

Inspection of La Houquette School

St Pierre du Bois, Guernsey GY8 0DS

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2023

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development and welfare	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Children are at the centre of this safe, caring and inclusive school. The school values, including respect, kindness and honesty, lie at the heart of the school's work. Pupils say they are proud to attend La Houquette. One pupil expressed their strength of feeling by saying, 'I love this school. I want to live here forever and ever!'

Leaders have high expectations of what all pupils can achieve. Pupils enjoy their learning. They know adults want the best for them. Leaders provide effective pastoral support. Pupils know they are accepted for who they are.

Staff foster a culture of kindness. Pupils are polite and considerate. They have positive attitudes to their learning. Pupils, including those in early years, behave well in lessons and around the school. Low-level disruption is rare. Consequently, the school is a calm and purposeful place to learn.

Pupils are respectful of their peers and adults. They understand what it means to be a good friend. Leaders provide pupils with a range of opportunities to enable them to become respectful citizens. Pupils make the most of their local environment to support their learning. For example, they visit the nature reserve and local beaches.

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

Leaders share with staff their high aspirations for all pupils. Staff value highly the leadership of the headteacher. They recognise her determination for everyone to succeed. Those new to the profession feel welcomed and supported.

Leaders prioritise reading. From the moment children start in Reception, they start to learn phonics. Books match the sounds pupils are learning. Leaders' careful tracking of pupils' phonics knowledge means those who struggle receive additional support to catch up quickly. Pupils are exposed to a wide range of high-quality texts from the early years to Year 6. Staff use questioning effectively to develop pupils' understanding of new vocabulary. Older pupils enjoy reading. Some say they 'lose themselves' in books and talk about how reading is good for their well-being.

The mathematics curriculum is clearly sequenced to support pupils to build knowledge over time. Pupils engage positively in their learning. They are confident in explaining their methods when solving problems involving data, for example, and when working with more complex concepts.

Leaders have worked diligently to plan for most subjects in the wider curriculum. For example, in physical education (PE), leaders have carefully identified and ordered the knowledge they want pupils to learn. Staff use their knowledge of what pupils know and can do in PE to support their building of new knowledge over time.

However, in other subjects, this is not always the case. Pupils, therefore, struggle to recall what they have learned in the past. Furthermore, teachers' use of assessment in some subjects does not inform what pupils should be taught next. As a result, gaps in pupils' subject-specific knowledge persist.

Leaders have established an inclusive and positive culture. They provide effective pastoral support. Leaders know and understand pupils' needs well. They ensure pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are included fully in all aspects of school life. Staff adapt learning appropriately so these pupils can follow the curriculum successfully.

Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils are thoughtful and well mannered. They show concern for others. Pupils appreciate the positive approach to behaviour and understand there are 'choices, chances and consequences'. They engage and play well together during social times.

Leaders ensure there is an extensive range of opportunities to develop and nurture each pupil as an individual. Pupils have a good understanding and appreciation of difference across the world. Pupils take on active leadership roles, such as running their own clubs, being part of the school council and being 'Value Keepers.' Pupils understand how to maintain active and healthy lifestyles.

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. Parents agree the school is an integral part of the island community. Parents comment on the 'high level of care for all its children' and that staff really 'care about their education.'

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders act in the best interests of keeping children safe. There is a mutual understanding that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Staff receive frequent and relevant safeguarding training. They understand the potential risks pupils may face. Staff know what to do when they are concerned about a child. They say that leaders take any concerns seriously.

Leaders carry out the necessary checks on staff to establish whether they are safe to work with children. Pupils know who to go to if they are worried. Leaders ensure the curriculum supports pupils' understanding of keeping safe in a range of situations, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- In some subjects, teachers are not always explicit about the knowledge they want pupils to remember. As a result, pupils cannot recall key learning well enough.

Leaders need to ensure that teachers are clear about the subject-specific content they want pupils to know and the order in which this is best taught.

- Teachers' use of assessment is not always precise enough to check what pupils know and understand. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils have gaps in their knowledge of the curriculum. Teachers need to assure themselves that all pupils secure all the essential knowledge that leaders intend.

School details

Inspection number	10240085
Type of school	Primary School
Age range of pupils	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	300
Appropriate authority	The States of Guernsey
Headteacher	Claire Judd
Website	www.lahouguetteschool.com
Date of previous Ofsted inspection	Not previously inspected by Ofsted

Information about this school

- La Houquette School is a two-form entry primary school.
- The school is led by the headteacher, supported by a seconded deputy headteacher from another local primary school. A new permanent deputy headteacher is taking up post in September 2023.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 35 of the Guernsey Education Law 1970.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other senior staff, groups of staff, the special educational needs coordinator and two representatives from the Education Office.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, science, PE and geography. For each deep dive, inspectors 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 lead inspector listened to pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 read to a known adult.

- Inspectors considered the documentation around safeguarding, including the safeguarding checks made on staff. They discussed how the school keeps children safe with the senior child protection officer, speaking to school staff, talking to pupils and looking at the processes to ensure staff are safe to work with children.
- Inspectors considered responses to the pupil and staff questionnaires carried out at the time of the inspection and the Guernsey Parent Survey.

Inspection team

Heather Barraclough, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Wendy D'Arcy	His Majesty's Inspector
Kathy Maddocks	Ofsted Inspector

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