

Orchard Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115988
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	357858
Inspection dates	24–25 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Gehane Gordelier

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	396
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Nikki Brigg
Headteacher	Mr Robert J Carson
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Twenty-one lessons and one assembly were observed. All of the teachers working in the school at the time of the inspection were seen teaching. Meetings were also held with staff, a group of pupils, members of the governing body including the Chair and Vice Chair, and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked in detail at the school's policies, procedures for ensuring that pupils are kept safe, the school's self-evaluation, action and improvement planning, samples of pupils' workbooks, teachers' planning and the school's data and information about pupils and the progress they are making.

The responses to 237 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those completed by 29 staff and 132 pupils, were also considered.

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

- The quality of learning and progress for all pupils, particularly in mathematics
- The consistency with which the quality of teaching is good, particularly in challenging the more-able pupils and in meeting the needs and interests of lower-attaining girls.
- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels contribute to raising standards, driving improvement and embedding ambition.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is less than half the national average. Very few pupils do not speak English as their first language and most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but fewer than is the case nationally have a statement of special educational needs. The school has been awarded Healthy School status and the Football Association Charter Mark.

The school runs a range of lunchtime and after-school activities which are overseen by staff and specialist coaches. The school also shares its grounds and facilities with the local community, especially at weekends and during school holidays. This provides additional activities for pupils and other local children to attend at these times.

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

Orchard Junior is a good school. The very positive relationships among staff and pupils and the warm welcome given to parents, carers and visitors are among the school's many significant strengths. One parent wrote, 'We are very pleased with our children's progress at Orchard... children thrive, through mutual respect and confidence.' This comment supports the views of many who completed the parental questionnaire.

Pupils much enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in their exemplary behaviour and their very positive attitudes to learning. The school is rightly proud of its pupils and of their many achievements. This includes their achievements in sport, with the girls, for example, winning the local football tournament, and pupils making good progress in learning how to swim. Pupils also achieve very well in art, music, reading and science. Pupils' attainment in English and science by the end of Key Stage 2 has generally been significantly above average since 2008. Attainment in mathematics has remained broadly average and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics has remained in line with national averages. The school recognises that it has been less successful in accelerating the progress that pupils make in mathematics than in English and science. Although staff recognise that pupils' use and application of number skills are weaker than they should be, they are not improved rigorously or systematically enough. There are some good examples of cross-curricular links, such as with history and literacy, but mathematics lessons do not always put learning into a meaningful context.

The quality of teaching is typically good; it is built on strong relationships and utilises approaches that interest and engage pupils in their learning. This includes the use of new technology. In the small minority of lessons where teaching is less than good, there is limited challenge for the more-able pupils, particularly in the first part of the lesson; the pace slows and assessment is not used sufficiently well to match work to pupils' learning needs. At times, there is insufficient planning for the progression of skills, such as in some mathematics lessons for pupils of different abilities. However, the use of data and information about pupils by senior leaders enables the school to identify those pupils at risk of underachieving. These pupils are often provided with extremely good additional support from well-trained learning support assistants (LSAs) as well as from other teaching staff. As a result, pupils not only make good academic progress overall, they make excellent progress in many aspects of their personal and social development. Pupils leave the school as articulate, well-mannered and confident young people, having developed a good range of skills that will serve them well in the future. Their knowledge and understanding of personal safety and the extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles are outstanding given their age. The extremely high level of care, guidance and support provided to pupils is evident in all aspects of the school's work and is also reflected in the excellent way the school works with parents and carers to help support and meet the

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needs of pupils. This contributes very well to the high level of confidence parents and carers have in the school and the extent to which pupils say they feel safe and well cared for.

The school's self-evaluation is mostly accurate and as a result the school has already identified most of what it could do to become even more effective. However, not all staff and governors are as involved in the self-evaluation and target setting process as they could be. Some action and improvement planning lacks rigour in identifying how actions will impact on pupils of different ability and how progress will be measured. There are also too few interim milestones to enable the school to assess during the course of the year the extent to which actions and initiatives are making a difference.

