

# Porchester Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122529
<b>Local Authority</b>	Nottinghamshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380485
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 September 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	John Paddick

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	149
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrea West
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sam Bradbury (acting)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Standhill Road Nottingham NG4 1LF
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<b>Email address</b>	office@porchester.notts.sch.uk

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited six lessons taught by six different teachers. Inspectors scrutinised a wide variety of pupils' work, especially in writing and mathematics. They held meetings with the acting headteacher, teachers and classroom assistants, and the Chair of the Governing Body. Inspectors also met with a group of pupils from Year 6. They observed the school's work and looked at minutes of governing body meetings, the school development plan, records of pupils' progress and safeguarding documentation. Inspectors analysed 44 questionnaires from parents and carers, 120 from pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 18 from members of staff.

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

- Is the quality of pupils' writing improving?
- Are boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities making progress at the same rate as other pupils?
- To what extent is the new provision for ICT raising attainment?
- Has the quality of teachers' marking improved since the previous inspection?

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average primary school. The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is average and a very small number of these are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make up around a fifth of the school roll. This is broadly average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational needs. Recently there have been several changes at senior management level and the school is currently led by an acting headteacher. Since the previous inspection the school has achieved the Dyslexia Friendly Schools Quality Mark.

**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

Porchester Junior School provides its pupils with a good standard of education. It is a very happy, welcoming and successful school where members of staff go the extra mile to provide good quality care, guidance and support for all groups of pupils and especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. An atmosphere of calm and industry pervades the school because teachers and their assistants are successful in ensuring that pupils behave well and work hard. Relationships between pupils and the adults who work with them are universally good. Capacity for sustained improvement is good because the acting senior team is providing good leadership and managing the school well. Consequently, there has been no slippage in the quality of education provided or in the progress that pupils make. The school has given effective attention to the areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. For example, the targets set for pupils are much more challenging and the way that teachers mark their work is much better. The facilities for information and communication technology are now excellent and some of the pupils' work in this area is stunning.

All groups of pupils make good progress because teaching is good and the tracking system quickly identifies any who are underachieving. This enables the school to identify any problems quickly and provide effective extra help for those pupils who fall behind, often on a one-to-one basis. By Year 6, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average. Boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be entitled to free school meals all achieve above average national test results. Teaching usually fully engages the pupils and enables them to learn quickly because it is compelling, brisk and full of variety. Occasionally the pace of learning dips when teachers spend too long on explanations and questioning rather than providing pupils with enough time to think, discuss their work with their peers and consolidate and practise skills. Teachers always mark pupils' work thoroughly and insist on good standards of presentation.

The school's self-assessment is accurate and development planning thorough. Plans seek to improve aspects of the school's work such as pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching. They clearly identify intended developments, timescales, monitoring procedures and the members of staff responsible for them. However, it is difficult to gauge whether the process has been fully successful in improving provision and raising standards because some of the key aspects of the planning lack clear and precise quantitative targets.

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

- Ensure that the pace of learning is consistently good or better by:
  - improving the planning of lessons so that it clearly identifies the amount of progress that groups of pupils are intended to make
  - reducing the amount of teacher talk and oral questioning in a minority of lessons and increasing the range of opportunities for active learning.
- Improve school development planning by:
  - including easily measurable and precise targets for the quality of teaching and pupils' attainment and progress
  - monitoring these targets rigorously so that the impact of improvements in provision can be firmly linked to outcomes.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good because all groups of pupils make good progress as they move from Year 3 to Year 6. Pupils join the school in Year 3 with broadly average attainment and make good progress over four years to reach above average standards by Year 6. National test results over the last three years have been consistently above average in English and well above average in mathematics. Classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' written work during the inspection confirm that above average standards and good progress have been maintained. Pupils' current work in mathematics is extensive and well presented. By Year 6, many pupils understand fractions, decimals and percentages and can interchange them with ease and use them in the solution of problems. Attainment in writing has improved in response to the emphasis that the school has given to it. The quality of pupils' written work is above average. They present it well and make good progress with extended writing for a variety of audiences. Pupils develop quite sophisticated skills in the use of information and communication technology as they move through the school. Much evidence of this can be found on the school's excellent website. An example is the silent black and white movie created by Year 4, which is of superb quality.

