senior leaders responded quickly and effectively to a significant health and safety matter in the science preparation room to ensure that all staff were properly trained and chemicals fully protected.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The combination of good teaching, effective training, pastoral support and a well-designed curriculum has had a positive impact on pupils' progress in the last two years. The regular and personalised development programme has lifted the quality of teaching well, allied to effective and rigorous monitoring of classroom practice.
- In Years 1 and 2, in several lessons, pupils were very excited to be working together on, for example, understanding number sequences, with adults using effective questioning to extend pupils' current levels of knowledge. While teachers usually provide for the range of needs evident, occasionally they do not reshape tasks to challenge the most able pupils well enough.
- Effective teaching was seen throughout the school across different year groups and subjects. In English, history, modern foreign languages, performing arts and physical education in particular, the impact of this is evident in the improving rates of progress for all groups of pupils across all years.
- Across Years 7 to 11, in most cases, teachers plan carefully to improve pupils' skills and understanding using a variety of activities and tasks to make lessons interesting and to meet the needs of different learners. This was evident in a Year 9 history lesson where pupils had researched information about Victorian London and were expected to question each other about historical accuracy. This led to a lively debate, engaging pupils of all abilities.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use effectively to provide interesting and engaging lessons. Teachers generally use good-quality questioning skills that promote thinking and discussion among pupils. Pupils enjoy contributing to class discussions and, as a result, they learn from the contributions of other pupils. This works best where teachers steer pupils towards work that offers the right level of challenge for their ability. When pupils are suitably challenged by tasks, they become enthusiastic and absorbed in their learning and so make good progress. For example, in a Year 10 Spanish lesson, pupils showed a growing grasp of different verb tenses

when their teacher directed them to recall what they already knew and to apply it to new vocabulary.

- Deliberate and effective action has been taken to improve pupils' writing skills. Opportunities for extended writing are developing across the curriculum and year groups. Pupils read widely, including aloud to their peers. They study advanced texts including Shakespeare, modern classics and poetry. There is good vocabulary development across the ability range. Lower-ability pupils are encouraged to use dictionaries to check meaning and improve the accuracy of spelling.
- Pupils' work is usually well presented with only a few instances of unkempt work seen by inspectors. This includes homework which is regularly set and monitored using a new school system. A growing emphasis on pupils preparing work for future lessons, particularly in Years 7 and 8, is having a beneficial effect on their progress.
- While most teachers manage behaviour in their classes well, this is not wholly consistent across the school. In some mathematics lessons, for example, pupils became distracted when the work was either too easy or not properly matched to their previous learning. This was also evident in some other lessons across the curriculum. Not all teachers think carefully enough about what pupils are expected to learn, as they neither make the most effective use of the assessment information available nor plan tasks that interest pupils sufficiently. This often affects provision for the most able pupils.
- Teaching assistants support pupils effectively in lessons. They use questions to structure learning and help pupils develop their answers. As a result, pupils who receive additional support extend their knowledge and skills.
- The school has a clear policy on the nature and frequency of written feedback to pupils. Teachers have clear guidance about what feedback makes the best impact and when. When used effectively, this policy has a positive impact on pupils' progress. For example, in English, teachers' comments to pupils are precise, individual and aspirational, enabling improvement in language skills. However, some inconsistencies remain in the provision of feedback, in science for example.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. The school has developed strong teamwork with other agencies who meet regularly to discuss any concerns about vulnerable pupils. This robust system ensures that the school can respond rapidly to any difficulties that arise. Leaders check carefully to ensure that good support arrangements are in place for the small number of pupils who attend off-site provision.
- The vertically grouped tutor groups for Years 7 to 11 is liked by many pupils, as many older pupils act as role models for younger pupils, often making themselves available as support mentors. In key stage 1, adults know the pupils well. This knowledge is used effectively in supporting vulnerable pupils. Teachers actively promote positive attitudes, the need to be resilient and to keep trying. Because of this, pupils develop the determination to persevere.
- Across the school, pupils benefit from positive relationships with their teachers. They are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their personal skills. They know

that if they slip behind with their work, or need help with discussing personal matters, there is always someone to turn to with confidence. Pupils are confident and self-aware young people as a result. Pupils say that they feel safe and are confident that the school deals with the rare instances of bullying swiftly.