The school has made good progress in the areas identified for improvement at its last inspection. Effective strategies are in place to support those pupils who experience difficulties with their literacy and numeracy. Senior leaders are now making better use of data to track and monitor the progress made by pupils. The school has demonstrated that its capacity to sustain improvement is good. Staff and governors share the same vision for the school and work together towards common goals. Senior leaders have also made effective use of the guidance and support from their School Improvement Partner to raise the expectations of what pupils can achieve and to set more challenging targets.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress that pupils make in mathematics by:
 - ensuring better daily planning for the progression in skills
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to secure their basic number skills and to use and apply their mathematical skills in meaningful contexts.
- Bring greater consistency to the quality of teaching so that more lessons are securely good and a greater proportion of pupils are helped to attain the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring there is a good level of challenge for the more able and for this to be introduced early in lessons
 - accelerating the rate of progress when it slows, so that learning progresses at a good pace
 - ensuring that daily planning is consistently of a high standard and takes full account of the different needs of all pupils
 - developing a greater level of consistency in the use of assessment to support learning.
- Develop the role of middle managers so that they are better able to lead in their areas of responsibility by:
 - ensuring they play a greater role in the monitoring and evaluation of the progress pupils make and the levels they attain
 - improving the quality of their action and improvement planning so that these include a more explicit focus on the intended outcomes for different groups of pupils as well as quantified success criteria so that progress can be measured.

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Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' outstanding behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning. Their achievement in writing is improving at a faster rate than in mathematics because there is often a sharper focus on the progression of skills in the teaching of English than in mathematics. While pupils are developing good skills in the use of information and communication technology (ICT), they have yet to make sufficient use of ICT to support and further enhance their learning in class-based lessons. In the large majority of lessons pupils make good progress and enjoy the activities teachers set for them. In an outstanding French lesson, pupils in Year 3 made very good progress learning how to say and read the names of different animals. The lesson built effectively on what pupils already knew in English to help them begin to learn about French grammar.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the carefully targeted support provided by knowledgeable and highly skilled LSAs. Pupils feel extremely safe in school because they are confident that staff will help them if needed. In discussions about safety, pupils speak confidently about road safety and the importance of remaining calm, for example during fire drills. Pupils make healthy choices, value the importance of exercise and understand the dangers of smoking and drugs. Older pupils also recognise the link between mental health and being happy. There is a strong and active school council. Pupils develop as good citizens who participate well in their school and local community. Good examples include links with the local parish, where pupils' requests for more benches in the local park and for a butterfly garden have been met. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and improving. The school recognises the need to extend pupils' cultural awareness, but is already making good progress with this through the curriculum.

Attendance levels have improved significantly in the last year. This is as a result of the good work of the school and the governing body with parents and carers, as well as the joint effort on raising attendance with other local schools.

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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	2
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	2
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

In a discussion with one of the inspectors, a pupil said: 'Teachers don't teach at you, they help you to be part of it.' This insightful description characterises the large majority of the teaching seen in the school. Common features of the good teaching observed included:

- strong relationships between staff and pupils
- the use of ICT by teachers to help model and explain new learning as well as to help engage and motivate pupils
- the use of questions to help pupils to recall and build on previous learning and to take time to think about their work
- opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and independently
- the use of talk partners, at times referred to as 'chatter buddies'
- the very effective use of LSAs in providing additional support to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as to those who, at times, find learning difficult.

Where teaching was less effective some of the school's policies and agreed practice were not being implemented consistently well. The school has developed an engaging and exciting curriculum which is strongly enriched by extra-curricular activities. These include after-school clubs, such as the animation club in ICT, as well as visits to places of interest

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and visitors to the school. Pupils' love for reading is nurtured well, not just by the staff in the school, but for example through the annual visit of a storyteller who uses props and actions. Pupils enjoy hearing folk tales from other cultures, such as Aboriginal stories from Australia.

