

# Hertford Infant and Nursery School

Hertford Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 7GF

## Inspection dates

13–14 February 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Early years provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The executive headteacher, ably supported by the head of school, is working effectively to bring about improvements to this small infant school. Together, they share a determination that every pupil should have the best possible school experience.
- Safeguarding is a strength of the school. Leaders and staff are highly alert to pupils' needs. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils and families receive the support they need. They have rightly identified the need to deepen pupils' understanding of e-safety.
- Leaders provide outstanding provision for pupils' personal development and welfare. Staff know pupils extremely well. They skilfully support and nurture pupils from Nursery to Year 2.
- Vulnerable pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are supported effectively. Consequently, they make good progress from their starting points.
- Children get off to a great start in the early years because of the high-quality care and provision they receive. This helps them settle into school quickly and happily.
- Overall, pupils make good progress because they experience suitably strong teaching. However, expectations for what pupils can achieve are not consistently high in all lessons and across all subjects.
- The curriculum provides opportunities for pupils to learn a range of subjects. However, leaders recognise that further improvements are needed to assess and deepen pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding across subjects other than English and mathematics. This work is firmly under way.
- Teachers assess pupils' work with increasing accuracy in English and mathematics. However, leaders, including governors, do not have a clear overview of this information to drive improvements incisively for all groups of pupils.
- Pupils behave well. They enjoy their time together and show positive attitudes to their learning. This is an inclusive and friendly school.
- Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. They feel their children are safe, well cared for and treated as individuals.

## Full report

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

- Leaders and governors monitor the impact of actions and initiatives, introduced to raise standards, so they can drive improvement more precisely for all groups of pupils.
- Further strengthen the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
  - teachers raise their expectations of what pupils can do and achieve across all subjects
  - pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are deepened across subjects other than English and mathematics, including e-safety.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since her appointment in September 2018, the executive headteacher has swiftly gained the trust and support of parents, staff and pupils. She, working closely with governors and the head of school, demonstrates an unwavering vision to ensure that high standards are in place and pupils are happy at school.
- Staff work well as a team and morale is high. One member of staff commented, 'We are a family, we look out for each other.' Many staff remarked on the kindness and welcoming atmosphere that permeates the school. Staff, including those who are new to teaching, appreciate the thoughtful attention leaders give to their professional development. As a result, teachers have increasingly strong subject knowledge and staff demonstrate a deep understanding of pupils in their care.
- Senior leaders have rightly recognised that more work is needed to ensure that there is consistency in the quality of teaching across all classes and in all subjects. Members of the newly established teaching and learning team demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and are enthusiastic about their work. They are knowledgeable about the school's priorities for improvement and how their work will contribute to these. However, it is too early to see the impact of their leadership.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders have thought carefully about how topics can engage pupils' interest and how these are meaningful for pupils in their school. Topics are enhanced by trips to interesting places. Pupils learn about local history, enthusiastically explaining how the Victorians used 'dippers' when going for a swim off Brighton beach. However, leaders recognise that further improvements are needed to ensure that pupils' skills knowledge and understanding are deepened in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Leaders use additional government funding for sport effectively. Leaders are passionate that physical education should improve pupils' life skills. They have sensibly invested in outdoor learning resources to enable pupils to develop physically and socially. Pupils take part in an impressive array of after-school clubs that promote physical activity, such as the very popular roller-skating and dance clubs.
- Leaders ensure that pupils with SEND are cared for and this area of the school's work is led exceptionally well. The school is highly inclusive, with a growing reputation locally for its skilled work in this area. Staff are well trained to provide specific interventions to support the learning and social, emotional and mental health needs of individual pupils. Leaders make good use of external agencies to help pupils get the support they need. As a result, pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points.
- Leaders ensure that provision for disadvantaged pupils is effective. Leaders show a resolute determination to support and champion this group of pupils. Additional funding is used well, ensuring that these pupils succeed, academically and pastorally. However, although provision for individual pupils is tracked closely, leaders do not have a clear overview of the impact of their actions to raise standards.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. Carefully planned experiences weave through all aspects of school life. Pupils' understanding of

different religions and cultures is strengthened by the school's annual 'International Week', along with trips to synagogues and local churches. Pupils learn about global issues, such as refugees, and show an impressive understanding of the importance of treating everyone equally and with kindness.

