

Northern Junior Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115935
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357846
Inspection dates	24–25 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Keith Sadler

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Veronica Saunders
Headteacher	Dorothy Fane
Date of previous school inspection	25 January 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Eleven lessons were seen and eight teachers were observed. The inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and groups of pupils. The school's work and a wide range of documentation were reviewed. These included the school's analysis of pupils' progress, teachers' lesson plans, the school improvement plan, leaders' monitoring records and pupils' work. Questionnaires from staff and pupils and from 56 parents and carers were analysed and their responses taken into account.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether Year 6 pupils are on track to meet their targets.
- The quality of the teaching of writing.
- How well the school's curriculum promotes pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- The extent of the role that subject leaders play in the school's monitoring and evaluation.

Information about the school

Northern Junior is smaller than most primary schools. Most pupils come from the immediate vicinity, although an increasing number come from the surrounding area, particularly from Portsmouth. Almost all the pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above the national average. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. An above-average proportion of pupils joins the school at times other than the normal entry point in Year 3.

The school provides breakfast and after-school clubs. This provision is not managed by the governing body and was not included in this inspection. The school has gained the enhanced Healthy School award and also the Royal Horticultural Society's Britain in Bloom award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Northern Junior is a good school. It has some significant strengths. There is a highly positive atmosphere that stems from the outstanding care, guidance and support for the pupils. This results in them achieving exceptionally well in their personal development and making good progress in their academic studies. Consequently, the outcomes for pupils are outstanding. Behaviour, both in lessons and around the school, is exemplary. Pupils feel exceptionally safe. They have an excellent understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle; a fact that is shown in the enhanced Healthy School award. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is equally excellent and, by the time that they leave the school, almost all are confident, secure and well-rounded pupils who are prepared well for the next stage in their education. Almost all parents and carers say that they are happy with their children's experience at the school. Many wrote highly positive comments about how pleased they are to have chosen this school for their children.

Although attainment in the past has been at the national average, current Years 5 and 6 pupils are on track to reach their challenging targets and attainment is above average for their age in both English and mathematics. This marks good progress from their average starting points. However, higher-attaining pupils only make satisfactory progress in mathematics and so the proportion on course to attain the higher level remains at the national average. This is because on just a few occasions teachers do not stretch all pupils as far as they might and so these pupils do not always apply their mental and oral skills sufficiently well when undertaking practical mathematics activities. In English, the progress of some pupils, particularly higher-attaining pupils, is somewhat hampered by weak handwriting skills.

Teaching is good with all adults having good relationships with the pupils. This ensures that classrooms have a positive and strong learning ethos. The curriculum is of good quality and makes learning fun. Apart from the lack of challenge in some mathematics lessons for higher-ability pupils, the curriculum planning for the promotion of literacy and numeracy is good. There is a particularly strong partnership with parents and carers and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The successful mathematics workshop for parents and carers, for example, helps to forge close links between home and school.

Pupils are proud of the school and they take the many responsibilities offered to them enthusiastically. They undertake their role as school councillors seriously and their regular reports in assembly, such as the recent survey on how to improve the school, gives value to the pupils' views. Both pupils and their parents speak highly about enjoying school, but leaders are working effectively to ensure that suitable attendance rates are maintained as they have dipped from above-average levels.

Leadership and management are good. There is strong team work and morale is high amongst the staff. As one member of staff commented, 'I find the school to be a very

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positive and cooperative environment to work in.' Governance continues to be outstanding, with members of the governing body having close and regular contact with the school. This is enabling them to provide a good balance between supporting and challenging the school to do better. The headteacher's commitment and determination to further improvement is evident and is based on accurate self-evaluation. These factors, when linked to the maintenance of outstanding personal development and the good improvement in the areas identified as weaknesses at the last inspection, demonstrate a good capacity for further improvement. Staff and governors are well placed to realise their ambitions for further school development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Lift the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - a greater proportion of pupils attain the higher level, particularly in mathematics, by strengthening pupils' application of mental and oral skills in practical mathematical activities
 - pupils' handwriting skills are improved
- By January 2012, raise levels of attendance to the previously secure above-average levels.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and their achievement is good. They have very positive attitudes to learning and this contributes well to the good progress made in most lessons. For example, Year 3 pupils responded very positively in a good literacy lesson when they were successfully building tension into their good-quality plans for developing a climax to their mystery stories. The teacher's imaginative activity enabled the pupils to progress well because they were confident and enthusiastic when working in pairs and individually. The pupils' attainment on entry has gradually improved over the past few years from below average to above-average levels. Younger pupils' work is now of a high standard with many of the pupils attaining levels expected of pupils at the end of Year 4. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn well in lessons because they are supported well by the effective teaching assistants. They also receive good attention from class teachers who benefit from having very small class sizes throughout the school. The school has rightly focused on providing more opportunities for pupils to carry out practical mathematical activities and this is starting to pay dividends. Writing is taught well. The recent well-founded focus on strengthening pupils' writing means that progress is accelerating and attainment has improved to match the above-average attainment in reading.

