

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: Balksbury Junior School

Floral Way, Salisbury Road, Andover, Hampshire SP10 3QP

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 April 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils love attending this school. They arrive each morning with enthusiasm, eager to begin their day. They feel happy, safe and supported. Everyone gets along and achieves well because pupils live up to the very high expectations that are set for them. The values of perseverance, respect and collaboration are evident throughout the school. As a result, it is a harmonious community.

Pupils thrive and learning comes alive. The school is determined that all pupils should receive high-quality learning experiences, and it succeeds in this. The curriculum helps pupils to secure a deep knowledge of each subject that they study. The school has high expectations of pupils' achievements. By the time they leave, pupils achieve highly and are well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Pupils' behaviour is highly positive. They listen carefully, are highly motivated and show respect and kindness towards staff and each other. Pupils are diligent, self-assured and confident individuals who can articulate different perspectives. They develop a strong sense of character and moral compass. The school has created a culture that celebrates difference and includes everyone. When pupils or their families need support, the school provides whatever they can to help.

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

Pupils benefit from the school's highly ambitious curriculum. The knowledge that pupils need to learn has been carefully selected. Teachers have the subject knowledge and skills required to deliver the curriculum effectively. They skilfully create interesting activities that immerse pupils in their learning. Teachers routinely check that pupils learn and remember

this knowledge. If pupils do have any gaps in their learning, these are quickly addressed so that they are ready to move on. Where leaders have identified that historical results should have been better, they have taken prompt and decisive action to analyse and improve the curriculum even further.

The school has embedded its 'love of reading' culture. Staff use stories to enhance the curriculum. Pupils access a wide variety of high-quality books throughout the school. The staff ensure that pupils' reading books closely match their ability. The school uses the same phonics scheme as its federated infant school to support those still at the earliest stages of reading. These pupils receive effective additional support in a way that they already understand. As a result, they catch up quickly on the knowledge and skills they need to be fluent readers.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from the same rich education as their peers. Leaders ensure any additional needs are identified and supported as quickly as possible. This includes implementing the advice of external professionals where needed. Staff modify resources and teaching effectively, so that pupils can access the curriculum successfully. Pupils with SEND get the right support and achieve well.

Pupils are highly attentive in class and show impressive levels of perseverance and motivation in their learning. Pupils' behaviour at social times fully reflects the school's values. They play and socialise happily with their peers, as well as with younger children from the infant school, in a plethora of well-organised activities. Attendance and punctuality are prioritised every day. As a result, most pupils attend regularly.

The personal development of pupils is a strength of the school. The curriculum for personal, social and health education covers wide-ranging themes. It enables pupils to understand the importance of education and how this will open doors to them in the future. Pupils are thoughtful and reflective. They have an age-appropriate understanding of different faiths and cultures. The school is committed to providing pupils with a wide range of enriching experiences that enhance their learning. A vast number of lunchtime and after-school clubs are available, ensuring every pupil can find something they enjoy.

Staff praise the school, including the training and coaching that enhances their own expertise. They know leaders take their workload and well-being into consideration when making decisions. Each strategy has been carefully considered so that pupils benefit as much as possible.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 school to be good for overall effectiveness in April 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.

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	115852
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10361659
Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing	James Mirza-Davies
Headteacher	Katy Thompson
Website	www.balksburyfederation.co.uk
Dates of previous inspection	22 and 23 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is federated with Balksbury Infant School, under one governing body and an executive headteacher.
- The school runs its own before- and after-school wraparound care.
- The school currently uses one unregistered alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school has received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspector visited a sample of lessons, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The inspector met with the executive headteacher and other leaders within the school. The inspector also met with the chair of governors and four other members of governing board, as well as an educational representative from the local authority.
- 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 self-evaluation reports, minutes of governing body meetings and behaviour incident logs.
- The inspector considered the views of parents shared through Ofsted Parent View, including free text comments. The inspector also spoke with some parents on the second day of the inspection.
- The views of staff were gathered through meetings and discussions conducted throughout the inspection, as well as the staff survey.
- The inspector gathered pupils' views throughout the inspection, including through the classroom visits, group discussions and pupil survey, as well as at lunchtime.

Inspection team

Chris Parker, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

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