The high quality of care, guidance and support is evident from the moment one enters Orchard Junior School. The good links with other schools strongly support the transition for pupils from one school to the next. The school is successfully supporting those pupils who have previously exhibited challenging behaviour and staff are proud of not having had to exclude a pupil. All pupils, including those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, are well known by staff and very well supported. The effective links with outside agencies enable the school to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities particularly well. ♦

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 responses from staff in the questionnaire convey a very high level of pride in working at Orchard Junior. This is a strong reflection on how well the senior leadership team lead and manage the school. The dedication and determination of the headteacher and senior leaders are helping to embed ambition and drive improvement. A good example has been the audit of staff training needs in the light of school priorities and the subsequent in-service training. This has helped the school to get back on course after a period of instability caused by some changes to staffing and a dip in attainment in 2009. There is now rigorous interrogation of data to check on the progress made by every pupil. This contributes well to the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity and reducing the attainment gap, for example between boys and girls. Teachers are now held more closely to account for the progress made by their pupils and there is an improved cycle of monitoring and lesson observations. However, the monitoring of lessons does not always focus sharply enough on levels of attainment or the progress made by pupils of different abilities. Furthermore, middle managers have yet to contribute as well as they might to monitoring activities and the planning to raise standards.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school and is aware of its strengths and areas for improvement. The governing body, while helping the school to set priorities, is not as well involved in the school's self-evaluation process as it could be. It challenges the school and provides effective support with regard to health and safety matters, financial management and the curriculum. However, it does not always communicate to parents and carers the impact of some key policies. Nevertheless, the work of the

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governing body alongside the school has helped to ensure that safeguarding procedures are good.

The school actively promotes community cohesion and this helps pupils to appreciate and respect individual differences. While there is scope for the school to improve on its promotion and evaluation of community cohesion, there are already effective plans in place to do this. The school has already started to reintroduce a more global dimension into aspects of the curriculum, but this has yet to be fully implemented.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a high level of response to the questionnaires for parents and carers. Returns show that parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about the school. The highest levels of satisfaction concerned how well the school is led and managed, how happy parents and carers feel about their children's experience at the school, and the extent to which parents and carers believe the school helps to keep their children safe. A very few parents indicated that they were less than satisfied with the progress their children are making and the extent to which the school helps to meet their children's needs, or takes account of parental concerns and suggestions. The inspection findings support the positive views that parents and carers have of the school. However, while the progress pupils make is good, it is not always as good in mathematics, and some of the teaching and learning are not always as consistently good as they could be. The school has been asked to make improvements in these areas. The inspection also found that the school does seek and take account of the views of parents and carers, and that the work of the school with parents and carers is outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Orchard Junior 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 237 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 396 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	165	70	66	28	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	178	75	57	24	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	134	56	99	42	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	132	56	95	40	8	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	162	68	70	30	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	130	55	97	41	5	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	152	64	82	35	1	1	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)	148	62	80	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	144	61	84	35	7	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	124	52	100	42	6	3	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	122	51	99	42	6	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	189	80	46	19	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	181	76	53	22	0	0	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Orchard Junior School, Dibden Purlieu, Southampton SO45 4SB

Thank you so much for helping the inspectors to learn about your school when we visited recently. We enjoyed meeting you and listening to what you had to say and were also very interested in what your parents and carers told us. Your school provides you with a good standard of education. There are some things we found to be outstanding.

The way you behave with adults and each other is exemplary.

All those who spoke to us and who completed the inspection questionnaire indicated that you feel safe in school.

You have an excellent understanding of how to keep yourselves healthy and you make healthy choices.

The quality of care, guidance and support provided by the school is outstanding.

The school works extremely well with parents and carers and this is also making a strong contribution to your learning and how well the school takes care of you.

There are three main things we have asked your school to do to help it to become even better. We want the school to help you to make even better progress in mathematics, to make sure that more of the teaching in the school is consistently good and to help some of the staff with responsibilities to develop their leadership roles more fully.

It was a great pleasure to have met you and I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier Her Majesty's Inspector

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