

Hyde Park Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113274
Local Authority	Plymouth
Inspection number	363805
Inspection dates	2–3 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Grahame Sherfield HMI

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	359
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Cole
Headteacher	Bernadette Evans
Date of previous school inspection	9 July 2008
School address	Hyde Park Road Plymouth PL3 4RH
Telephone number	01752 225314
Fax number	01752 255315
Email address	hyde.park.junior.school@plymouth.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
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M2 7LA

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 19 lessons and observed 15 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils and met some parents informally. Inspectors looked at key documents, such as the school's plans for improvement and the minutes of meetings of the governing body, as well as 261 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- The progress the pupils are making, particularly in mathematics.
- How successfully teaching has been improved since the previous inspection.
- The impact of the recent curriculum review on pupils' learning.
- How well governors fulfil their role in holding school leaders to account.

Information about the school

The school is above average in size and serves the surrounding urban area. Most pupils are of White British heritage and a very small minority speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is above average and the percentage known to be eligible for free school meals is below average.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Hyde Park Junior School has improved significantly and is now outstanding. Pupils greatly enjoy learning, promoted by the excellent curriculum, within the exceptionally positive and caring environment created and maintained by the headteacher and her staff. Pupils' attainment is high and their personal development is outstanding. Parents and carers are exceptionally supportive of the school. One reported that the school 'inspires and nurtures' its pupils while another noted that her children have 'developed and learned so much' at the school. These very positive views are representative of the very large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire and are similar to those of the inspection team.

Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics and attainment is significantly above average by the time they leave the school in Year 6. The school has been very successful in improving progress in mathematics and approaches involving pupils carrying out physical activity to develop and consolidate understanding are greatly enjoyed and highly effective. A sharp focus on the identification of any aspects of teaching that could be improved is a key feature of the school and teaching is now outstanding. Teachers use their excellent knowledge of their pupils to plan work that matches their needs very well and contributes strongly to the outstanding progress made. It is typical of the school's constant striving to achieve even better practice that staff are working to refine assessment in writing and mathematics still further so that activities can meet pupils' needs even more precisely. In this way it is intended that still more pupils can make outstanding progress. The school has rightly identified that this is a key focus to enable it to continue to improve.

Pupils report they feel very safe, and behaviour is excellent in lessons and around the school. They have a very good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in a healthy lifestyle and make an excellent contribution to the school community through willingly taking on a wide range of responsibilities. Pupils are proud of their school, have a firm grasp of right and wrong and understand and appreciate that humanity is so varied. Their outstanding personal development and high attainment prepare them exceptionally well for their future economic well-being.

The strong leadership of the headteacher and senior staff has established a widely shared commitment to continuous improvement where the best possible use is made of the rather cramped building. There is a purposeful atmosphere where staff are highly reflective, self-critical and always keen to try new ideas for the benefit of the pupils. Partnerships with other organisations are excellent and governance is good and improving. Self-evaluation is accurate, resulting in clear and appropriate priorities for future action. Challenging targets are used well to raise standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Consequently, the capacity to improve further is outstanding.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Press ahead with actions to improve further the precision of teachers' assessments in writing and mathematics so that staff are even better placed to match activities in lessons to pupils' needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Pupils work very effectively in lessons, both individually and in small groups. They respond very well when teachers generate real excitement about their learning. For example, in a Year 3 class pupils particularly enjoyed a mathematics lesson where they developed and consolidated their understanding of direction and turns by turning their bodies in response to the teacher's lead. In a Year 5 class involving the use of information and communication technology, the dynamic approach of the teacher resulted in a fast pace of learning where pupils showed a high degree of independence and developed their skills very well.

A key strength of the school is the careful tracking of the progress pupils make from their generally above-average starting points when they join the school. This process involves careful consideration of each individual pupil by the staff within each year group. This means that any adjustment that might be needed in the support and challenge provided can be quickly made by staff directly involved in pupils' learning. Partnerships with local secondary schools have been explored to help to extend the higher-attaining pupils in mathematics. A significant minority of those in Year 6 are now working beyond the primary curriculum at levels normally associated with secondary schools. The school pays very close attention to checking the progress of different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who speak English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic backgrounds. Any additional support or challenge is then provided where necessary. As a result, all groups of pupils achieve exceptionally well.

Pupils are polite, listen to each other and to adults with respect and greatly enjoy school. Attendance is above average rather than high as, despite the school's best efforts, a few parents and carers take holidays in term time. Pupils value the wider opportunities the school provides to enhance their learning and to contribute to the school community. Their excellent personal development includes opportunities to develop leadership and creative skills.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	1
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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?

