

# Portsdown Primary and Early Years School

Sundridge Close, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 3JL

**Inspection dates** 12–13 December 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Teaching does not always ensure that work is pitched at the right level for pupils or that teachers' questioning challenges their ideas enough.
- Pupils' progress across the school is too uneven; consequently, not all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable.
- The use of too many worksheets, coupled with too much teacher-led work in lessons, limits opportunities for pupils to learn independently.
- Children in the Reception classes do not have enough opportunities for well-planned outdoor play.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities in mathematics to develop their practical problem-solving skills.
- Although leaders work hard to bring about improvement, they are not always rigorous enough in setting clear goals that can be carefully checked for their impact, nor are they always clear about what constitutes good progress.
- Members of the governing body are not always challenging enough in asking searching questions to help them to understand the school's work.

### The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, and good, and often better, progress in Year 6.
- Senior leaders have acted decisively to eliminate weak teaching and raise its level so that an increasing amount of it is good.
- Well-planned topics and the 'academy' afternoons enliven the curriculum and engage pupils' interest and involvement.
- Good provision for pupils in the diagnostic assessment unit enables them to make good progress in developing their language skills.
- The headteacher has built a strong, caring community where pupils behave well, feel safe and well cared for and parents are welcomed.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons of which three were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspectors made a number of other short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, a local authority officer, the leadership team and other senior staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the on-line Parent View survey and the views of parents spoken to during the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding.
- The inspectors listened to pupils from Year 2 and Year 6 read.

## Inspection team

Janet Sinclair, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Tysoe

Additional Inspector

Christine Dickens

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Portsmouth is an above-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action, 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 well above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, none of whom are at an early stage of learning English.
- The number of pupils eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium (additional funding for pupils in local authority care, from armed forces families, or those known to be eligible for free school meals) is above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school has a specialist unit catering for up to 10 Key Stage 1 pupils with speech and language difficulties.
- The Nursery provides flexible daycare for up to 50 children aged from three months to Reception age, from 7.45am to 5.00pm for 50 weeks of the year.
- Pupils in the main school are organised in a combination of single- and mixed-age classes. There are two single-age Reception and Year 1 classes, three mixed-age classes of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils, two of Year 4 and Year 5 pupils, and one class of Year 6 pupils.
- The school has a breakfast club.

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

- Improve pupils' achievement by ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better through:
  - setting work that provides clearly for pupils' differing learning needs
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning
  - ensuring that questioning extends and challenges pupils' understanding
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to solve practical problems in mathematics
  - limiting the use of worksheets so they do not provide the main means of pupils' communicating their learning.
- Improve provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that there is daily well-planned provision for outdoor activities that children undertake by themselves.
- Improve the capacity of leaders and managers to sustain improvement by ensuring that:
  - they prepare a one-year school development plan with clear targets linked to key areas for improvement, and that measurable success criteria enable leaders to accurately gauge the impact of their actions
  - leaders are clear about what constitutes good progress, both during lessons and through better analysis and use of data.
  - governors ask more challenging questions to help them to understand the school's work more fully and to better hold leaders to account.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 was average in 2011. In 2012 it improved so that it was above average. Some pupils made accelerated progress, particularly in mathematics. However, their overall progress required improvement. Strong teaching and provision in Year 6 help to make up for any earlier slow progress.
- Progress over time in Years 3 to 5 shows some underperformance, particularly in writing. Progress at Key Stage 1 is too slow. The school is working hard to address this, and progress for all pupils has accelerated this term due to more effective teaching.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills and abilities below those typically expected for their age. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage so that by the time they are ready to enter Year 1, most of them meet, and a good number exceed, the statutory early learning goals expectations.
- The progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those who are supported through the pupil premium, is similar to the progress that other pupils make in each year group.
- Progress in reading across the school is better than in other subjects, although not yet consistently good. This is due to a strong focus on regular individual reading in class, opportunities for reading in literacy lessons, and a good level of parental involvement in their children's reading, seen in parents' attendance at reading workshops, and their commitment to hearing their children read regularly at home.
- Progress in writing is increasing due to a strong emphasis on punctuation and grammar, effective use of vocabulary, regular opportunities for writing, and pupils' checking their work against set guidelines.
- Pupils have increasing opportunities to use their literacy skills in other subjects, for example when writing about lighthouses in Year 1 or when developing scientific vocabulary such as 'precipitation' and 'evaporation' in Year 6.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching over time requires improvement because it does not always help pupils to learn well enough.
- Work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs, and questioning does not necessarily challenge or extend their learning. Teaching sometimes places too much emphasis on the teacher, with too few opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in their learning. Over reliance on the use of worksheets further limits opportunities for pupils to express their own ideas.
- Good teaching is demonstrated through high expectations, clear explanations, effective questioning and good subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used these skills to very good effect to ensure a good outcome when pupils were writing in the style of the author Michael Morpurgo.
- Effective teaching of phonics (how letters sound) helps pupils with their spelling, reading and writing. This was particularly noticeable in the Reception classes where children were building three-letter words confidently. Year 2 pupils use this knowledge well when reading unfamiliar words.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly with 'green for growth' (where the work needs to improve) and 'tickled pink' (where the standard is good). Pupils have group targets for improvement, and are given guidelines to check their work, which involves them well in making their work better.

