

# Balksbury Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	115852
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	388251
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 July 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Gehane Gordelier HMI

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

<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>	301
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Catherine Morton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Patricia Murley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>School address</b>	Floral Way Salisbury Rd Andover SP10 3QP
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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	3–4 July 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	290346



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Gehane Gordelier

Her Majesty's Inspector

Warren Wilkinson

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out at no notice. Inspectors observed 14 part-lessons taught by 10 teachers. They listened to pupils read and undertook learning walks. Meetings were held with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body, the District Manager and Primary Phase Inspector from the local authority. They also spoke to pupils and undertook a scrutiny of their work. There were too few responses from parents and carers to the on-line Parent View survey; consequently, inspectors were unable to take account of this information when planning the inspection. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation. This included the school's self-evaluation, action and improvement plans, the governing body minutes, reports from the local authority, the school's data about pupils' progress, teachers' planning, and documentation related to safeguarding.

## Information about the school

Balksbury Junior School was judged to require special measures when it was last inspected. Since then, it has become federated with the on-site Balksbury Infant School under one headteacher and one governing body. The headteacher from the infant school became the substantive headteacher of the two federated schools in September 2011. In the last couple of years, there have been changes to staff as well as to the membership of the governing body. A new Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body took up their positions in December 2011.

The school is larger than the average-sized junior school. Few pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The vast majority of pupils are White British. A lower proportion than in most schools are from a minority ethnic group or learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than average. The school holds the Healthy School status and the Rights, Respect and Responsibility Award.

The school meets the current floor standards, which set the government's minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

**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

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

## Key findings

- The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It is not good because there are still weaknesses in the learning and progress of pupils; too much teaching remains satisfactory as leaders and managers have not ensured it is of a higher quality. 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. Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before the next section 5 inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory as levels of attainment are rising, particularly in reading, and for most pupils in mathematics. Older pupils make slower progress in developing their writing skills. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as pupils of middle ability, do not always progress at the same pace as their peers.
- Teaching is improving and is consistently good in Year 6. However, not all teachers are clear about what they need to do to ensure their lessons are all securely good so pupils make increased progress.
- The behaviour of pupils is satisfactory over time and pupils say they feel safe in school. Most are keen to learn and enjoy their lessons. However, some pupils do not extend to their peers the same level of courtesy and consideration they show to adults.
- Leadership and management are satisfactory. The senior leadership team is fostering some improvements well in the school and the governing body is increasingly holding the school to account for the learning and progress of pupils. However, the management of performance and monitoring the quality of teaching is not consistently rigorous. The role of some middle managers is underdeveloped and some systems, such as those for recording behaviour issues, are limited as the school's behaviour policy is not consistently applied.

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

- Ensure overall levels of attainment, particularly in writing and mathematics, are significantly above average by the end of Year 6 by:
  - pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs achieving as well as their peers in both these areas
  - providing pupils with opportunities to produce quality writing and to practise using their mathematical skills in a range of subjects
  - ensuring that pupils of lower ability can use their knowledge of letters and the sounds they represent to read unfamiliar words that include more than one or two syllables
  - enriching pupils' vocabulary as well as developing their knowledge and understanding of grammar.
  
- Ensure at least 80% of teaching is good or better by March 2014 by:
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write at length using complex and compound sentences that are grammatically correct in all subjects
  - ensuring that work which is intended to challenge pupils provides an extension of pupils' learning and skills
  - improving the quality of teachers' planning so that it takes full account of the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs
  - developing the use of questions so these probe pupils' understanding and develop their ability to give reasons for their answers
  - increasing the range of assessment strategies used in lessons so all teachers are able to respond more readily to the needs of all pupils and increase the pace to best effect
  - displaying key vocabulary accompanied by an explanation of what words mean
  - providing next steps in learning in pupils' reading record books.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of the leadership and management at all levels, including the governing body, by:
  - ensuring that middle managers and year group leaders make good use of data and information about different groups of pupils to help drive improvements
  - providing teachers with clear formal feedback about the value they add to pupils' learning and ensuring they know what they need to do to become securely good practitioners
  - ensuring all action and improvement planning is of equally good quality and includes a sharp focus on the intended outcomes for learners and measurable success criteria
  - reviewing the school's behaviour policy and systems used to record and monitor incidents, and ensuring consistency in the implementation of effective behaviour management systems.

