

Lyndhurst Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	116491
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	379266
Inspection dates	28–29 May 2012
Lead inspector	Diane Wilkinson

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	469
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Northwood
Headteacher	Margaret Beel
Date of previous school inspection	23–24 October 2008
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson

Additional Inspector

Roger Thurlbeck

Additional Inspector

Deborah Wring

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 28 lessons and observed 21 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils and a few parents/carers bringing their children to school were also spoken to. There were too few responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for inspectors to take into account when planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, heard a sample of pupils read and looked at analyses of pupils' progress, development planning and monitoring, a range of policies and procedures, curriculum planning documents and a sample of pupils' work. They also scrutinised questionnaires returned by 62 parents or carers.

Information about the school

Lyndhurst is a larger-than-average junior school. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage, with very few speaking English as an additional language. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. A very small minority of pupils are from service families. The school meets government floor standards, (the minimum standards required by the government) in English and mathematics. The school holds the Healthy School status, Investors in People beyond the standard, the ICT Mark and silver award for the Food for Life Partnership. It runs its own breakfast and after-school clubs for pupils from this and the adjacent infant school. These were also inspected.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- Lyndhurst Junior School is a good school. Attainment in mathematics is high and above average in English although pupils’ writing skills are weaker in some aspects; for example, in their ability to craft stories. As a result of this, the school is not yet outstanding.
- Pupils make good progress from their starting points because comprehensive and rigorous tracking of their progress allows staff to intervene quickly and successfully when this slows. As a result, pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- Teaching is good, with an increasing number of outstanding lessons seen, but other lessons lack the rigour and pace to produce high quality learning. The interesting and stimulating curriculum helps staff plan lesson activities that enthuse pupils and challenge those working at different levels to do well. Occasionally, staff do not adapt activities throughout lessons to raise the level of challenge and inspire pupils to do their very best. Assessment and target setting, which are excellent in mathematics and involve pupils exceptionally well in the process, are less good in other subjects. Marking of pupils’ work does not always indicate how to improve.
- Pupils are friendly, helpful and get on well together. Although a few find good behaviour difficult, incidences of poor behaviour are dealt with well, so this rarely affects learning. Pupils greatly enjoy school. This has a very positive impact on their learning and attendance levels, which are high. Pupils are well looked after, including in the very well-run before- and after-school clubs.
- The school benefits considerably from the strengths of its headteacher and senior leadership team. A wealth of monitoring information leads to continuous monitoring of performance, including the quality of teaching, and good development planning, which is well targeted at weaker areas. As a result, the school is beginning to successfully tackle these, most notably in improving the quality of teaching and raising attainment in English, especially in reading.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement, especially in writing, by summer 2013 through:
 - extending the excellent assessment and target-setting procedures seen in mathematics to other subjects
 - working collaboratively with the adjacent infant school to ensure pupils develop a coherent approach to story writing, particularly in increasing their knowledge of the structure and features to use.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that the majority is outstanding, by:
 - ensuring that there is rigour and pace in all activities, especially those where pupils work in groups or independently
 - constantly checking how well pupils are doing so that, when they complete a task quickly, the level of challenge can be raised further
 - marking pupils' work so that it consistently indicates whether pupils have achieved the lesson target and identifies how they can improve.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Attainment on entry, although usually above average overall, varies from year to year and between subjects. For the current Year 6 it was broadly average. Inspection evidence, taken for example from the analysis of tracking data and work scrutiny, clearly identifies that pupils make good progress in English and excellent progress in mathematics. Overall attainment by the time pupils leave the school is above average, and is high in mathematics. The very large majority of parents and carers agree their children make good progress, one typically commenting, 'My child has come on in leaps and bounds.'

Attainment in reading is above average and improving rapidly, as is the rate of progress, partly due to a revised programme of work which has encouraged pupils' enthusiasm and commitment. A greater emphasis on teaching sounds and letters (phonics) has brought about excellent progress in reading in Year 3, but the full effect of this is not yet apparent in other year groups. By the time they leave school, all pupils read confidently and fluently, exhibiting a good knowledge of different authors and genres. Good comprehension skills help pupils discuss the plot and characters of a story well.

Attainment in writing is rising, but there is still room for improvement in some aspects. High expectations observed in lessons ensure presentation is uniformly very good, with neat handwriting, accurate spelling and excellent use of punctuation, such as colons or dashes. The use of adventurous vocabulary, alliteration, similes and metaphors engage the reader. Pupils write descriptions well, as in a Year 6 pupil's account of the arrival of a spaceship through '.... the tall, domed buildings shadowing the surroundings'. Pupils write well in non-fictional topics, using persuasive language, writing clear instructions and an effective letter of complaint. There is some good story writing, as seen in 'The Quest'. However, the school has correctly identified

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that this aspect should improve further, with plans in place for a joint project with the infant school.

Pupils' exceptional mathematical ability ensures that, by Year 6, an increasing number reaches the expected Level 4 and a higher proportion than nationally exceeds this. Pupils' knowledge of place value, calculation skills and use of fractions, decimals, percentages and negative numbers, including when working with measures, is excellent. Pupils apply these skills exceptionally well in problem solving and consequently the more able pupils attain levels significantly above those normally seen at this age.

Very effective tracking of their progress and the good interventions in place to meet their needs ensure that pupils who might be at risk of underachieving, including disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and pupils from service families, are closing the gap well with their peers.

Quality of teaching

Teaching has improved well over the past year, with an increasing number of lessons being outstanding. The main reasons for this are the strong emphasis placed on professional development for teachers and classroom assistants and the commitment of staff to providing high quality learning for pupils. The very large majority of parents and carers agree that teaching is good, praising the staff's support for learning.

