

Hillbourne School and Nursery

Kitchener Crescent, Poole, BH17 7HX

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Progress has been significantly improved since the last inspection and most pupils are making at least the progress expected nationally. A sizeable proportion makes even better progress. Parents and carers appreciate this and the school's reputation is good and growing.
- Achievement is good. Pupils reach broadly average standards from low starting points. Weaknesses that did exist, in Years 1 and 2, have been systematically dealt with.
- Those pupils who are most disadvantaged are making particularly good progress. Gaps in performance are rapidly being closed.
- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors have improved the quality of teaching and maintain a well-ordered, caring environment.
- Teaching is typically good with staff turning good planning and high expectations into a curriculum that is interesting, and helps pupils to achieve.
- Pupils are nearly always happy to be in school, are usually well behaved and keen to learn. They feel safe and well looked after.
- The school's rapid progress is underpinned by much improved assessment systems which show staff what pupils can already do, what they are capable of, and what they need to do next to make improvements.
- The school's successful track record points to a strong capacity for further development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Too few pupils, especially boys, reach the higher National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in writing.
- Teaching is not outstanding. In a small minority of lessons the pace of learning is too slow and not all pupils, especially the more able, are fully challenged.
- Children in Nursery and Reception need even more opportunities to interact with adults and to become aware of links between letters and sounds.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out at one day’s notice by three additional inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 24 lessons, or parts of lessons, taught by 20 teachers.
- They met with groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and various key members of staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone and met with another at the feedback at the end of the inspection.
- Inspectors looked at pupils’ work including books from the last academic year and heard pupils from Years 1 and 6 read.
- Inspectors took account of the 31 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and held informal discussions with parents and carers in the playground before school.
- They observed the school’s work, and looked at school documentation, including data on pupils’ progress, evidence of self-evaluation and monitoring records.
- Inspectors analysed questionnaire responses from 21 staff.

Inspection team

Mike Burghart, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Linda Rafferty

Additional inspector

Terry Payne

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above average sized primary school serving a suburban area of a large coastal town.
- Six years ago the school was formed from an amalgamation of a first and a middle school in separate buildings on the same site. The same buildings are still in use.
- The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium support is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The school shares its campus with a children's centre run by the local authority. This facility did not form part of this inspection.
- The governing body provides childcare in the form of breakfast and after-school clubs.
- There are plans to change the age of transition to secondary schooling in this authority in 2013 so that all pupils will move on to the next phase of education at the end of Year 6. Some pupils already change schools at the end of Years 4 and 5.
- The school meets the government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build on the success already established to improve pupils' achievement by:
 - embedding the school's 'emotional literacy' scheme and help all pupils to be ready to learn by being prepared emotionally as well as academically
 - ensuring that more able pupils are fully challenged and that the proportions of those reaching above average National Curriculum levels are increased
 - providing more effective support to improve boys' achievement in writing.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is more consistently outstanding by:
 - increasing the pace of learning, making sure pupils do not spend too much time sitting on the carpet during introductions to lessons
 - making the most of the established assessment programme to set targets for pupils to improve in subjects in addition to English and mathematics.
- Develop the learning environment for children in Nursery and Reception to provide more opportunities in support of communication, language and literacy development by:
 - increasing opportunities for children to interact orally with adults while involved in play activities, especially outdoors
 - developing displays to help children raise their awareness of links between letters and sounds.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Many children start school with skills, knowledge and experience that are below what is expected at this age and this frequently restricts their ability to communicate. Nevertheless, they settle in quickly, get on with others, behave well, take turns and share. Despite lots of fun (no one will forget hunting bears) and a good start in Nursery and Reception, language and literacy skills are below average when children move up to Year 1.
- Historically this delay has restricted progress across the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 and resulted in some underachievement. This was identified in the last report and became the focus of development planning. Very successful improvements to assessment and the quality of teaching over the last two years have been responsible for progress rates strongly improving. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has risen sharply to average, and in the case of reading to above average.
- Progress at Key Stages 2 and 3 has also been improved with the vast majority of pupils consistently reaching at least average levels. Pupils enjoy literacy work. A fine example being in a Year 6 lesson where descriptive writing was considerably enhanced as pupils expressed their emotive reactions to pictures of dogs.
- Improvement in writing has been less marked for those who are potentially more able, and in particular where no Year 6 boy achieved the higher Level 5 in 2012. Work is in hand to address this with a focus on writing for a variety of cross-curricular purposes, for example making notes researching the internet comparing Poole with Newfoundland.
- The school's emphasis has been keenly focused on those who have extra funding as part of the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is a real success story with progress dramatically improved and gaps between the learning of such pupils, and that of pupils nationally, being rapidly closed.
- The school is adept at helping pupils whose attitudes to learning are less secure to achieve. Planning for what the school calls 'emotional literacy' is well established in some classes and is effective in improving progress. Embedding this in all classes is the next step.
- Achievement in mathematics is good, with a noticeable improvement in the performance of girls reaching above average levels at the end of Years 6 and 7. Good teaching, based on good planning and the sharing of staff skills and expertise, is at the heart of this and provides a good model for raising achievement across the curriculum.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The school is building on strengths noted in the last report in supporting pupils' personal development. Improvements over time to the quality of teaching, especially how staff question pupils, complement this and have considerably improved the way pupils' academic progress has been promoted. The result is that pupils are well prepared for the next phase of education and are growing up as caring members of society.
- Well established in some classes, encouraging pupils' emotional literacy development is helping pupils who find concentrating hard to be more actively involved in learning. Where this is less successful, in a small minority of lessons, the impact of teaching is more limited. In these lessons, teachers do not always fully challenge pupils, especially the more able. When staff spend too long on introductions, and the pace of learning drops, pupils become less interested. This has been one of the factors most negatively affecting boys' writing and the legacy of this still remains.
- Those pupils in need of additional help, for example those with special educational needs, are well taught. There is a good partnership between teachers and their assistants and good communication over pupils' personal plans.
- Relationships are good and, coupled with the effective assessment system which is well

