

# Talbot Combined School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	113700
<b>Local authority</b>	Poole
<b>Inspection number</b>	378746
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Susan Gadd HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Community
<b>School category</b>	Middle deemed primary
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–12
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	380
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr J Rana
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs K Curtis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 January 2010
<b>School address</b>	Talbot Drive Poole BH12 5ED
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Susan Gadd

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Hogg

Additional inspector

Helen Griffiths

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 20 lessons involving 17 teachers. In addition, they looked at samples of pupils' work in books and listened to some pupils read in Years 1, 2, 6 and 7. Inspectors also met with senior and middle leaders, members of the governing body, local authority representatives and groups of pupils. There were insufficient parental responses on the Parent View section of Ofsted's website for inspectors to consider when planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including data on pupils' attainment and progress, the school's monitoring information on the quality of teaching, records of pupils' behaviour and procedures for ensuring pupils are safe. Inspectors received 53 parental questionnaires, which represents 14% of the parents and carers at the school.

## Information about the school

Talbot is a larger than average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average, while for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs it is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is lower than average. A higher than average number of pupils leave and join the school at various times. The school meets the government's floor standard, which set minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

When the school was inspected in January 2010 it was judged to require special measures. There have been five monitoring visits to the school by Her Majesty's Inspectors since that inspection to assess the progress made towards addressing the issues raised. In September 2011 the governing body appointed a substantive headteacher; prior to this the school was led by an affiliated headteacher.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures. This is now a satisfactory school which has changed significantly for the better since January 2010. Pupils now enjoy coming to school as is evident in their improved attendance. There is a more effective curriculum and more good teaching. The school is not yet good because behaviour is satisfactory; attainment is not high enough and a few inconsistencies remain in teaching.
- By the time pupils leave the school in Year 7 they have reached the appropriate levels for their age in English and mathematics. From children's low starting points when they enter, they make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage as a result of significant improvements to leadership and provision both indoors and outside. As pupils move up through the school they make at least satisfactory progress with sizeable numbers making good progress.
- Teachers' use of assessments is now more consistent so that, on the whole, the work set meets the needs of all. Occasionally however there are missed opportunities to stretch the more-able pupils during introductions to lessons.
- Pupils feel very safe in school and their behaviour has improved markedly.
- The headteacher has created a positive attitude to school improvement among all leaders. They have worked very effectively as a team to address past inadequacies successfully. The governing body and staff at all levels can point to significant improvements in behaviour, teaching, the curriculum and pupils' attitudes to learning as a direct result of their interventions. The school is now in the process of refining some of their data so that it can closely evaluate the impact of all initiatives.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics for all pupils and improve the amount of good or better teaching by:
  - introducing a consistent approach to the teaching of linking letters and sounds in Key Stage 2 and Year 7 so that pupils have more opportunities to develop their skills in this area
  - ensuring that pupils who are more able are consistently challenged to achieve their best during the introduction to lessons
  - providing pupils with more opportunities to assess their own and each other's learning.
- Improve pupils' behaviour so that it is consistently good or better by:
  - ensuring that all adults use a consistent approach to behaviour management within classes and in the playground.
  - developing pupils' capacity to improve their behaviour during independent and extended learning activities.
- Develop a greater consistency in the use of data by middle leaders to ensure that all leaders have a clear understanding of the effectiveness of different initiatives.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

- Children enter Reception with skills that are generally at low levels for their age and well below expectations in writing. As a result of good teaching and a much improved learning environment children now make good progress in Reception and are beginning to enter Year 1 with many of the skills expected for their age.
- Historical data show that by the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment is low for the majority of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. This low attainment is replicated in the outcomes of national tests in Year 6, particularly for the more-able pupils in English and mathematics. However by the time pupils leave the school in Year 7, their attainment has risen again so that it is broadly average. However these apparent fluctuations do not always reflect pupils' actual achievement because high numbers of pupils join and leave the school throughout the year.
- Inspectors observed good teaching which is rapidly addressing the few remaining pockets of low attainment across the school. In mathematics, pupils were observed using and applying their developing knowledge of number lines to solve practical problems. In Reception and Key Stage 1, pupils have daily opportunities to develop their skills in linking letters and sounds to help improve their reading and writing. This systematic approach is now being planned for the older pupils. Inspection evidence gathered through observations shows that pupils are now making better progress in their writing through the use of more adventurous language and regular opportunities to apply their skills in a range of contexts. Recent changes to guided reading have led to more detailed planning and focused activities during independent sessions. The most recent

reading assessments at the end of Year 2 show pupils making good progress from their starting points. While many have reached broadly average standards, attainment for the more-able pupils is low. In Years 6 and 7, pupils' standards in reading, as observed by inspectors, are now broadly average.

- The school has been successful in narrowing the gaps in achievement between different groups of pupils. Those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, who are looked after, who are disabled or who have special educational needs are making similar progress to their peers. This is as a result of the good support pupils receive in and out of class and improved teaching.
- There has been a major shift in pupils' attitudes to learning. Pupils are now eager to develop new skills and knowledge within a subject. Classrooms are now bright and stimulating and pupils enjoy sharing their ideas and opinions on a subject.
- Out of the few parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire many agreed that their children are now making good progress.

