

Inspection of Maidenbower Infant School and Nursery

Harvest Road, Maidenbower, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7RA

Inspection dates:	1 and 2 July 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

The school provides an exceptionally nurturing environment. Pupils are well known by staff, who provide expert care for each of them. Pupils feel safe at the school and are confident that staff will help them if they have any worries. The school's values, such as kindness, are a strong feature of school life. Pupils talk about how they are helped to get on well together and how to resolve any disagreements.

Breaktimes see pupils playing very happily together. Older pupils are keen to help younger ones. They take up roles such as 'playground angels', where they help organise activities. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included in school life. Staff expertly support those from the school's specially resourced provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (specially resourced provision) to mix happily with the rest of the school at breaktimes.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement. These are largely achieved. Pupils enjoy learning and work hard to achieve their goals. Lesson times are typified by a buzz of purposeful learning activities. Pupils are mature and responsible, such as when they help organise classroom equipment.

Pupils relish the rich range of clubs, activities and visits that help develop their interests.

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

Leaders have worked skilfully with the staff to bring improvement across the school's work. The school has improved curriculum construction in subjects so that learning takes place in a logical order. Effective training means staff better understand the content to be taught and explain new learning well. They ensure that the tasks pupils complete help them remember what they learn. The school accurately identifies the needs of pupils with SEND. Learning activities are adapted effectively to support pupils with SEND to learn well. Staff typically check carefully how well pupils have understood past learning and that they know what to do now. However, sometimes these checks do not accurately identify gaps in pupils' knowledge. When this happens, pupils do not learn as well as they could.

The school has rapidly developed the specially resourced provision since it opened in January. The curriculum provided for its pupils is adapted from that in the mainstream classes and reflects the same high ambition. Where appropriate, staff ensure that these pupils learn alongside their peers in mainstream classes.

The early years team considers carefully what pupils will learn. They manage activities with great skill, including checking pupils' learning. Staff make excellent use of these checks to adjust pupils' tasks. Early years pupils achieve outstandingly well by the time they start Year 1.

The school ensures a strong focus on reading. Staff adhere closely to the school's phonics programme. This supports pupils to become confident readers. The school tracks pupils' progress carefully. It provides additional support for those needing it, so they catch up

with others. The school promotes a love of reading effectively, with visiting authors invited and books relevant to current learning placed in classrooms. As a result, pupils enjoy reading.

The school has very high expectations for pupils' behaviour. Staff consistently demonstrate how to be kind and respectful. They sensitively steer pupils to do the right thing. Staff make excellent use of reflective discussions with pupils, so they learn to manage their feelings. The result is a harmonious atmosphere where pupils get on extremely well. Staff are skilled at supporting pupils to be resilient in learning, encouraging them to stick at tasks. Pupils are proud of what they achieve. They talk keenly about examples of work displayed on their 'proud patch' in classrooms.

The school supports pupils' attendance effectively. Attendance is high, and the school works closely with parents and carers if there are concerns so that their children's attendance improves.

Pupils' personal development is thoroughly fostered through lessons, assemblies and other activities. Each pupil is carefully supported as an individual to be ready for the next stage in their education. Pupils develop exceptional awareness of how to be respectful of each other, how to keep safe and the importance of healthy eating. The school provides excellent opportunities for cultural development. For example, music and performance are regular features of school life and are greatly enjoyed by pupils. Thoughtfully planned clubs and activities ensure that all pupils are included, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The school is highly effective at enabling staff to work as a team. This has led to the improvements seen since the last inspection in all areas of work and a sharp focus on the areas where there is more to do. The school prioritises staff development, leading to marked improvements in what is provided for pupils. Staff are fulsome in saying how much they enjoy working at the school. The school's engagement with parents is exceptional. Governors are assiduous in holding the school to account and in providing support. They are exceptionally well organised, gathering rich evidence first hand to enable them to monitor the school's work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some of the checks made on pupils' understanding of new knowledge during learning activities do not accurately identify gaps and misconceptions. This means that some pupils are moved on before they are ready and do not secure learning as well as they could. The school should ensure that staff have the knowledge and expertise to identify and address gaps and misconceptions in pupils' knowledge.

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	125962
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10379833
Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Elaine Jenkins
Headteacher	Laura Roberts
Website	www.maidenbowerinfantschool.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	17 and 18 January 2023, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- A specially resourced provision for up to 12 pupils with autism spectrum condition was opened by the local authority at the school in January of this year.
- The age range of pupils attending the school was formally adjusted by the school with the Department for Education after the last inspection in 2023 to recognise that the school's governors are the appropriate authority for the nursery provision. The age range of pupils now includes three-year-olds.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and senior staff, the chair of the governing body and other governors, a representative of the local authority and with groups of staff.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, English and science. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils and observed breaktimes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record of checks on adults; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has established an open and positive culture that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and of surveys of staff's opinions.

Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Vanessa Hickey	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Law	Ofsted Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025