managed by senior and middle leaders, make it possible for teachers to set and share targets for pupils to aspire to. That this is not the case in every class is very much due to staff changeover and it being only the third week of the school year. Extending such targets to subjects other than English and mathematics is a legitimate objective already prioritised by the school.

- There are aspects already identified by senior leaders as being in need of further improvement in provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example in providing yet more opportunities for children to interact with staff and to appreciate the meaning of letters and words. However, the quality of teaching in Nursery and Reception is good and its positive impact ensures children enjoy learning, often through structured play.
- Opportunities for pupils to learn other than in lessons are well orchestrated through a wide range and number of clubs and after-school activities. Staff take excellent care of pupils and teach them well, not only imparting knowledge and skills in the conventional way, but also through their enthusiastic example.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in and around the school. Parents, carers, pupils and staff comment that although there are occasional outbursts, low-level disruption to learning is rare. This view is consistent with inspection findings that attitudes to learning are good and is confirmed by good rates of progress.
- Behaviour is not judged as outstanding because there are a few pupils who can, and sometimes do, present behavioural problems. When these arise they are managed particularly well. The school benefits from strong links with the outreach department of a local special school. Staff have received training in how to deal with any eventualities and are well supported by the systems in place and senior leaders.
- There is little evidence of bullying and pupils show that they are aware of how to stay safe and what to do if they have problems. They are confident that there is always a member of staff to turn to and that leaders deal with situations quickly and fairly. With very few exceptions, parents and carers share the same views.
- Attendance rates have been improved over the last two years and are now in line with the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually. Good links with education welfare services are helping to overcome the low level of persistent absenteeism.
- Pupils are keen to say that the school treats them fairly. First-hand observations and discussions with staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils indicate that the school successfully ensures there is no discrimination. In many sessions inspectors observed similar lessons taught to parallel classes across year groups. Evidence shows that pupils have equality of opportunity within the school and when compared with pupils elsewhere.

The leadership and management are good

- Robust and accurate self-evaluation provides a very secure basis for school development planning. The headteacher, senior leaders and governors set a fine example through their commitment to continually making improvements. Their vision, tempered with the reality of the limitations of finance and the building, is effectively translated into practical planning, designed at every level to help pupils achieve well personally and academically.
- The track record of successful development since the last inspection, the quality of staff, and the procedures and systems already in place are reassuring of the school's capacity to bring about even more improvement.
- Expectations of work and behaviour are high and these are equally well applied to staff, through meaningful performance management, as well as pupils. Effective monitoring has had a very positive impact on the quality of teaching. It has led to well-targeted training

and support. Good use of outside agencies, for example for literacy, has had notably positive effects on the progress of those supported by the pupil premium initiative. Raising more teaching to the outstanding level and continuing to improve achievement remain priorities fundamental to moving the judgement for leadership and management from good to outstanding.

- Despite some being only very recently in post, middle managers make a good contribution to leadership through their evaluations and action plans. For example, an astute appreciation of some underperformance in writing and too little curriculum time having been devoted to science has resulted in priorities in the school's central development plan. There are early indications of success.
- Procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe are effective, as are those designed to support pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well as an integral part of curriculum planning. An excellent example being how British athletes of the Muslim faith came to terms with dietary requirements of training during Ramadan.
- The school benefits from the active support of its school improvement partner who, as the agent of the local authority, has given much valued input into training for literacy.
- **The governance of the school is good**
 - Governors effectively manage finances, evaluating the impact of decisions they make on pupils' progress.
 - They rigorously monitor the success of provision in raising pupils' achievement.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	134892
Local authority	Poole
Inspection number	406573

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	371
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Burriss
Headteacher	Ken Taylor
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 January 2011
Telephone number	01202 692604
Fax number	01202 600911
Email address	office@hillbourne.poole.sch.uk

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