### **Quality of teaching**

- Inspectors observed teaching which ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. However, in the main, the quality of teaching is good. This judgement is supported by the school's own monitoring which records the progress that pupils have made over time. In the strongest lessons, focused teacher questioning and strong subject knowledge have led to pupils developing new skills and knowledge at a rapid pace.
- A range of teaching strategies is used to engage all pupils. These vary from the increased use of practical equipment in mathematics, to the effective use of the interactive whiteboard to develop pupils' imagination and drama to bring stories alive. For example, in Key Stage 2, pupils were videoing themselves presenting a piece of persuasive writing to help them modify and improve their writing. In other lessons an emphasis on 'talk for writing' was helping to develop pupils' independence while developing their social skills by encouraging them to share ideas and listen to views of others. In a mathematics lesson, pupils developed their understanding of number bonds by participating in a number hunt. This practical approach to learning is a direct result of improvements to the curriculum and adults' growing understanding of how pupils learn. Some pupils are encouraged to assess each other's work and respond to adults' marking. However this good practice is not always evident across the school.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are now learning to become independent learners through the varied opportunities to choose their own learning both indoors and outside. Adults plan well for children's individual needs and interests as a result of improved observations. Effective questioning and an emphasis on practical learning experiences mean that children are now making good progress in this stage.
- The views gathered from pupils, parents and carers support inspection evidence that teaching has improved and is now good.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

- Pupils are highly positive about the improved behaviour throughout the school. Despite behaviour being good in many classrooms it is not always so and

overall behaviour is satisfactory. Inspection observations and discussions with pupils reveal that on occasions adults do not have a consistent approach to behaviour. Behaviour logs and discussions with pupils indicate that incidents of poor behaviour have reduced but are more likely to arise in the playground rather than in the classrooms. The few parents and carers who responded to questionnaires, agreed.

- A small number of pupils have yet to develop the maturity and skills necessary to manage their own excitement and behaviour during independent activities. Despite the remaining inconsistencies in behaviour, bullying in any form has reduced over time because of the improved systems and the changing attitudes of pupils. Pupils are aware of the different forms of bullying and such instances are now infrequent. Consequently pupils are confident that adults deal with any behaviour issues and feel very safe at school. The school has invested a lot of time and energy into making break times more engaging by improving the play facilities and adults are now available in the playground to teach pupils how to play a range of games.

## Leadership and management

- The headteacher's infectious drive and energy have filtered into all layers of leadership. All staff are now working towards a common goal and can point to marked improvements in all aspects of school life. Rigorous assessment and moderation procedures from Reception through to Year 7 have provided the school with accurate data on the attainment of individual pupils and the progress they are making. The assessment coordinator has developed a whole-school tracking document which is used to identify and target underachieving pupils. Frequent progress meetings have resulted in targeted interventions in literacy and numeracy which have helped to accelerate pupils' progress.
- The introduction of coaching has helped to improve the quality of teaching. A regular cycle of monitoring has been introduced which targets the needs of individual staff and is closely linked to performance management.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and is used as a springboard to capture pupils' imagination and engage them in their learning. This, combined with the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, has helped to create a cohesive community. For example, pupils treasure the opportunity to learn in a range of age groups during 'golden time' each week. During the inspection pupils organised and presented their favourite music in assembly and confidently answered questions from pupils across the whole school.
- The governing body plays an active part in school life. Governors hold regular meetings with members of staff to ensure that all adults are held to account. Safeguarding procedures are detailed and meet the statutory requirements. A growing number of parents and carers are becoming involved in their children's learning through attending workshops and contributing to the parents' and teachers' association.
- There is an unwavering desire by all leaders to see the school improve further and their strong capacity to achieve this is evident from the progress they have made in their journey out of special measures. Consequently the school is able to demonstrate how it has been successful at tackling past inequalities between different groups of pupils. The gaps of underachievement have reduced for many by improvements in behaviour, teaching and learning and a curriculum

that meets the needs of everyone.



## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



23 March 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Talbot Combined School, Talbot Drive Poole BH12 5ED**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. As many of you know I have been visiting Talbot regularly because your school needed 'special measures' and had to get better. This is what we found.

- Many of you told us how much the school had improved. We agree with you!
- Your behaviour and attendance have improved and most of you now attend school regularly.
- Your teachers take good care of you and have worked really hard to improve your education. We agree with you that teaching is now good and many of you are now doing well.
- You enjoy coming to school because the curriculum is fun and you especially enjoy 'Golden Time' on Fridays!

Mrs Curtis and all the other adults in the school have worked very hard to improve your school so that it is now satisfactory. Even so, they want it to get even better and we have asked them to:

- make sure you are all challenged to achieve your best, especially those of you who are more able
- provide those of you in Years 3 to 7 with regular opportunities to learn about linking sounds and letters to improve your reading and writing
- provide you all with regular opportunities to learn from one another by discussing your work and assessing each other
- continue to make sure that they know about the progress you are making as the school introduces new ideas
- ensure that all adults help you to improve your behaviour in the same way.

You can help by making sure you attend school regularly and always trying your best.

Thank you again. We send you all good wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Susan Gadd  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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