

# Highbury Primary School

Dovercourt Road, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 2RZ

**Inspection dates** 24–25 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Pupils make good progress in reading writing and mathematics. They achieve well.
- Attainment at the end of Year 2 is rising.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 is in line with the national average.
- Pupils behave well, feel safe and have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy coming to school, which is reflected in the improved rates of attendance.
- Pupils with additional needs, and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, make similar progress to other pupils.
- The subjects taught are interesting and exciting, providing a range of opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.
- All outstanding issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed.
- Leaders, managers and the governing body have a clear vision for the school which has been shared and understood by staff and parents.
- Self-evaluation has correctly identified the most important areas for improvement through rigorous monitoring procedures.
- Setting targets for teachers has been used well to improve the quality of teaching. Weak teaching has been eradicated.
- Training and development activities for teachers, teaching assistants and other support staff have increased their skills, contributing to the improvements in teaching and learning and the behaviour of pupils.
- The school provides good support for the small number of pupils who find it a challenge to behave well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of teaching still requires improvement and not enough teaching is outstanding.
- Pupils need more opportunities to develop the ability to work by themselves.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills require further development.
- Pupils are not always involved enough in monitoring their own progress.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching in all classes. They observed 29 lessons, taught by 11 teachers, of which 14 were observed jointly with either the headteacher, the deputy headteacher or the assistant headteacher. A Key Stage 1 and a Key Stage 2 assembly were observed. In addition, the inspectors carried out a learning walk to look at subjects across the curriculum and a behaviour and safety learning walk.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher, the inclusion leader, the English and mathematics subject leaders, phase leaders, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader and the Nursery manager. The lead inspector also had a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard pupils read and scrutinised their work from the current year and from last year.
- Inspectors looked at a number of documents including strategic plans, safeguarding arrangements, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of the governing body's meetings, external reports from the local authority, assessment data and curriculum plans.
- The views of parents were taken into account through consideration of the responses from 19 parents to the on-line Parent View survey and informal discussions with parents.
- Staff views were taken into consideration through scrutiny of questionnaires completed by 28 staff members.

## Inspection team

Ann Henderson, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Gail Robertson

Additional inspector

Bill James

Additional inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended), Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is likely to be of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school with nine classes. There are four classes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, there are two Reception/Year 1 classes, one class for three- and four-year-olds and one class for two- and three-year-olds. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in mixed-age classes. There are two classes for Year 1 and 2 pupils, three classes for Year 3 and 4 pupils and two classes for Year 5 and 6 pupils.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club, both of which are managed by the governing body.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual times.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage, the proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language or are at the early stages of speaking English when they join the school is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who need extra help is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding, which in this school provides additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- Following the last inspection, the headteacher left the school in January 2011. An interim headteacher was in post from January to July 2011. The current headteacher took up her post in September 2011. There have been a number of staff changes since the previous inspection and the class structure has been reorganised.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching and further accelerate pupils' progress in all classes by:
  - further developing pupils' speaking and listening skills
  - finding more opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning skills
  - increasing opportunities for pupils to monitor their own progress.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the school in the Nursery classes with levels of skills and abilities that are below those usually found for children of this age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because adults provide a range of interesting and exciting learning activities for them.
- Attainment is rising in Year 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. The national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2012 show that reading and mathematics are broadly in line with the national average. However, writing remains a relative weakness.
- Pupils' progress from their starting points has improved strongly in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. Such good progress is a result of teaching that successfully motivates pupils and creates very positive attitudes to learning.
- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment compares favourably with other schools nationally. A greater number of pupils are reaching higher levels of attainment.
- Teachers are helping pupils to catch up quickly from their previously low attainment. The recent introduction of daily handwriting and spelling lessons supports pupils well to develop good letter formation and spelling patterns. The quality of handwriting and spelling has improved.
- The regular phonics (the sounds letters make) teaching for groups of pupils from Reception to Year 4 supports them to build unfamiliar words well. Older pupils, who have not benefited from such a regular programme of phonics teaching, sometimes struggle to read unknown words because they do not have such a well-developed understanding of the sounds letter make.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to speak to their classmates about topics that interest them and generally pupils listen well to instructions and information. However, pupils' skills in this aspect of English are less well developed.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils in receipt of additional government funding, pupils whose first language is not English and those new to the school make similar progress to their peers. This is because they are well supported in lessons and in additional programmes provided for them. This shows that the school successfully promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination for all pupils.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has significantly improved since the previous inspection. Inspectors observed teaching that was mostly good, some with outstanding features. This contributed well to pupils' interest and engagement in the learning activities planned for them.
- Most parents who responded to the on-line questionnaire agree that their child is well taught. Those who spoke to inspectors during the inspection expressed very positive views, saying their children are happy at school.
- Teachers use assessment information well to plan lessons that are appropriately suited to the pupils' levels of ability. They make the learning intentions clear to pupils at the outset of the lesson and provide useful 'stars to success' to help them to know whether their learning has been successful.
- Another factor that has greatly improved since the previous inspection is the interesting and engaging curriculum which has been developed effectively to provide exciting and stimulating opportunities for learning. This well-designed curriculum supports good-quality teaching and encourages the development of skills across all subjects. Teachers plan many problem-solving activities to encourage pupils' independence.
- Classrooms are bright and welcoming, with lively and interesting displays to celebrate

pupils' work. There is a consistency of approach to providing useful information to support pupils' learning in lessons.