Teaching is at its strongest in reading in Year 3 and mathematics in Year 6, where it is excellent. Due to a concerted effort, some features of teaching are especially good in all classes. For example, all lessons are well planned, with activities effectively matched to pupils' needs, challenging all well to move on from the level they are currently working at. This ensures that disabled pupils or those with special educational needs are well taught, as is also the case when they work in small group or one-to-one activities, often led by teaching assistants. In outstanding lessons teachers monitor learning intuitively, constantly adjusting the level of challenge in a task so that pupils make exceptional progress, although this is not the case in some lessons.

The main inconsistency in teaching relates to pace and rigour because in a minority of lessons staff do not capitalise well enough on pupils' very positive attitudes to learning, especially in the group or individual tasks. On these occasions, although pupils apply themselves well to the activities, the lack of time limits set, or advice given on the amount of work that must be covered, result in pupils working at a slower pace than they are capable of. All staff, including teaching assistants, lead discussions well and question pupils effectively to increase their understanding. However, opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to talk with each other and reflect on their learning, limiting their spiritual and social development.

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In mathematics, the way that pupils are involved in assessing their work and choosing their lesson targets is exceptional. Pupils very accurately gauge whether they need to complete the introductory task or move straight on to the next level, constantly checking their progress and raising their goals so their progress is outstanding. However, other subjects do not benefit from such high quality assessment and target setting. Although there is outstanding marking in some classes, most notably in Year 6 where it provides excellent advice on how to improve, marking is not always as helpful to pupils.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Good moral and social development, underpinned by well-established rewards and sanctions to encourage positive behaviour, ensure behaviour is typically good, and has been over time. Bullying in any form is strongly discouraged. It is always dealt with successfully through supporting both the victims and perpetrators so that relationships amongst pupils are harmonious. Pupils report that they are well looked after both in school and the breakfast and after-school clubs. This is also the view of the vast majority of parents and carers, one parent writing specifically to comment on the level of care provided. Pupils are well aware of how to avoid hazards, including when using the internet. A small minority of parents and carers expressed concern about some pupils' behaviour disrupting lessons. Inspection evidence indicates that the small number of incidents that do occur are dealt with well so that learning is rarely affected, a view which is shared by pupils themselves.

Staff make an exceptional effort to ensure that pupils have positive experiences in school, including through creating a curriculum that engages their interest. This engenders a positive learning environment which, together with the strong ethos of respect and good relationships between pupils and adults, ensures a very positive commitment to learning, including in paired or group work. Pupils' enjoyment of school and the breakfast or after-school clubs, together with excellent systems for promoting attendance, ensure the level of attendance is high.

Leadership and management

Due to the exceptionally strong leadership skills exhibited by the headteacher and senior leaders, they have the full commitment of staff and governors in working hard to provide memorable experiences and a high quality education for pupils. This is endorsed by parents and carers. The very comprehensive range of monitoring systems in place helps keep a regular check on the impact of provision on pupils' progress, with the views of pupils and their parents and carers being regularly sought. This results in accurate self-evaluation where weaknesses are quickly identified and addressed, ensuring that the management of performance, including of teaching quality, is good. Inevitably improvement strategies have had to be prioritised, tackling the weakest aspects first. As a result, the full impact of some initiatives, largely associated with English, is not yet realised. Current development planning is well focused on these areas and improving the quality of teaching further. This, together with other successes such as achieving high attainment in

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mathematics, means the school is well placed to improve further.

The school benefits from a committed and knowledgeable governing body. Members are fully involved in monitoring and improvement work, especially through their regular learning walks and excellent information provided by senior staff. As a result, they challenge and support the school well. Safeguarding arrangements, including measures to deal with bullying and the procedures for the vetting of staff and child protection, are good. The reshaping of the curriculum, drawing on pupils' views and extensive research, has brought a vibrancy to pupils' learning, ensuring the pupils acquire important skills in reading and writing well and exceptionally well in mathematics. It effectively promotes spiritual, moral, social and cultural development as is evident in pupils' good behaviour and relationships, and the respect pupils show to those from other cultures or backgrounds. This has a good impact on preventing discrimination and promoting equality.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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).

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.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.



30 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Lyndhurst Junior School, Portsmouth PO2 0NT

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We very much enjoyed our time talking to you and seeing all the things you do. I particularly want to thank the pupils who gave up their time to read to, or speak with, us. We have judged your school to be good and are pleased that you and your parents and carers share this view.

Here are some of the things we found that were especially good about the school.

- You achieve well, and exceptionally well in mathematics where attainment is high. Attainment is improving in English as well, quickly in reading. We were very pleased that so many of you told us how much you like these subjects.
- Staff plan lots of interesting activities that help you to do well. Those of you who find learning difficult have lots of support to help you catch up.
- You behave well and are very friendly and polite. Staff are good at dealing with any behaviour problems and we are pleased that you recognise this. You enjoy school very much and work hard, so attendance levels are high.
- Your headteacher, staff and governors work hard to keep you safe and make sure that you learn well through constantly checking your progress and improving the experiences you have at school.

Here are some of the things we have asked the school to improve.

- Help you to do as well in English as you do in mathematics. So we have asked staff to use the excellent assessment and target setting systems they use in mathematics in other subjects, especially for writing, and to work closely with the infant school to help you become really good story writers. You can help by continuing to work hard at your writing.
- We think you can make even better progress if more teaching was outstanding and to do this we have asked teachers to make sure you work as hard as you can throughout lessons and that marking always helps you to improve.

Yours sincerely

Diane Wilkinson
Lead inspector

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