- All parents spoken to and those who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, were effusive in their praise for the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. They appreciate the efforts of leaders and staff. They feel that the school plays an important and central role in their children's development. Parents said that their children are happy and flourishing, citing staff as 'miracle workers'. One parent reflected, 'It is hard to put into words how great the school has been.'

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors care deeply about the school and are focused on its improvement. They show a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are working effectively to manage the school's transition into a federation of two schools.
- All governors, including those who have recently joined the governing body, actively seek out and attend useful training to gain a deeper understanding of their statutory duties.
- Governors work hard to ensure that the school's finances are used well. They have overseen a recent staffing restructure and judiciously reflect on how funding can be used for the benefit of all pupils.
- Governors offer appropriate support and challenge to senior leaders. They carefully analyse the information leaders provide for them about pupils' attainment and progress. However, governors do not demonstrate an incisive understanding of the impact of actions and initiatives introduced to raise standards. This hampers their work in driving improvements for all groups of pupils.
- Governors' attention to safeguarding is diligent. They regularly check the school's single central record and work closely with the school's designated safeguarding lead. They sensibly undertake an annual safeguarding audit and make sure that any actions are followed up swiftly.

### **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' welfare is at the heart of the school's work. All staff and parents spoken to during the inspection and the overwhelming majority of parents who responded to Parent View feel that their children are safe.
- Leaders ensure that all staff fully understand their statutory responsibilities in keeping pupils safe. They are clear that safeguarding is 'everyone's responsibility'. Training for staff is frequent and appropriate. Consequently, staff are vigilant and know how to report any concerns they may have. Leaders follow up concerns swiftly, ensuring that pupils receive the support they need.
- Health and safety checks are undertaken regularly by leaders. Pupils say they feel safe and know what to do in the event of a fire or major incident.

- Pupils have limited opportunities to learn about staying safe online and how to use the internet responsibly. Leaders recognise that further work to deepen pupils' understanding of different technologies and the risks associated with these is a top priority.
- Pupils say they feel safe. They express great confidence in how staff look out for their welfare, stating: 'We feel safe because we know the teachers and we know everyone is kind in this school.'

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- Excellent relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils work hard and want to do well. Pupils are exuberant about their learning and work happily together.
- The quality of teaching shows some inconsistency across the school. It varies between classes, individual lessons and across subjects. Leaders are aware that teachers' expectations for what pupils can achieve need to be raised, to ensure that all teaching is consistently as good as the best. The newly created teaching and learning team has sensible plans in place to bring about improvements in teaching but these plans are at an early stage.
- On the whole, pupils have opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and often. They study and learn from high-quality texts and write in a range of styles. However, teachers' expectations of pupils' presentation and handwriting skills are not consistently high across the school. Teachers do not reliably encourage pupils to take pride in their work.
- The effective teaching of reading enables pupils to develop well. Pupils use their phonics skills successfully to decode unfamiliar words. They also apply these skills in their writing. Teachers skilfully equip pupils with a range of strategies to work out the meaning of different words. As a result, most pupils read proficiently and have a growing vocabulary.
- Pupils across the school develop good number and calculation skills. Teachers adeptly plan activities that encourage pupils to use these skills to solve problems. For example, pupils were able to successfully count out the number of vertices on a 3D shape. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to explain their reasoning when working on complex word problems.
- Additional adults work closely with teachers to provide valuable support to pupils with SEND. Staff have very positive relationships with individual pupils and work effectively to motivate them to learn. As a result, this group of pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment and progress are now secure in English and mathematics. Teachers benefit from opportunities to check the accuracy of their assessment with other teachers within and beyond the school. However, the assessment of pupils' learning in other subjects, such as science and humanities, is not as well developed. Consequently, teaching is not always matched closely to pupils' learning needs in these subjects.
- Teaching provides pupils with many interesting activities across a broad range of subjects. For example, teachers used a picture book to engage pupils in learning about

