

Talavera Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116149
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	366628
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	David Collard

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	294
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carol Renshaw
Headteacher	Helen Barden
Date of previous school inspection	30 September 2009
School address	Gun Hill Aldershot Hampshire GU11 1RG
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out at no notice by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 23 lessons or parts of lessons taught by 13 teachers. Meetings were held with staff, pupils, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority. Inspectors observed the schools work, and looked at a range of documents including policies, the school improvement plan, assessment data and local authority reports.

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

The improvement in the attainment of Year 6 pupils in the latest national tests and whether there was a significant improvement in the progress that all pupils are making through the school.

The quality of leadership across the senior and middle management and whether this was sufficient to ensure that any improvements are sustainable into the future.

Whether the school had sufficient capacity to ensure that it was providing, at least, a satisfactory quality of education and was therefore in a position to be taken out of special measures.

Information about the school

This broadly average sized school was placed in special measures five terms ago. Since then, there have been termly monitoring visits by inspectors and regular visits and reports by the local authority.

The school serves its local area and there are a significant proportion of service children from the local super garrison. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. Most of these needs relate to learning, emotional or physical difficulties. There is a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and especially from a Nepalese heritage. A significant minority of these pupils enter the school speaking little or no English.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main 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. It now provides a satisfactory quality of education and the improvements that have been made over the last 18 months demonstrate that the school has a good capacity to continue to move forward. This is because pupils are making advanced rates of progress and increasing proportions are making up lost ground from the past. As the quality of teaching has become consistently better throughout the school so behaviour, achievement and attitudes of pupils have greatly improved. They are much more motivated, take an intense interest when the work is demanding, have above average attendance and so demonstrate that they can see a purpose for being at school. Through the determined and calm leadership of the headteacher and the good self-evaluation, analysis and prioritising of improvements, leaders at all levels have become acutely aware of what needs to improve and have the expertise to make the right changes.

In reading, writing and mathematics, pupils are making consistently satisfactory progress. The most recent data show that in most classes approximately half are making more progress than would be expected. This contrasts with the progress rates a year ago when the same pupils were not making even the expected levels of progress. The school's focus on writing has ensured that this is where the most progress has been made. For example, pupils are developing good grammar, using better descriptive language and writing longer stories and texts. Attainment in Year 6 is broadly average in English. In mathematics there is a mixed picture. Work in books shows that, because of the focused teaching, many pupils are working at the age-expected levels. However, this has not happened in the recent national tests where pupils' longer-term legacy of underachievement and lack of confidence in problem solving hindered the scores and means that attainment overall is low. Those with higher ability in both English and mathematics, however, are progressing well.

Pupils' personal development is equally sound and behaviour is good. This is due to the good emphasis placed on the provision for care, guidance and support. In lessons, there are almost no instances where learning is disrupted and pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. In many lessons pupils concentrate intently on their work especially when they are given freedom to work under their own initiative. For example, a Year 5 class were very actively engaged in thinking about how to find out about Tudor kitchens following an enjoyable visit to Hampton Court. The school correctly sees its next focus as making sure that the curriculum and teaching build on this type of independent learning through a more vibrant and creative approach across all subjects. Nevertheless, teachers successfully plan work that balances the need to catch up lost ground in the basic skills as well as broadening pupils' experiences and enjoyment. Displays are interestingly used to provide a further way of celebrating good work and posing further questions.

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Since her appointment, the headteacher has built the confidence of staff, has eliminated weak teaching and has allowed potential leaders to have a say in the decision-making process. All teaching is now at least satisfactory with an increasing proportion that is good and some that is outstanding. Leaders can talk confidently about their own areas of responsibility, know what is expected of them and are accountable for the results achieved. The members of the governing body have also improved their role. They are beginning to both support and challenge leaders because they have an understanding and higher expectations about what the school and its pupils can achieve. All these positive features mean the school is poised to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012 raise the proportion of pupils in Year 6 gaining the age-expected level in mathematics to the national average by developing ways of pupils using and applying the skills they have already learnt across a range of different problem-solving and real-life situations.
- Improve the learning of all pupils by developing the curriculum and quality of teaching so that pupils can:
 - see that the skills they have gained can be used for a variety of purposes
 - develop more confidence in using these skills
 - improve their chances of succeeding well through the rest of their schooling.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils start school with extremely low skills in reading, writing and mathematics. For example, of those in the present Year 6, over half had not achieved the age-expected level when they started Year 3 and almost none had achieved above this. Of this group, approximately three quarters are now working at the age-expected Level 4 in English and nearly one quarter are working at the higher Level 5. Performance is not as strong in mathematics and, despite having made satisfactory progress, only 61% of pupils achieved Level 4. More positively, work in books across all classes shows improved rates of progress in both English and mathematics as well as in science. Artwork throughout the school is particularly strong.

