

Inspection of a good school: The Mountbatten School

Whitenap Lane, Romsey, Hampshire SO51 5SY

Inspection dates:

23 and 24 January 2024

Outcome

The Mountbatten School continues to be a good school.

The headteacher of this school is Andrew Portas. This school is part of The Mountbatten School trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Heather McIlroy, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Paul Urben.

What is it like to attend this school?

The school offers a warm, caring community in which pupils flourish. Pupils value how staff want them to aspire to perform beyond their own expectations, both academically and in their personal development. Most pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning and the many extra-curricular opportunities on offer. One parent echoed the views of many by reflecting, 'My children are thriving here, taking part in everything on offer, and so they are progressing both academically and as people. Thank you, Mountbatten!'

There are high expectations for pupils across the school. The dedicated team of staff ensures that pupils benefit from strong teaching. Learning is enriched through a huge number of clubs, experiences and trips. Pupils immerse themselves in all that the curriculum offers. They become confident and cooperative learners. Over time, they achieve well and develop leadership, resilience and independent learning skills that equip them well for the future.

The 'Mountbatten 3D Curriculum' nurtures positive attitudes towards learning and encourages pupils to be caring, respectful and to achieve. The first-class leadership of pastoral care and well-being underpins the exceptionally safe and inclusive learning environment. Positive relationships ensure that pupils feel very well supported and secure. In turn, pupils' good humour, considerate behaviour and respectful manners make The Mountbatten School a special place to be.

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

An ambitious, broad curriculum enables pupils to achieve well. The number of pupils undertaking the English Baccalaureate is comparatively low. The school has taken steps to

address this while also ensuring that pupils can choose from a wide range of artistic, technical and creative GCSEs and vocational options. Well-planned careers education and advice ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next steps in education or employment.

The careful design of the curriculum ensures that pupils build knowledge and skills from Year 7 to Year 11 across subjects. Most teachers check pupils' prior understanding well before explaining new subject matter effectively. However, some teachers' skills in these areas are less well developed. Consequently, sometimes, pupils can become disengaged from their learning, which affects how well they achieve. The school has refined its systems for checking pupils' reading skills. Priority is given to ensuring that pupils get the specific support they need to be able to read confidently.

Pupils respond to teachers' high expectations by producing work of a good standard overall. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils can be successful, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and other disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are aware that the achievement of these groups has not been as strong as that of their peers in the past. Most teachers adapt their teaching well to meet the needs of these pupils. However, this could be more consistently effective. The school is rightly prioritising further training to ensure that all teachers are equally adept at addressing any gaps in knowledge that these pupils may have.

The school's effective actions have led to significant improvements in pupils' attendance rates over the last year. Although there was a rise in suspensions last year, these have now dropped dramatically. This demonstrates the school's effective approach to tackling any prejudicial behaviour among pupils. Pupils and parents told inspectors that they really value the school's strong approach to promoting equality.

Provision for pupils' personal development is first class. The impressive relationships and sex education and health education curriculum covers personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and incorporates local contextual issues well. Pupils have ample opportunities to learn how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy and safe. Similarly, being an 'international school' supports promoting respect for different cultures, languages and religions. Dedicated staff offer a variety of regular clubs, as well as interesting trips, competitions and events each year. Pupils enthuse about the achievements of the school bands in national competitions and the chances to take on a variety of leadership roles.

The school considers the workload and well-being of staff carefully and provides opportunities for staff to be involved in any changes. Most teachers and support staff report feeling well supported.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some teachers do not adapt their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils as effectively as others do. Where this is the case, a minority of pupils can miss key points. The school should ensure that all teachers can skilfully support all pupils, including those with SEND, in line with the best examples in school.
- The approaches of some teachers to assessing what pupils already know and can do need refinement. As a result, some pupils do not get suitably challenging tasks and opportunities to deepen their thinking and knowledge. By building on the best practice, the school should increase staff expertise in this area further so that pupils achieve more highly.

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 school to be good in March 2015.

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	136640
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10296355
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,465
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Paul Urben
Headteacher	Andrew Portas
Website	http://www.mountbatten.school
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2018 under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a standalone academy.
- Trustees are also responsible for running Personal Best Education. This is a partner company providing sports and leisure activities and courses for pupils at the school as well as for adults and primary-age pupils from the local community.
- The school currently uses four registered providers to offer alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Deep dives were conducted in English, mathematics, science, geography and music. As part of these, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited lessons, talked to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors met with teaching staff to talk about their approach to designing and delivering the curriculum. In addition, meetings were held with leaders of PSHE to discuss curriculum planning and provision in this area.
- Inspectors met with school leaders, staff and those with responsibility for governance, including the chair of the trust. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, special educational needs coordinator and other members of teaching and support staff.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents, including those relating to behaviour, attendance and governance.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils to discuss their views about many different aspects of their school and to talk about their work. Inspectors also held informal conversations with pupils at break and lunchtime.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff represented in meetings and the responses to Ofsted surveys were considered.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's policies and practices and met with safeguarding leaders to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding. Records of safeguarding incidents were scrutinised and discussed. Inspectors also reviewed the school's records of the recruitment checks made on adults working in the school.

Inspection team

Matthew Newberry, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Woodman	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 2024