how plastics are destroying the environment. Pupils enthusiastically used their English and art skills to create posters and write persuasively. Pupils were proud to tell inspectors that, because of their work, the school is now a local collection point for crisp packets.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils and staff enjoy warm relationships. Staff know pupils extremely well, helping to nurture and guide their development. Interactions between pupils and adults are positive and genuine. In return, pupils treat staff with respect. Pupils, whatever their challenges, flourish in this trusting and caring environment.
- The school is highly adept at supporting the small number of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs. Leaders work in partnership with parents and external agencies to enable these pupils to access their learning successfully and integrate well into school life.
- Pupils develop their wider understanding of the world through 'Nature Time'. This is an intrinsic part of the curriculum and offers pupils rich and rewarding experiences. Expert teaching successfully develops pupils' skills of concentration, teamwork and risk taking. Consequently, pupils' curiosity is stimulated and they develop increasing self-awareness and understanding of the natural world around them.
- Pupils do not believe there is much, if any, bullying. Pupils are very accepting of each other's differences and are clear that everyone is treated fairly.
- The school uses alternative provision, when necessary, to meet pupils' specific needs. Ongoing liaison between the school and the alternative provider ensures that placements are kept under constant review. This makes sure each placement is safe and successful.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's positive behaviour policy is well understood by all. It is applied consistently across the school and, as a result, pupils have a good understanding of the rules. As a result, pupils enjoy learning in a calm and orderly environment.
- Breaktimes are happy occasions, when pupils' personal development is further developed through outdoor activities. Leaders' recent initiatives to improve the quality of provision on the playground have resulted in a sharp drop in minor behavioural incidents. Lunchtimes are harmonious and civilised. Staff help pupils socialise well and offer practical help, such as helping pupils to cut up their food.
- Behaviour in lessons is positive and focused on learning. Pupils pay attention to adults and contribute readily in lessons. They cooperate well together, working in pairs or groups, helping and supporting each other. For example, in key stage 1, pupils worked productively on a comprehension task, thoughtfully listening to each other's views.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Leaders' diligent actions to improve attendance are having a positive impact. High levels of trust between the school and families enable leaders to provide useful support to those families whose children have low attendance. Consequently, the school's overall attendance is high and above the national average.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- In 2018, outcomes at the end of key stage 1 were variable. The proportions of pupils achieving the expected standards in reading and mathematics were just below the national figures but in writing they were lower.
- The teaching of early reading is effective. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check has risen sharply over the past three years. In 2018, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standard was broadly in line with the national average. Current pupils have good phonics skills and make good use of these when they read.
- The most able pupils achieve well in reading and mathematics. In 2018, the proportions of pupils achieving greater depth in reading and mathematics were broadly average and have improved over time. However, the proportion of pupils achieving greater depth in writing was below that seen nationally, showing little improvement from the previous year.
- Work in current pupils' books and the school's own assessment information show that pupils are making good progress in English and mathematics and are securely on track to achieve improved outcomes this year.
- Pupils with SEND make good progress from their starting points because activities are matched closely to their learning needs and they receive a range of appropriate support.
- The school's own assessment information and work seen in current pupils' books show that disadvantaged pupils make good and, in some cases, strong progress. The difference between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and that of other pupils nationally is now narrowing because of the intensive support this group of pupils receive.
- In 2018, at the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in science was above the national average. However, progress in subjects such as humanities and art is more variable because the assessment of pupils' learning in these subjects is not precise enough. Teachers do not always plan or match activities closely to pupils' learning needs in all subjects.

## Early years provision

**Good**

- Children get off to a strong start in the early years because of the exceptional care and nurture they receive.
- The early years leader, although new to her role, has quickly established a team of staff who support each other well for the benefit of the children. Leaders carefully consider how the curriculum stimulates children's interests. For example, children enjoy

learning about dinosaurs and making bear puppets.