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## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Pupils make satisfactory progress from their significantly above average starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards have been broadly average by the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics for the past two years. Standards are now rising more securely in all classes and gaps in attainment are reducing. In Year 6, the majority of pupils are working above the levels expected for their age in reading and mathematics. A greater proportion of pupils than in previous years are set to achieve the higher Levels 5 and 6 in mathematics and in reading by the end of Key Stage 2. The standard of pupils' writing remains a weaker aspect. This is because, despite recent improvements, there are gaps in pupils' knowledge of grammar and in their ability to produce extended pieces of writing and of using complex and compound sentences. Nevertheless, pupils have a good understanding of adjectives and the different purposes for writing. In a good English lesson in Year 3, pupils learnt to select and use a range of technical vocabulary to describe the monkey character in a story, using words like 'herbivore'. Pupils were able to plan and lay out their writing for different purposes such as providing stage directions and cast lists.

Despite standards of reading being high for most pupils, there are gaps in the knowledge and skills of lower-ability readers. This is slowing their progress. Pupils of lower ability in Year 3 are not secure, for example, in their ability to use letters and the sounds they represent (phonics) to help them to read unfamiliar words and words containing more than one or two syllables. Older pupils in the school are reading at a lower level than their peers, as they do not always understand the meaning of key words. This limits their comprehension.

Pupils learn about handling data and how to produce charts and graphs; however, their ability to use the four operations to help them to solve problems is underdeveloped. When pupils' learning of new skills is put into a meaningful context, their pace of learning increases. In a good mathematics lesson in Year 5, for example, pupils developed their knowledge and understanding of percentages by applying these to everyday scenarios. They worked out the price of items from a catalogue once the cost had been reduced by 10 and 20%.

The learning and progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs has improved as a result of additional support which is now more focused on securing basic skills. There is a greater emphasis on supporting pupils with their reading and writing than their mathematical skills. The school has correctly identified the need for additional support for this group of pupils to help them to improve their basic mathematics. Although pupils on school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs make satisfactory gains in learning, their rate of progress slows compared to others, when lessons do not cater as well as they should for pupils' individual needs. Pupils told inspectors that they find it helpful when teachers

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provide them with written targets to guide their learning, but that this useful strategy is not used regularly enough.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching is satisfactory. It has improved in the last year, and there is now an increasing proportion of good teaching. The best teaching, often in English and mathematics lessons, reflects teachers being clear about the knowledge and skills pupils need to know, which they communicate effectively to pupils. Their subject knowledge is good and they make effective links with real-life experiences. Teachers in Year 6 establish clear expectations about behaviour and learning readily with new classes. This was observed in the transition sessions for pupils in Year 5 moving up to Year 6 next year. In these classes, teaching ensures that pupils' personal and social skills are suitably well developed to promote strong dispositions and attitudes to learning. Most lessons include planned opportunities for pupils to share and discuss ideas, and to undertake practical activities. However, what prevents the good lessons from being better is the limited challenge for the more able or the provision of extension work that does not actually extend pupils' learning and skills.

The teaching of subjects other than English and mathematics is less effective. This is because teachers are not all transferring the good skills they use for teaching English and mathematics to other subjects. Furthermore, they do not make the most of learning opportunities by reinforcing basic skills of writing and mathematics in other subjects. There are too few opportunities for pupils to produce extended pieces of writing that is of good quality in different subjects. Teachers are too accepting of work across the curriculum that is neither written nor presented as well as the work that pupils produce during their English lessons.

Planning takes account of the needs of most pupils, but does not incorporate sufficiently the needs of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Skilled teaching assistants at times make up for these shortcomings. In too many lessons, teachers accept pupils' first answers to questions too readily without probing pupils to help them to develop their thinking skills and their ability to give reasons for their answers. In these lessons, assessment strategies are often limited. Teachers do not routinely ask pupils to explain what they have understood or what they are learning. Occasionally, short whole-class reviews are ill-timed and stop pupils who are in mid flow and progressing well. Although teachers identify key vocabulary to teach in their planning, this is not always reinforced well in lessons. In some lessons, new and unfamiliar words are not sufficiently well displayed; this is unhelpful to pupils of lower ability, especially those who would benefit from having words such as 'opaque' or 'translucent' provided alongside an explanation.