Teachers have established excellent relationships in the classrooms with a real sense of purpose. They know their pupils and their capabilities very well. What pupils need to do is clear and learning proceeds at a brisk pace, with teachers asking questions skilfully to check pupils' understanding. Engaging activities secure pupils' involvement very well and they are often keen to challenge themselves to move on to more demanding activities available. Teaching assistants support pupils' learning effectively. Teachers' marking is good, although its quality is better in English than in mathematics. In the best teaching observed, teachers' infectious enthusiasm inspired pupils to learn and they rose to the challenge most impressively. Where teaching seen was not quite of this highest quality, sometimes too much was attempted and not enough time was allowed to consolidate learning at the end of a lesson.

The curriculum has been refined through the recent review, for example by creating further cross-curricular themes and embedding the use of information and communication technology in other subjects. It is carefully designed and meets pupils' need very well. Local themes and resources are used well to develop pupils' understanding of the area, and exploring the customs and languages of the different minority ethnic communities in the school contributes to pupils' valuing of diversity. Flexibility is retained in the sets for English and mathematics and currently sophisticated groupings according to pupils' strengths and weaknesses in different aspects of mathematics are being successfully

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piloted in Year 5. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities that are very well supported by the pupils, particularly in sport.

The school is very inclusive and welcoming. Pupils are known as individuals and very well supported in making the most of the opportunities the school has to offer. There is much effective work with families and a range of agencies for those pupils in need of a little extra help to achieve this. Rigorous and thorough approaches successfully promote good attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has focused sharply on developing teachers' skills in leadership and, as a result, these are very well developed at all levels. This contributes strongly to the highly effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work. The ambition for the continuous improvement of the school is widely shared and staff morale is high. Governors visit the school to gain first-hand information to complement that provided by the headteacher and her staff. They are thus well placed to question the school's leadership about its performance. A new approach to governors' links with aspects of the school is now in operation to secure more purposeful involvement in self-evaluation.

The school works very successfully to ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the more able, make similar progress to others. This shows it is highly effective in promoting equal opportunities for all pupils to achieve as well as they can. The school also ensures that discrimination against any group is avoided at all times and makes an outstanding contribution to community cohesion. It is a highly cohesive community, has very strong links with the local area and celebrates the diversity of cultures within it. There is an established link with a school in China and with a school in a contrasting rural area in the United Kingdom.

Excellent partnerships with a range of external organisations extend the opportunities for pupils, both in their work and in their personal development. Multi-agency approaches are used to support individual pupils as needed and many activities help to enrich the curriculum. For example, links with the local football club have boosted the attainment of boys and those with local businesses have enabled pupils to take part in running small enterprises. The school's arrangements for safeguarding are good. Detailed checks are made on staff suitability to work with children and the outcomes of these are recorded appropriately. All necessary policies are used well.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

A much higher proportion of parents and carers than is usually found returned the questionnaire. The very large majority of parents and carers who responded have positive views on all aspects featuring in the Ofsted questionnaire. Almost all respondents believe that the school is well led and managed and that their children are safe and enjoy school. Inspection evidence confirms these very positive views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Hyde Park 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 261 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 359 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	56	107	41	3	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	188	72	69	26	2	1	1	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	90	34	138	53	23	9	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	100	38	129	49	20	8	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	130	50	121	46	6	2	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	99	38	137	52	14	5	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	103	39	143	55	10	4	2	1
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)	96	37	134	51	10	4	3	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	106	41	126	48	17	7	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	121	46	113	43	11	4	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	96	37	132	51	19	7	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	154	59	98	38	1	0	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	149	57	102	39	4	2	2	1

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.



4 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Hyde Park Junior School, Plymouth, PL3 4RH

Thank you for your involvement in the recent inspection, particularly for the friendly and open way in which you talked to us. We enjoyed visiting your school very much.

You go to an outstanding school and we think you are right to be proud of it. Here are the main things we found out.

- You make excellent progress in your work and the standards you reach in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are well above average.
- You enjoy the many varied activities provided for you in the outstanding curriculum.
- Your behaviour is excellent, you get on very well together and enjoy the outstanding teaching.
- You told us the school cares for you exceptionally well and you feel very safe.
- You have an excellent understanding of the importance of diet and exercise, make a very good contribution to the day-to-day running of the school and suggest ideas to make it even better.
- The governors, the headteacher and the other staff are always working to make the school even better for you.

There is one thing we have asked the school to do to keep improving.

- The teachers already have a very good understanding of what you can do and what you find more difficult and are working to make this even better in writing and mathematics. We have asked them to press ahead with this work so that they can help you to make even better progress.

Thank you again for your involvement in the inspection and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Grahame Sherfield

Her Majesty's Inspector

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