

Poulner Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115999
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	363844
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Ian McAllister

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	331
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Colin Bull
Headteacher	James Stanford
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2011
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 18 lessons, observing 16 teachers. Meetings were held with members of the governing body, senior and middle managers, and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement plan, the curriculum and a number of key policy documents. There were 103 parents' and carers' questionnaires received and analysed.

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

- The impact that leaders, managers and the governing body have on improving teaching, learning and progress for all pupils, but especially those in Year 6.
- The effectiveness of the school's actions to maintain improved attainment and to accelerate pupils' progress further.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve attendance.
- The impact of strategies to narrow the gaps in attainment for different ability groups.

Information about the school

Poulner Junior School is larger than the average-sized junior school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is below the national average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below the national 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Poulner Juniors is a good school. It has several outstanding aspects. Key to the success is the high priority given to promoting pupils' personal development as well as academic achievement. The school is a highly inclusive, harmonious community where all pupils are treated equally. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities thrive because they feel safe and well cared for, and they enjoy the exceptionally rich and exciting range of activities provided for them in and out of lessons. It is not surprising that attendance is good. The vast majority of pupils behave well and have good knowledge of healthy lifestyles. A large majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school. One parent summed up the commonly-held view saying, 'It is definitely a proactive school with a great atmosphere.'

Pupils from all backgrounds and ethnicities achieve well because the quality of teaching and learning is good. In the best lessons, teachers make very good use of information from assessment to plan lessons. These are fast paced and include a variety of relevant and exciting tasks that are well matched to pupils' individual needs. Lessons engage and challenge pupils of all abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This is made possible by varied activities and is aided by effective learning support. Efforts have been made to assess and track pupils' progress more accurately. However, marking in all year groups is not consistent and does not always give pupils sufficient guidance on how to improve their work. The excellent curriculum, with its recent focus on developing literacy and numeracy, and with strengths in the creative arts, is proving successful in bringing about good progress and in eliminating differences between the attainment of boys and girls. It provides a wealth of memorable experiences and has an increasingly strong impact on outcomes.

Levels of attainment are above the national average in English and mathematics by Year 6, and have shown a consistent improvement for the last three years. Pupils make greater than expected progress in English across the school, but there are inconsistencies in the rates of progress in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. However, this is compensated for in Years 5 and 6, so that progress overall in mathematics is good. Work in books and lessons, and the school's assessments of performance, show that pupils currently in Years 5 and 6 are making good progress. Care, guidance and support are outstanding, with well-organised provision and support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring that they make good progress.

Safeguarding procedures are outstanding. The school goes well beyond requirements and all processes and procedures are very rigorous. Pupils play a very active part in the school and an increasing one in the local community. They develop an outstanding awareness of other faiths and cultures through the school's local and overseas links. The arts, music and

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physical education have a high profile in the school, and make a strong contribution to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The newly appointed headteacher, very ably supported by his deputy and a very effective governing body, has set about tackling weaknesses with determination. Rigorous monitoring, coupled with an effective programme of professional development for teachers, has provided the key to unlocking the potential in the school. Self-evaluation is based on rigorous monitoring and is accurate. Given these strengths in leadership and management, and the progress that has been made in raising attainment, the school has a good capacity to sustain further improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By July 2012, address the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by:
 - ensuring all teachers make effective use of assessment strategies in lessons to support the learning of all groups of pupils
 - implementing consistent approaches to marking pupils' work, so that pupils understand more clearly what they have to do to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to answer questions while making sure everyone gets a turn. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils noticed it was all boys answering questions, and they self-corrected this, ensuring girls got a turn. The vast majority behave well in lessons, and pupils are courteous and respectful to each other as well as to adults. In lessons, they work effectively in small groups and with partners. They listen to each other and contribute constructively to discussions. They make most rapid progress in lessons where the teachers ensure active involvement and give pupils time to reflect on their learning. During their time in school, all groups of pupils make good progress. The school's data show rising attainment, and this is confirmed by inspection evidence. Weaker progress in mathematics in Years 3 and 4 is being tackled by targeted changes and improvement in this area is beginning to build throughout the school.

Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe and are encouraged to continually reflect on the choices they make. The extent to which pupils feel safe is outstanding. Pupils know and understand the factors which affect their health, and they participate in a very wide range of enrichment sporting activities. However, the contents of too many lunch boxes do not always represent a balanced or healthy meal. The emotional well-being of the pupils is outstanding. Pupils are proud of their school. They enjoy taking responsibilities by becoming, for example, monitors or members of the Friendship Patrols. The pupils are prepared well for later life by the chances they have to use English and mathematics across the curriculum as well as the school's focus on thinking skills and opportunities offering them windows on the world of work.

Pupils engage at a very sophisticated level with regard to religious, moral and philosophical themes. They understand right from wrong and make appropriate choices. Pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is evident in the extent to which they are deep, reflective and insightful thinkers, as well as in their appreciation of the arts, music and nature.

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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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	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?

All teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory, with a large majority that was good, and in some cases outstanding. In the best lessons, excellent relationships often result in pupils' exemplary behaviour, which in turn creates a favourable climate for learning. Teachers are able to deploy a range of teaching styles that sustains pupils' concentration and promotes enjoyment. Teaching assistants work effectively to provide good support for learning. Activities are carefully planned to meet the needs of different pupils. Where teaching and the progress shown in pupils' workbooks are satisfactory, assessment for learning is not used well enough to address any misconceptions or confusion, and to get pupils back on track. Tasks are occasionally not matched closely enough to the needs of different groups; marking is inconsistent in quality and usefulness, and does not always give pointers for improvement.

The outstanding curriculum has many strengths. The integrated learning units are meticulously planned and regularly reviewed to ensure they provide exciting and memorable experiences for all groups. The teaching of discrete subjects ensures full coverage of National Curriculum requirements. Presentations to families, other classes and schools make a strong contribution to community cohesion. An exceptionally wide range of extra-curricular clubs, some of which are run by parents, are very well attended, and the curriculum is further enriched by an exciting variety of visits, visitors, and a residential

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opportunity for each year group. All this promotes very high levels of enjoyment in learning.

The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are outstanding. The school knows its pupils very well as individuals, and the staff take great care to put in place a range of strategies to meet their needs. All members of staff are involved in identifying and supporting vulnerable pupils, and the school has specifically introduced measures to work closely with families. Thorough transition arrangements prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education at secondary school.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The new headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of parents and carers, as well as of the governors and staff. The outstanding governing body is very involved with the life of the school. It ensures that values and ethos are thoroughly embedded throughout the school. It has good systems to gather information about the school's performance, which it uses effectively to hold senior leaders to account. It fulfils its statutory role well and monitors the impact of its decisions very closely. Under the leadership of the deputy headteacher, middle leaders are becoming more confident in their roles and are making an increasingly effective contribution to the successful drive to raise attainment. They are readily taking on more responsibility and relish their task. The school maintains good relations with parents and carers. They are kept well informed about their children's progress, although a few would like additional information. Good partnerships with other local schools and a wide range of outside agencies add to the outstanding quality of care and support that the school offers.

The school makes good provision for equality of opportunity, and is effective in valuing diversity and tackling discrimination. All groups of pupils within the school make broadly similar progress. Systems to safeguard pupils and their impact on pupils' health and safety are outstanding. Close checks are made on the suitability of adults to work with children, risks are assessed robustly and the security of the school is reviewed regularly, with the pupils' involvement. The school contributes very well to community cohesion by taking a lead, with the local police, in developing training for e-safety to tackle more effectively risks to young people. Excellent links with schools in Bournemouth and Sri Lanka ensure pupils have an excellent understanding of contrasting communities.

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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	2
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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The level of response to the Ofsted questionnaire was average when compared with other primary schools. Parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive in their views about the school. All but two who replied to the questionnaire agreed that their children enjoy school and are safe. Written comments praise especially the support and commitment of staff. A very small minority expressed concerns over communication and the way behaviour has been managed, which were raised with the headteacher. During the inspection, evidence was gained to judge that the school has worked hard to involve parents and carers in their children's learning and that pupils' behaviour is well managed. Many parents and carers made very positive comments, such as 'The school holds parent forums and they listen to our views on issues' and 'My child will be leaving Poulner Junior School this month and has had the most fantastic four years at the school. She has had some great opportunities and experiences, and has thoroughly enjoyed her time at the school.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Poulner 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 103 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 331 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	58	56	43	42	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	57	44	43	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	36	35	62	60	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	39	55	53	8	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	50	49	52	50	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	40	40	57	55	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	47	52	50	2	2	1	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)	56	54	42	41	0	0	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	45	47	46	7	7	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	28	27	60	58	10	10	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	32	61	59	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	40	39	55	53	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	50	49	47	46	2	2	1	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	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 Poulner Junior School, Ringwood BH24 3LA

Thank you for welcoming us so courteously when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and watching you learn. You behaved well and it was obvious how much you enjoy school, and the many interesting and exciting things you do. I particularly enjoyed hearing all the music that takes place in your school.

Poulner Juniors is a good school. These are some of the things your school does well.

- You feel safe in school.
- You understand right from wrong and you think very carefully about the choices you make.
- The school gives you a tremendously wide range of opportunities to learn, and most of you make the best of those opportunities.
- The care, guidance and support offered to you are outstanding. Your teachers know you very well as individuals and take great care to meet each person's needs.
- The governing body of your school does a very good job.
- All the adults in your school take exceptionally good care of you.

We have asked the school to look at two things to make your school even better.

- To ensure that all teachers carefully assess what you do in lessons so that everyone learns as best they can.
- To make sure that your work is marked well, and in such a way that you understand very clearly what you have to do to improve.

All of you can play your part by continuing to work hard, and most of all, by continuing to enjoy your learning!

Thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Ian McAllister

Lead inspector

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