- Pupils are placed in ability sets for mathematics which help to target their learning, but they do not always get enough opportunities to solve problems related to real-life situations, or to be involved in investigating different methods, and this slows their progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who are supported through pupil premium funding get targeted one-to-one support and specific guidance that helps them well to keep up with their peers. They are also supported well in class by teaching assistants who take them in small groups for more highly focused learning. They progress very well in Year 6 due to good, and sometimes excellent, teaching.
- In the Reception classes, a good working atmosphere and a well-organised learning environment ensure that children engage well. However, there is no planned provision for outdoor learning and very few opportunities for children to work outside. When they do have the opportunity to learn outside, they are excited and keen to participate.
- The nursery staff provide a well-resourced, inviting learning environment. All adults work well with the children to provide them with challenging learning experiences.
- Teaching in the diagnostic assessment unit is well planned to ensure that pupils' language skills are developed successfully.
- Parents spoken to were pleased with the progress their children make.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are clear about how they are expected to behave and know that they will get 'time out' should they misbehave.
- Pupils say that there are a few pupils in each year group who have bad behaviour, and as a result they lose their 'academy' time (a range of activities they choose on a Friday afternoon) or are sent to a separate room with a learning mentor. Consequently, they do not disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils with identified behaviour issues are issued with behaviour plans, they are monitored by learning mentors, and their parents are involved. This helps to improve their behaviour. Policies and procedures for promoting good behaviour are in place and consistently applied.
- Pupils say that there is very little bullying – mainly name calling – and that the Playground Buddies and Guardian Angels sort out any problems that do occur at playtimes.
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning and work well together when given the opportunity. For example, they work well together as talk partners.
- The school has worked hard and successfully to improve attendance since the previous inspection. There are fewer persistent absentees and there have been no exclusions.
- The school ensures a safe environment for the pupils in their care. Pupils say that they feel safe and are clear about the fact that they have to report any incidents that make them feel unsafe. An annual safety week ensures that pupils know how to stay safe. For example, they learn about using the internet safely, and have videos on safety, including safe use of railway crossings.
- The very few parents who responded to the on-line Parent View survey were unanimous in their view that their children are safe in school.
- A small number of pupils attend the well-managed breakfast club, where they enjoy a healthy breakfast and the opportunity to play together.

### The leadership and management

### requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because neither teaching nor achievement is yet good.
- Senior leaders act quickly to address any emerging areas for concern. Monitoring of teaching

and learning is regular and consistent but does not always focus sufficiently on the quality of pupils' learning within the lesson. However, they make sure that staff are allocated according to their strengths and weak teaching dealt with effectively. The school has also been successful in significantly improving writing, which demonstrates capacity for further improvement.

- School improvement planning lacks sufficient direction. For example, several versions of the school improvement plan focus on raising attainment and improving pupils' rates of progress. However, there are not always specific measurable outcomes that would enable leaders to carefully check the effectiveness of their actions. Effective planning is also hampered by some lack of clarity about what constitutes good progress. For example, the school evaluated progress in Key Stage 1 as outstanding, but when the data was checked carefully the outcome revealed that their progress required improvement.
- The process of setting targets for teachers ensures clear action points for individual development as well as whole school priorities. This increasingly ensures that all staff contribute well to the school's continuing improvement, or are given support to enable them to do so.
- Senior leaders monitor pupils' progress carefully to guarantee an improving picture of pupils' progress across the school. This demonstrates the school's increasing determination to promote equality of opportunity across the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced but is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs in lessons and this sometimes slows their learning. There is a good degree of enrichment through visits and visitors.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils know right from wrong and are kind and helpful towards each other.
- There are good links with parents. Parents spoken to during the inspection were happy with the school and what it provides, and the school works well with them.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They carefully monitor the school's finances, including the use of pupil premium funding, ensuring that it is used to benefit pupils by providing additional staffing to help increase pupils' rates of progress, which it has. Although active in helping the school to tackle underperformance in teaching, members of the governing body are not always challenging enough in asking searching questions to help them to understand the school's work, including the progress pupils make and the quality of teaching. They understand and monitor the process of setting targets for the headteacher and other staff and know how this links to increases in salary. They ensure that pupils and staff are kept safe through effective safeguarding procedures and that equality of opportunity is vigorously promoted.

## 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>	116258
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	405633

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>	3 months – 11 years
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	370
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stefan Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Irene Baldry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8–9 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 378991
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 215922
<b>Email address</b>	headteacher@portsdown.portsmouth.sch.uk



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