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage experience a wide range of activities for learning across the classrooms inside. Although there are opportunities for children to play outside, better use could be made of the outside area to stimulate children's development across all areas of learning and for them to have more opportunities to freely access and take advantage of the outdoor learning areas more frequently.
- Although phonics is taught to small groups of pupils at a similar stage of learning, the adults delivering the teaching do not always use the correct pronunciation of the sounds made by letters. Nevertheless, reading has an increasingly high profile within the school and teachers have developed a range of exciting approaches to increase pupils' enthusiasm for reading, such as the 'Reader of the month' and book prizes for regularly reading at home. Pupils are enthusiastic and excited about the prospect of receiving these rewards.
- Teachers mark pupils work well, they recognise and praise pupils' good efforts and accuracy in meeting the intended learning objectives. The marking comments also provide useful information about how pupils can make further improvements to their work. Time is allocated at the start of the lesson for pupils to respond to marking comments from the previous lesson and make further improvements.
- Pupils know their targets for reading, writing and mathematics and actively engage in checking their own learning. Teachers also monitor pupils' progress towards achieving their targets which provide pupils with useful information on the levels of attainment they are expected to achieve.

#### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- There has been a significant improvement in the attitudes displayed by pupils. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils get on well together and have good relationships with adults. They are polite, considerate and respectful. Pupils and parents agree behaviour has improved.
- Attendance has improved and is broadly average. The instances of lateness and persistent absence have been significantly reduced because of the relentless checking carried out by the headteacher. Meetings with parents to support improved attendance and punctuality have also included providing access to the breakfast club and the allocation of nursery places for siblings to offer additional support for families.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes different types of bullying; they say bullying is rare, but dealt with quickly if it occurs.
- Pupils feel safe and know there are adults are on hand to care for them and help them. The school has a planned approach to ensure pupils understand how to keep safe, including on the internet. During the inspection older pupils took part in an assembly to develop their understanding of using the internet safely in school and at home.

#### **The leadership and management** are good

- Senior leaders have consistently communicated high expectations and relentlessly focused on improving learning and progress for all pupils. They have successfully created a well-motivated staff team who is ambitious to raise standards and ensure pupils are actively engaged in learning.
- Very focused and regular checking of planning, teaching, the classroom environment and assessments have led to a consistent approach in the way teachers implement the school's policies. As a result, pupils' progress has improved and their attitudes to learning are good.
- Performance management has been used well to eradicate weak teaching and plan suitable training for teachers to improve their practice. Senior leaders regularly model good

teaching. Support for weaker teachers to improve their skills has been successful.

- Accurate self-evaluation has led to plans which identify the most important areas for improvement. The staff team was restructured during the last academic year, providing opportunities to develop the skills of middle leaders to support the year groups for which they are responsible. These phase leaders regularly check that pupils make good progress by ensuring assessments are secure, and additional support is planned where necessary.
  - There are good systems in place to track pupils' progress. Senior leaders check the progress of groups of pupils. There is a wealth of information which is available for leaders and teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching and the additional support provided for groups of pupils. This has led to the improvements in rate of pupils' progress.
  - The much-improved, well-organised and exciting curriculum provides pupils with interesting learning experiences. Subject leaders regularly check whether pupils' skills are being developed progressively. There are very good links between subjects which support pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills well.
  - Pupils are involved in deciding what they want to learn about in a particular topic. This serves to effectively motivate and engage pupils in their learning and promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A wide range of additional activities such as drama, information and communication technology, choir, nature and cross-stitch club enhance pupils' learning experiences.
  - The improved relationships with parents and the involvement of partnerships to support learning are having a positive impact on the school. The skills and expertise of parents and the support of the local college offer greater opportunities for pupils to broaden their learning experiences.
  - The local authority has provided good support to improve the quality of teaching and develop the expertise of middle leaders. As a result, teachers support pupils' learning well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are given a wide range of activities across all areas of learning and adults check their progress accurately.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body provides effective challenge and support for the school. The governors are proactive in checking whether planned improvements are effective, which has contributed to the improved progress and higher levels of attainment reached by pupils. Their approach to ensuring the safety and well-being of staff and pupils is robust. As a result, all safeguarding issues identified at the previous inspection have been addressed. The governing body has a good understanding of how the school's finances are spent and check on the effectiveness of spending for those pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding.
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## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	116196
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	399928

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	324
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Derek Good
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sarah Sadler
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12–13 October 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 375404
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