

Inspection of a good school: Court Lane Infant Academy

Hilary Avenue, Cosham, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO6 2PP

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 April 2024

Outcome

Court Lane Infant Academy continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Karen Geddes. This school is part of the University of Chichester Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Jennese Alozie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Jane Longmore.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy and kind place where all pupils are welcome. Pupils are highly motivated to learn and achieve their best. They are happy and love their school. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show respect to adults and each other. The school's key values of 'believe, inspire and achieve' develop a sense of community and empathy. One pupil said, 'You can achieve it if you believe in yourself.'

The school's motto of 'every child, every chance, every day' is the aspiration for the school's high-quality provision. The school has an ambitious and interesting curriculum. Pupils engage well in their learning activities. Pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics are strong and secure. Pupils' achievement in all other subjects is improving well. Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) well and ensure that they are fully included in school life.

The school encourages pupils to be active, responsible citizens. They can talk about the different ways they learn to respect people's differences. Pupils know there will always be a trusted adult they can talk to about any worries that they have. As a result, pupils feel safe and staff keep them safe in school.

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

The school is ambitious for what pupils can achieve. The curriculum is thoughtfully designed. In reading and writing, pupils' outcomes are significantly above the average outcomes nationally. In all subjects, the school has identified important knowledge, skills and vocabulary which helps to build pupils' understanding.

The school has prioritised reading. From the start of the Reception Year, teachers incorporate a variety of interesting and appropriate books into children's learning. Children begin learning the sounds that letters make as soon as they join the school. The school typically achieves high outcomes for phonics. This is due to a clear and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics. Staff support pupils who fall behind to help them to catch up quickly. This is usually highly effective.

Teachers have a good understanding of the subjects that they are teaching. They use precise vocabulary to explain to pupils what they are learning. Staff routinely check that pupils understand the meaning of any new vocabulary that is being used. Staff vary learning activities and engage pupils' attention well. In some subjects in the wider curriculum, the school is compromising pupils' depth of learning in order to give too broad a curriculum. At times, pupils' learning is not as effective as it could be because teachers try to cover too much. This means pupils are not always clear on what subject-specific knowledge or skills they are learning or developing.

The school has developed its approaches to checking how well pupils have learned and remembered key knowledge. These secure systems help teachers know what pupils still need to learn. This is particularly the case for pupils with SEND. Staff identify these pupils early and give them the specific support they need. Teachers adapt tasks so that pupils with SEND are able to work alongside their peers and access the curriculum.

At social times, pupils play well together. They are cooperative and kind. Classrooms are orderly and calm. Conduct is strong, and pupils are respectful of others. In the early years, children follow clear routines. They play well together and learn to share and cooperate both in the classroom and outside.

Pupils appreciate the different opportunities the school provides to broaden their experiences. There are, for example, opportunities to learn Spanish, dance or sign language as additional skills. Pupils in the choir sing regularly to audiences, such as the locally organised 'infant voices' concert. School trips enhance and help to embed the pupils' classroom learning. Pupils are keen to take up a number of responsibilities, including being members of the 'Court Lane Ideas Squad' and the 'Eco-Squad'. These important roles help pupils to understand personal responsibility and develop their leadership.

Governors and trustees work diligently to improve the school further and share a common ambition for all pupils. They challenge each other to ensure that decisions improve pupils' school days. Staff enjoy working at the school. The school helps them to manage their workload. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the school. One said, which reflected the views of many, 'I feel so blessed to have been able to send my child to Court Lane. The teachers and staff are all so passionate about their work and this really comes across.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, the school has focused on covering too much content at the expense of pupils acquiring a depth of knowledge. This means that pupils do not always develop a greater depth of understanding over time in those subjects. The school should further refine the curriculum and prioritise the key content that it wants pupils to learn.

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 second ungraded inspection since we judged the predecessor school, Court Lane Infant School, to be good in November 2013.

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	143315
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10322020
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	346
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Jane Longmore
CEO of trust	Jennese Alozie
Headteacher	Karen Geddes
Website	www.courtlaneinfant.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1 November 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Court Lane Infant Academy is part of the University of Chichester Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school's local governing board is shared with the link junior school.
- The headteacher took up the post in January 2021 having been the head of school previously.
- The school does not currently use any alternative provisions.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was 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 carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and art and design. For each deep dive, the inspector discussed the curriculum with subject

leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector also looked at additional curriculum plans for science, history and music.
- The inspector met with the headteacher, the deputy head and other leaders within the school and trust. The inspector also met with a trustee, two members of the local governing board, including the chair, and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- 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 reviewed a range of the school's documentation, including minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View and also talked with parents on the first morning of the inspection.
- The views of staff were gathered through interviews and discussions conducted throughout the inspection, as well as the survey.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including through discussions, during classroom visits and at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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