Teachers listen to pupils reading every week; however, they do not use pupils' reading records and tracking books to best effect. This is because comments are too general and do not specify next steps in learning such as any key vocabulary pupils need to learn or phonics that pupils need to practise. Marking in most English and mathematics books is good. Teachers make effective use of visits to local places of

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interest to support and enhance pupils' learning, such as the trip to Southsea Castle linked to learning about the Tudors.

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

Pupils enjoy coming to school, as reflected in their above average rates of attendance. This is an inclusive school where exclusions are rare. Pupils understand the different forms bullying can take. They have confidence in senior leaders and most staff to deal with issues that arise and this helps them to feel safe in school.

Parents, carers, staff and pupils are generally positive about behaviour and are of the view this has significantly improved in the last year. The inspectors found, while most pupils behave well in lessons and around the school, not all are sufficiently considerate or courteous to their peers, especially at lunchtimes and in the playground.

The school records every incident that occurs, from minor misdemeanours through to incidents requiring letters home and detention. However, there are too few records of the strategies used to help resolve matters and how effective these have been.

### **Leadership and management**

The senior leadership team has developed rigorous systems of assessment and tracking to check on the learning and progress of different groups of pupils. This has enabled leaders to target underperformance better, set challenging targets and to improve equality of opportunity for all pupils. The extent to which senior leaders make use of data is good; however, not all leaders and managers, including year group leaders, make equally good use of this information to help raise standards. The senior leadership team, along with the special educational needs coordinator and subject leaders for mathematics and English, have worked effectively to secure some improvement, but some weaknesses remain. This, together with a governing body which challenges the school more appropriately, reflects an increasing capacity to improve. However, the role and impact of middle leaders is underdeveloped. The quality of action and improvement planning is variable. Action plans for foundation subjects and for special educational needs do not include measurable milestones to judge success.

Senior leaders monitor the quality of teaching and learning regularly, and ensure staff are provided with training to improve their professional development. However, formal records of monitoring do not provide sufficient clarity for staff of what they need to do to move from teaching satisfactory lessons to teaching ones which are good or better.

Leaders and managers ensure that the curriculum is broad and balanced, and suited to pupils' needs. The school recognises that there are still too few opportunities for pupils to reinforce and extend their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. There are good examples of cultural development around the school, such as pupils



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learning about India and Hinduism, and pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They are aware of their rights as children. However, the level of spiritual awareness is less well developed. Although their social skills are promoted well, leaders and managers do not monitor behavioural patterns, which limits their ability to target aspects of undesirable behaviour effectively. Staff are not all clear about the school's behaviour policy and this is leading to some inconsistencies in the way which matters are dealt with. Nevertheless, the school tackles the rare incidents of discrimination effectively and governors now monitor the impact of the school's policy relating to equality of opportunity. The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory.

## 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](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.
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.**



5 July 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Balksbury Junior School, Andover SP10 3QP**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We spent time looking at the school's work, observing lessons and your behaviour around school. We were very interested to hear their views and to listen to what you have to say about your school. I am pleased to tell you that your school has improved; it is now satisfactory and no longer in special measures.

Most of you are doing very well with your reading and improving your mathematics. Although your writing is getting better, it is still not as good as it could be. The quality of teaching has improved this year. We agree with you that, while most of you behave well most of the time, a few pupils are, at times, unkind or inconsiderate. Senior leaders and managers as well as the governors are helping the school to improve.

We have asked your school to do the following to help it to become even better:

- make sure you all make even more progress in English and mathematics
- help more of the teaching to become good or better
- ensure all of the adults with leadership and management responsibility in the school, including the governing body, do an equally good job in helping the school to improve.

All of you can also help your school by continuing to work hard, by being kind and considerate to each other and by letting your teachers know if ever you find lessons too difficult or too easy. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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