In the last two terms there is a clear difference in the pride pupils are taking in their books. For some, their range of spoken and written vocabulary restricts their progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language quickly develop the skills of spoken communication with their friends and, through good first language support, develop early writing skills. There is no difference between the rates of progress of these pupils, or those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, and their peers.

Pupils know how to stay safe, fit and healthy. They can talk about what constitutes a healthy diet although their lunch boxes or choices of meals do not always reflect this. The school council talks avidly about how everybody has improved and as one said, I feel safe now. They say there are very few instances of poor behaviour and this is a great improvement from before! The school has been focusing strongly on raising pupils basic academic skills so there has been less emphasis on developing their contribution to the local or wider community. There are some joint events but these are limited, the best

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being through the international club with links generated in Sierra Leone. Plans are underway to increase the schools profile both locally and further afield because, at present, pupils only have a general understanding of the wider national and global diversity of our society. While there is good evidence of improved pupils progress and much better attitudes towards their education, the variability between subjects and the relative lack of independent learning means that pupils only have a satisfactory start to developing their economic well-being into the future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

The good care, guidance and support for pupils have improved significantly from the previous inspection. At the core of this improvement has been the staffs realisation that pupils were bored previously and could see no purpose to what they were learning. Higher levels of challenge and expectation within day-to-day lessons, well-focused support for those who need it and interesting and independent tasks have ensured that everybody has a renewed energy to learn. As one previously challenging pupil put it, It makes me feel happy that I have improved!

The quality of teaching has dramatically improved in some classes this year. During one lesson, for example, the teacher set a relatively difficult task and then let the pupils set about solving it. This they did with high levels of concentration and with some good discussion about how to go about it. The teacher only had to make minor interventions

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and had difficulty stopping the pupils enthusiastically trying to tell others about their answers. There are still a few occasions where there is too much teacher input and not enough of pupils developing their own learning. When this happens, the pupils do not build up confidence in their own ability or are not able to use previously acquired knowledge. A review of the curriculum is imminent and is rightly aimed at providing pupils with more relevant and related tasks that will develop both subject specific skills and provide pupils with a better opportunity to think for themselves. Marking is informative and, in the best cases, combines praise, challenge and an indication of what needs to be done next. Pupils own contribution to this process is more limited.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, appointed two terms ago, immediately set about building upon the work of the two previous acting headteachers. She has gained the full confidence of staff, even when some decisions have been difficult, and there is a clearly articulated and shared vision and plan of what still needs to be done. Other senior leaders are sharing the workload more equitably so that the whole team is developing their role well. A further tier of middle leaders are also now involved in this process albeit at a very early stage. This is building good sustainability and capacity. The partnership with the local authority has been pivotal in improving the quality of education. A range of consultants and advisors have been used well to develop teachers and leaders expertise. The members of the governing body have been provided with realistic information and are increasingly using their own expertise to help develop and challenge the decisions made. They have ensured safeguarding procedures are good with strong systems for vetting staff and fulfilling their statutory responsibilities. Equality of opportunity is satisfactory. Different groups of pupils are increasingly improving their academic progress through better analysis and faster support for those at risk of underachieving. Pupils say there is no evidence of any discrimination and documentary evidence supports this. Although the school is aware of its responsibilities for developing community cohesion at a local, national and global level, work on coordinating and evaluating this is still at an early stage. Nevertheless, pupils do have a number of opportunities to develop their understanding such as links with Kenya and with other schools locally. The school has been working more recently on using local expertise and parents and carers to develop better understanding of the cultures represented at the school such as with Army liaison and the Nepalese community.

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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	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

No views of parents and carers were collected during this inspection. However, informal discussions suggest that parents and carers have noticed the improvements that have happened during the last year. The school continues to actively work in involving parents and carers more through curricular evenings and newsletters.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

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	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Talavera Junior School, Aldershot GU11 1RG

I have very much enjoyed my regular visits to your school over the last 18 months. As you have told inspectors recently, there have been many good improvements and this means that the school no longer needs special measures. These are some of the reasons for the improvement.

You behave well, you have told us this has really improved in the last few terms. Well done and keep this up! You also know how to stay safe because the staff make sure you are cared for and looked after well.

You told us how much more interesting your lessons are. We agree and can see that there are now many more exciting things for you to do. We could see that when you are interested your concentration levels mean that everybody is getting on with what they are asked to do. This is because teaching is also improved and there are more lessons which are good.

Your new headteacher knows just how to keep improving things at your school. She has the full support of all the staff so, with your help, the school will continue to improve.

Everybody knows that there are still some things to work on to make sure the improvement continues so we have asked that:

your teachers make sure that next year those of you who are leaving have good skills in mathematics similar or even better than those in English; you will all need to improve your problem-solving skills so that is something for you to work hard at

the curriculum is reviewed to make sure that you all have the most exciting experiences in your lessons and that these prepare you well for later life.

Yours sincerely

David Collard

Lead inspector

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