Pupils' well-rounded personal development contributes well to their learning and progress. Both pupils and their parents and carers are very positive about the excellent arrangements that are in place to welcome the many pupils who join the school after Year 3. Pupils are warm and welcoming to each other and visitors. They show good sensitivity to the needs of others by raising funds for charity. Pupils' excellent behaviour and highly developed social skills contribute well to learning. For example, in almost all lessons, pupils thoroughly enjoy working together in pairs and small groups and, because they are sensitive and listen carefully to others' views, this results in good-quality work. The pupils

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are rightly very proud of their grounds because these are exceptionally well cared for and developed by them with the enthusiastic support of a helper. Every little corner of the areas close to the school have been developed outstandingly well and the pupils' clear commitment to the school being eco-friendly is shown in the myriad number of composting bins and the greenhouse made of plastic bottles. Pupils are pleased to show off the cups and awards that have been won for the grounds, not least the Britain in Bloom award.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Outstanding attention is given to all aspects of care, guidance and support. Adults place the pupils' well-being at the centre of their work and they do all that they can to make the school a happy and safe place to learn.

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour exceptionally well and they generally meet their differing learning needs effectively. They invariably ensure that the pupils are clear about what is to be learned and what they have to do to meet lesson objectives. Assessments are generally used well, but on the few occasions when teaching is satisfactory, work set is too easy for more-able pupils. Teachers make good use of the interactive whiteboards to enliven learning. In a good science lesson, for example, Year 5 pupils were able to watch an internet clip to support their understanding that it is the earth's tilt, as it circles the sun, that establishes the seasons.

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The curriculum is of good quality and is augmented and supported well by a wide range of after-school clubs. Pupils benefit from specialist music teaching and there are many opportunities for them to make use of the well-stocked school library. The curriculum is also organised well to meet the pupils' interests because many of the carefully chosen topics and themes stem from regular visits to local places of interest such as Porchester Castle and Fort Nelson. Recent improvements in resources for information and communication technology have improved access and teachers plan successfully for the use of computers in lessons. However, at present, curriculum planning does not always make the best use of literacy and numeracy tasks in topics and themes being studied.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team works closely together and the members are ambitious for the school and highly committed to further improvement. The vision is shared well by the governing body and the staff. Together they are determined to lift attainment and the drive for improvement is firmly embedded throughout the staff. Monitoring and evaluation processes are well established, with subject leaders providing good-quality information gained from the close checking of provision and pupils' progress. This has led to well-founded priorities for improvement. Even so, the overall evaluation of the school's effectiveness is over ambitious. An improvement in the tracking of learning is enhanced by holding meetings in which each pupil's progress is reviewed. This supports the good commitment for promoting equality and tackling discrimination because any unevenness in progress between different groups is quickly identified and in most cases eliminated. Furthermore, discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The assiduous governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures are of good quality and meet all current regulatory requirements. The school provides a cohesive community and there are very close links with the local community. Links at a national level are well established with an on-going link with a school in Norfolk. The governing body and staff are aware that links with schools globally are less well developed, but links with a school in Indonesia are being established.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

An average proportion of parents and carers completed the questionnaire and they were overwhelmingly supportive of the school. A few parents and carers said that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and this was reviewed as part of the inspection. It was found that the school has excellent procedures for both promoting good behaviour and any poor behaviour is managed well. Many of the written comments focused on the positive atmosphere and the quality of teaching and learning which was also evident during the inspection. These are summarised by one who wrote, 'My son joined the school in Year 5. Since attending, he has become interested and motivated and he enjoys school. We have noticed a wonderful change in his attitude to learning. This is down to the teaching and positive approach of the school. We wish he had always been here.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Northern Junior Community School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	52	23	41	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	64	20	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	32	37	66	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	45	27	48	3	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	52	24	43	2	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	32	37	66	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	34	36	64	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	24	43	27	48	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	39	30	54	3	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	14	25	36	64	5	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	27	34	61	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	38	31	55	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	55	22	39	2	4	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



26 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Northern Junior Community School, Fareham PO16 8DG

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave to us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. I was particularly impressed with your grounds which I think you look after magnificently well.

Our inspection judged that you go to a good school and that the outcomes for you are outstanding. You enjoy learning and the staff make sure that they keep you very safe. They also make sure your parents are kept fully informed and have an excellent partnership with your school. Your behaviour is excellent. You also have an excellent understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and you make an outstanding contribution to the school by taking on many responsibilities. The good teaching that you receive enables you to make good progress. You concentrate well and work hard and you enjoy working together in lessons. You are polite and welcoming to visitors and kind and considerate to those around you.

Your headteacher and senior staff are doing a good job. They are supported exceptionally well by the governing body and they all work really hard to make your school even better. In order to do so, we have asked them to focus on two things. Firstly we want them to ensure that more of you gain Level 5, particularly in mathematics, by always giving challenging work for those of you that find learning easy and also by making sure that you apply your mental mathematical skills well in practical activities. We have also asked that your handwriting skills are improved. Secondly, and this is where you can help, we want the school to improve your attendance. Too many of you take time off school when it is not necessary. Please make sure that you attend as often as you should!

We hope that you enjoy the rest of your education.

Yours sincerely

Keith Sadler

Lead inspector

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