Pupils' attitudes to learning and behaviour in lessons are universally good. They are polite, co-operative and enjoy very productive relationships with the adults who work with them. They say that they enjoy school and engage enthusiastically in a broad range of activities, especially music, sport and visits. They recognise that the school has many strong features and particularly value the help they receive and the opportunity to use the excellent computing facilities. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and know why it is important to take regular exercise. Their attendance has improved over the past year and the proportion of persistent absentees has fallen to below average levels.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers and classroom assistants create a very good learning atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate on their work and participate productively in discussions. Lessons are usually conducted at a brisk pace so time is used well and pupils learn quickly. When pupils are working in groups, teachers generally use a good range of techniques to ensure that they are progressing quickly and using time productively. Occasionally, however, teachers do not check progress carefully enough before the class moves on. Teachers mark pupils’ written work very thoroughly so they know what they have done well and how to improve on weaknesses. Their assessments of pupils’ work in reading, writing and mathematics are accurate so it is clear which pupils are making good progress and where extra support is required. Teachers and classroom assistants support and encourage pupils at all times so that even those who learn more slowly gain confidence and feel that they are successful.

A good curriculum provides pupils with a secure pathway towards making good progress in their basic skills and personal development. Recent emphasis on improving the quality of pupils’ writing has been markedly successful. Since the previous inspection, the development of the school’s provision for information and communication technology has been outstanding. A new computer room, a good supply of laptops and an interactive website, coupled with inspired teaching, are giving pupils a first-rate experience in this area. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially music and sport, and the school organises a rich variety of visits which increase pupils’ experience and help to underpin their

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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personal development.

Good transition arrangements with providers of secondary education mean that pupils are well prepared for and confident about moving to Year 7. Pupils of all ages recognise that they receive plenty of effective support and guidance. Frequently, the support is provided on a one-to-one basis and often enables pupils to overcome serious barriers to learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The recently appointed acting headteacher and senior team have been successful in gaining the confidence of members of staff. They are effectively ensuring that the transition to more permanent arrangements in January 2012 is not affecting the progress that pupils are making or the standards they are reaching. Staff morale is good. All members of the teaching and non-teaching staff say they are proud to belong to the school and most believe that it serves all groups of pupils well. The governing body has a clear understanding of the school's strong features and it knows what still needs to be improved. Governors know that members of staff are following their policies because so many of them visit regularly and have first-hand knowledge and understanding of the school in session.

The school promotes equal opportunities well; there is no evidence of discrimination of any description. Pupils from all backgrounds are equally valued, make good progress and get on together in an extremely harmonious manner. Safeguarding arrangements meet all requirements and have a high profile in the daily operation of the school. The school ensures that all adults who have access to children have been adequately checked. Good promotion of community cohesion means that pupils have a good understanding of different religions and cultures to be found in the locality and beyond. Pupils have a very significant influence in drawing the local community together through its shoebox appeal, litter-picking activities and its very well-regarded musical performances. For several years the pupils have experienced the joy of giving by raising money for buildings and equipment for a school in Tanzania.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and</b>	<b>2</b>
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<b>driving improvement</b> Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	2
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	2

## Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers' views are almost uniformly positive about the school. Inspectors found that their collective views very closely matched their own. A few parents and carers thought that the school did not give them enough help to support their children's learning, and that it did not take account of their suggestions and concerns. The inspection team looked into this carefully. They were assured by the acting headteacher that her door was always open for parents and carers with concerns and that she would do all she could to resolve them. The school website provides parents and carers with a clear view of the work that pupils are covering. If they require further help or advice they can always speak to members of staff at the end of the school day or seek an appointment.



### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Porchester 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 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 149 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	22	49	22	49	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	19	42	23	51	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	16	36	22	49	3	7	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	14	31	23	51	4	9	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	18	40	25	56	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	13	29	25	56	5	11	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	15	33	29	64	0	0	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)	17	38	18	40	3	7	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	16	36	22	49	3	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	15	33	23	51	4	9	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	27	21	47	5	11	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	13	29	27	60	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	16	36	25	56	2	4	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 8 April 2011 and 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



16 September 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Porchester Junior School, Nottingham, NG4 1LF**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We were really impressed by how keen you are to learn and the way that you conduct yourselves. A particular thank you goes to those of you who filled in the questionnaire or met with us to discuss your school. We were so pleased to find that almost all of you really enjoy being at school.

We found that your school has many effective features and it is providing you with good quality education. Most of you are making good progress and some are doing better than that. Teaching is good and there is plenty of opportunity for you to get involved in a wide variety of activities and especially music. Teachers and their assistants take great care of you and they are always on hand to help if you have problems of any sort. We were particularly impressed by your school website and the way that you can share your work with pupils in other countries. Your charity work in helping children in Tanzania deserves the highest praise.

Your school can still improve further and we have asked the governing body, headteacher and staff to make some changes to enable you to reach even higher standards by the time you leave Year 6. These are to:

- ensure that teachers always plan lessons to enable all of you to make the best use of the time available and learn quickly
- reduce the amount of time that you spend listening to the teacher rather than being actively involved in your learning
- sharpen school improvement planning by regularly monitoring the effectiveness of clear, measurable targets for raising attainment and the quality of teaching.

You can help the school to improve by continuing to behave well and work hard.

Yours sincerely

John Paddick  
Lead inspector

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