- Impartial advice and guidance enable older pupils to make choices about careers and next steps in their education, employment or training. Some pupils, including those that are disadvantaged, have more detailed support.
- Pupils show tolerance and respect for each other. The large majority take responsibility for their actions and know how to be good citizens through contributing to wider society and life in modern Britain. For example, the school council is elected by all pupils, giving them a good insight into democratic processes.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis with a clear code of conduct that all pupils understand and most adhere to fully. Pupils' behaviour is monitored well, especially by heads of the four school houses.
- In Years 1 and 2, most pupils are polite to each other, work and play well together and listen carefully to instructions adults give them. However, in a few cases, the routines for controlling behaviour are not always effectively used. A large majority of parents commented that their children are well looked after and are expected to behave well.
- Pupils show real pride in being part of the school community. As one Year 10 pupil remarked, 'we belong to this school and have to make the best of our chances'. Around the school, pupils conduct themselves well and have influenced improvements in the environment with, for example, the provision of outdoor seating.
- Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and are punctual to lessons, including moving back to lessons after breaktimes. While most pupils show good attitudes to their learning, on occasions their concentration slips if tasks set are too easy or too difficult.
- Attendance across the school has improved well to now be in line with national averages. The family support worker and attendance officer have successfully helped some parents, especially those of more vulnerable pupils, to improve their child's attendance. The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has significantly declined.
- Over the last year, as behaviour has improved, there has been a reduction in the number of fixed-term exclusions, and fewer disadvantaged pupils have been excluded.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- A small majority of the pupils start in the Reception class with low levels of communication skills. Overall, pupils make good progress in their phonics during their time in the early years and in Year 1. The proportion of pupils who met the expected level in the phonics screening check in 2016 was above average, indicating that teaching of this aspect is good. These outcomes were also agreed by external checking, reflecting a similar outcome to 2015.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2. Pupils read well and enjoy the variety of interesting and challenging books available. Nearly all can sound phonics accurately and use them well in their writing, for which there are increasing opportunities. Pupils'

workbooks show pride and good presentation, with feedback being responded to appropriately. The achievement of those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. This is because of the well-planned support given to these pupils both in lessons and through additional support.

- Scrutiny of pupils' work from the last school year shows clear progress for pupils of all abilities, although not all pupils could edit or reshape their writing effectively. Handwriting skills are good, including for disadvantaged pupils. While pupils generally make good progress in mathematics, not enough opportunities are provided for pupils, especially the most able, to reason through problem-solving or to apply skills learned in a variety of ways.
- Pupils enter Year 7 with attainment that is significantly below the national average. From these low starting points, pupils now make more rapid progress towards stronger outcomes. Year 11 outcomes had been adversely affected in recent years by large numbers of pupils joining the school late in key stage 4. However, in 2015, GCSE results had improved well on the low outcomes in 2014. Information from 2016 results shows that overall performance has improved. Differences between the performance of disadvantaged pupils and national figures have diminished well. For current Year 11 pupils, the differences between non-disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are predicted to diminish further and to be nearly eliminated.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving because teachers identify and support them through lesson-based and extra-curricular interventions. Variations in the performance of disadvantaged pupils are reducing quickly and are improving year-on-year. The small number of most-able pupils who are also disadvantaged make nearly the same progress as their classmates.
- Pupils who join the school with low levels of literacy and numeracy are supported effectively. Following good-quality provision through an appropriate programme of study, these pupils develop the skills they need to be successful learners and catch up with other pupils. Rapid interventions, usually for older pupils, follow where leaders identify concerns over a pupil's performance, and this system is consistently applied to all. The school's current assessment information indicates that the upward trend in progress is being sustained.
- A targeted learning programme is beginning to raise the aspirations of the most able through problem-solving tasks, comparing and contrasting information and presenting new ideas. The most able pupils are expected to apply themselves to learn by reading more challenging books from the start of their time in school and to write fluently and accurately. However, a few teachers do not have high enough expectations of what the most able pupils can achieve.
- In English, in particular, pupils achieve well. The most able are now performing in line with others nationally, because they have work set that challenges them to improve on their previous work. Pupils are also reading more challenging books and are expected to write more at length and in detail throughout Years 7 to 11.
- There remains scope to improve the proportion of pupils making more than expected progress in mathematics by the end of Year 11 by providing more opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills to solve investigations and problems in mathematics, as well as across other subjects.