- Experienced staff in Nursery build strong relationships with parents, who are extremely positive about the provision. Typical comments include, 'We couldn't have hoped for a better start to our child's school life,' and, 'My child always comes home beaming after Nursery and their progress, since starting, has been significant.'
- Children in Nursery are happy and settled. Adults skilfully guide children to explore their interests and help them to learn well. Children enjoy taking part in a wide range of activities, such as writing, reading, music and construction. This prepares them well for when they enter Reception Year.
- Leaders provide many opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. During inspection, children were excited to welcome parents to a 'Valentine's tea party' and staff provide support to parents so that they can better help their children learn to read.
- Interactions between children and adults, on the whole, extend and deepen children's thinking. During the inspection, the unexpected outcome of a leaking bowl of water inspired children to dig a trench and build a dam. Adults encouraged children to consider the depth of the water, measure it and consider why the water might drain away.
- Children get on well with each other and enjoy imaginative play together. For example, children were observed working together to make potions, clean their 'café' and apply their writing skills to cards.
- Strong routines and clear expectations mean that children understand what is required of them. They respond quickly and sensibly to adults' instructions. Where children's behaviour is less good, staff successfully modify it in a calm and purposeful way. Children successfully develop their skills of independence, for example by putting letters to go home in their allotted trays.
- The teaching of early reading is effective. Structured phonics sessions develop children's reading and writing skills. Adults encourage children to explore words and sounds through reading. The school's recently renovated library holds many picture books that interest children and support a love of reading.
- Children enjoy learning in a safe environment. Leaders make sure that all staff who work in the early years are trained appropriately and that all risk assessments are robust. Adults pay close attention to children's well-being.
- Work in children's learning journals shows that children of all abilities making steady progress from their starting points. For example, children's writing and mathematical skills show improvement over time.
- Most children start school with skills broadly typical for their age. By the end of Reception Year, the proportion of children achieving a good level of development (GLD) is broadly average. However, over the past three years, the proportions of children achieving GLD have significantly improved, with increasing proportions exceeding age-related expectations. These positive outcomes mean that children are well prepared to enter Year 1.



## School details

Unique reference number	114368
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10032909

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant and Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	154
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Co-Chairs	Tracey Hill and Jenny Perrin
Executive Headteacher	Zoe McGuigan
Telephone number	01273 552931
Website	<a href="http://www.hertfordinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk/">www.hertfordinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:head@hertfordinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk">head@hertfordinf.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	30–31 May 2012

## Information about this school

- Hertford Infant and Nursery School is smaller than the average-sized infant school.
- Since the previous inspection, the school federated with the nearby Hertford Junior School on 3 July 2017 to form the Hertford Federation. One governing body oversees both schools.
- The executive headteacher manages both Hertford Infant and Nursery School and Hertford Junior School. She took up this post in September 2018.
- The Nursery operates three days a week.
- In addition to the Nursery, the school has five classes. There are two Reception classes, one Year 1 class, one mixed Year 1 and Year 2 class, and one Year 2 class.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged is broadly in line with the national

average.

- The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care (EHC) plan is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The school runs a breakfast club and an after-school club.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes. Almost all observations were done jointly with senior leaders.
- The lead inspector met with one of the co-chairs of the governing body and a representative of the local authority, a national leader of education who is supporting the work of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the views of parents by considering the 85 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the start of the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors considered the views of a range of staff.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils informally and met with a group of pupils from Reception to Year 2.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read. They looked at work in pupils’ books with school leaders, including the leader of the newly formed teaching and learning team who is based at Hertford Junior School.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including leaders’ evaluation of the school’s effectiveness and the minutes of the governing body’s meetings.
- Inspectors examined the school’s records of current pupils’ progress and attendance. Safeguarding procedures were also reviewed, including the arrangements for keeping pupils safe and recruiting staff.

## Inspection team

Frances Nation, lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Chris Donovan

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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