- In other subjects across the curriculum, notably modern foreign languages, history and geography, pupils are making better progress now. The progress of older pupils on a good range of vocational courses is at least in line with national figures.
- Work in pupils' books reflects improving outcomes overall. Inspectors noted that there was significant consistency in the way that books were maintained, including strategies for assessment that pupils knew and could explain.
- A higher proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and or disabilities make at least expected levels of progress compared with similar pupils nationally. In a growing number of subjects, they are accelerating their progress. This is because they receive high-quality support from teachers and other teaching assistants, both in class and through additional lessons.

Early years provision

Good

- The leadership and management of the early years provision are good. Leaders have a detailed understanding of staff effectiveness, the provision's strengths and the areas that need further development. While leaders have a clear knowledge of children's outcomes in communications, literacy and mathematics, they are not as clear about other areas of the curriculum.
- Parents are well informed about their child's progress and different stages of development through a range of communications, including informal discussions and the use of information technology. They speak very positively about the relationships with the school.
- From starting points that are slightly below those typical for their age, children make good progress through the Reception classes and make a strong start to their time in school. As a result, in 2015, just over 80% of the children achieved a good level of development in the early years foundation stage profile, above the national figure. This was sustained well in 2016. Results in the last two years have been moderated and judged as accurate.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged children is targeted carefully to support children's progress.
- Inspectors scrutinised learning journals from the previous year. These showed a greater focus on English and mathematics than in other learning areas, and the school understands the need for children to show more of their learning in other aspects.
- Leaders accurately judge the strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Children are well taught. They make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children read and write regularly, and activities are planned each day to develop their understanding of number and other aspects of mathematics. They are provided with a wide range of activities to choose from each day, both in the classroom and outdoors. They quickly learn and understand the school's routines and develop very positive attitudes to learning, showing growing signs of independence.
- The school realises that more scope exists to provide opportunities to build on children's own ideas and extend their knowledge and understanding as they play.

- Expectations of children's behaviour are constantly reinforced. As a result, children quickly develop a strong sense of right and wrong and collaborate well with one another to develop their own ideas. A well-planned curriculum contributes effectively to children's rapid personal development.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. All statutory safeguarding and welfare requirements are met. Child protection policies and procedures are up to date. A culture of vigilance ensures that children are safe and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

School details

Unique reference number	116463
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10012292

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive with primary provision
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bruce Marr
Headteacher	David Jeapes
Telephone number	02392 693432
Website	www.mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk
Email address	general@mayfield.portsmouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized secondary school, with a primary department currently with children aged 4 to 7 on roll.
- The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is higher than that found in most schools.
- The large majority of students are White British and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school after the start of Year 7, or leave before the end of Year 11, is much higher than is typical nationally.

- The school uses alternative provision at Highbury College and The Harbour School for a small, and reducing, number of students in Year 10 and Year 11.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons and groups of pupils working, and observed pupils at breaktime when moving around the school. They talked to pupils in lessons, looked at work in their books and discussed their learning. Inspectors talked to four specific groups of pupils about life in the school, the behaviour and safety of pupils and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Inspectors conducted joint observations with senior leaders and discussed findings.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentary evidence, including the school’s self-evaluation and improvement plan, the school website, a range of policies, pupil performance information, child protection and behaviour records, and a selection of monitoring records. The school’s single central record was also checked.
- Detailed discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, recently appointed staff, five representatives of the governing body and a school improvement officer from the local authority. An inspector responded to a telephone complaint from a member of the local community.
- Inspectors considered 93 responses to Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire, and 19 free text responses. An electronic problem prevented the school from accessing the online staff survey. However, inspectors reviewed information provided by the school from an independent staff survey. No responses were made to the online pupil survey.

Inspection team

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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