

# Velmead Junior School

Velmead Road, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 7LG

**Inspection dates** 10–11 January 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher form a highly effective partnership and are at the heart of the school's success. Their drive and determination to establish a culture of teamwork are moving the school forward.
- The attainment of pupils is high and consistently improving.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding because relationships between pupils and their teachers are founded on mutual respect and care. They are keen to learn, concentrate well in lessons, care for and respond very positively to each other.
- The quality of teaching is good and in most lessons teachers and teaching assistants are effective in meeting the learning needs of pupils.
- The school communicates and works well with parents; pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy coming to school.
- Systems for identifying and supporting disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have improved and these pupils now make good progress.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of school are promoted extremely well.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always give pupils enough opportunities to work independently and think for themselves.
- Not all pupils, including some less able ones, make good progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 20 lessons, observing lessons in all classrooms. Four of these lessons were joint observations with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also listened to some pupils from all year groups reading from books they had chosen.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, four governors, including the Chair, and school staff, including subject and year group leaders, alongside the school improvement adviser from the local authority.
- Inspectors also took account of the 62 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), as well as speaking to several parents informally on the playground. The team also took account of the 30 questionnaires completed by staff when forming their judgements.
- Inspectors also observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents. These included its checks on how well it is doing, the school's own data on pupils' attainment and progress, governing body minutes, as well as policies, procedures and records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.

## Inspection team

John Croghan, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Susan Hunnings

Additional Inspector

Peter Thrussell

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools.
- Almost all of the pupils speak English as their first language.
- Fewer pupils than in most schools are supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children from families who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked-after children and those with parents in the Armed Forces.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by a statement, as well as those supported at school action plus, is above the national average. The percentage of pupils supported by school action is much lower than the national average.
- The headteacher has provided support for two other local schools recently, with one secondment for six months.
- The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic groups is lower than in most schools of this size nationally.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment in progress.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently at least good by:
  - making sure that teachers constantly check learning during lessons more effectively, so that tasks can be adapted for pupils of all abilities
  - ensuring that introductions to lessons are short and focused, and that interventions during lessons are targeted at specific groups or individuals, so that pupils have more opportunity to make progress in lessons.
- Improve the overall progress of pupils, particularly less and more able pupils, by:
  - making effective use of pupils' personal targets in the classroom to help them to understand better the skills and knowledge they are working at, to become more skilled in checking how well they are doing for themselves
  - ensuring that leaders identify more precisely the next steps for teachers during the performance management cycle.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment is well above average and has been consistently improving for several years, with the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 in reading, writing and mathematics also being well above the national average. The attainment of pupils in writing at Level 4 is also well above the national average, with reading and mathematics also above national average. From above-average starting points this represents good achievement.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and makes a great contribution to their successful learning. Pupils enjoy working together with partners and in groups so that they listen to each other with interest and give high-quality support in lessons and elsewhere.
- Progress over time is good for most pupils. However, some less able pupils, as well as some pupils who arrive in school with prior high attainment, do not do as well as they should during their time in school. Lesson observations and scrutiny of work show that good teaching means that these pupils are now making better progress in lessons.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress, although better in English than in mathematics. New interventions have been put in place to support mathematics, but these are too recent to judge the impact.
- The school's use of pupil premium funding to support those pupils considered vulnerable is beginning to close the gap in attainment between them and other pupils in school, particularly in mathematics. The percentage of these pupils achieving Level 4 is above the national average. The school has specifically employed an extra learning support assistant and created a nurture group to support these and other vulnerable pupils.
- Pupils read widely and can talk confidently about the authors they like: 'I asked if I could have this book for Christmas' was heard several times. Children use both phonics skills (linking letters with the sounds they make) and context to support them when reading aloud, and they enjoy a range of books. The resources provided by the school enhance their opportunities to read widely.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Most teaching is good, with some that is outstanding. It is improving because teachers build good relationships with their pupils based on mutual respect, care and understanding.
- Pupils are willing to learn because teachers and those who work alongside them explain what they want pupils to do very clearly, with knowledge and enthusiasm.
- The planning of lessons is detailed and includes recognition of what pupils already know and understand, including the organisation and provision of good resources.
- Marking and feedback to pupils in their books are improving because children are becoming more involved in commenting on and evaluating their own work, particularly with the use of personal target sheets in books, where two technical and one stylistic objective are identified. Teachers' marking generally praises pupils' efforts and the best examples provide guidance about how the work can be improved.
- Where teaching is outstanding, teachers allow pupils to start work quickly, alter lessons if needed and intervene appropriately with individuals or groups to allow a higher level of independence to well-motivated pupils. In some lessons, pupils did not have enough time to complete their work successfully because teachers' presentations were too long.
- Although teaching assistants give good support to particular groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs, teachers do not always use them to good effect, for example when

the teacher was talking to the whole class at the start of a lesson.

- The use of real-life situations in many lessons is a strength of teaching and is particularly successful in producing a consistent high level of quality writing, as well as being one of the key reasons for the improvements in mathematics. Both literacy and numeracy skills are developed well through other subjects, as well as being supported by visits and topics that interest and inspire learning.
- All teachers create a high level of confidence in their pupils, so that pupils work in an environment of trust. In some lessons these qualities were used to allow pupils to show initiative and work independently of adult support; in others, teachers did not use the opportunities created by them to improve the pace and progress of learning.

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

- Pupils' behaviour, courtesy and attitudes to learning are exemplary. Pupils feel very secure in school and know that the adults in the school will always help them. They know about different forms of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying, and clearly state that there is no issue about bullying in school. Pupils enjoy school and so attendance is high, with persistent absence low.
- The school is a warm and welcoming environment in which the pupils' behaviour towards each other, staff and visitors makes a strong contribution. Pupils take responsibility in a wide variety of ways with enthusiasm and skill, such as in the school council, helping plan learning activities on theme days, for example the Tudor day and answering the school phone at lunchtime.
- Behaviour in lessons is always good and in many instances outstanding. When behaviour in class is not outstanding it is because the teaching does not allow pupils to show their understanding by allowing them greater opportunities for initiative and independence.
- Pupils are extremely kind to each other and the school is a very inclusive community, where disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are able to join in all aspects of school life and lessons. Parents feel that their children are happy and safe and enjoy school.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school, especially when playing outside or moving around school, consistently showed care, consideration and support for each other, while fully enjoying their opportunities to play. They greatly appreciate and use the opportunity provided by the Millenium Garden for peaceful time at playtimes.
- Pupils are proud of their school and understand the system of rewards and sanctions, which they feel are fair because they are included in the process, and so they respond positively and with enthusiasm to all aspects of school life.

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

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It is constantly promoted well through all that the school does, including a wide variety of visits and residential experiences.
- The headteacher is passionate and effective in creating a learning environment based on the 'team' philosophy, so that all the staff share the vision and core values of the school. He is well supported by the deputy head and other senior leaders, as they create a school where attainment is consistently improving and pupils' behaviour is outstanding.
- Most teaching is good or better and improving, with the leaders clear about the need to improve opportunities for independent learning and greater involvement of pupils in their own progress. Targets for performance management are sometimes too broad to address the specific issues, particularly in relation to pupil progress.
- The school's checks on how well it is doing are accurate and school leaders fully recognise the strengths and areas for development. They have recognised the need to improve pupils'

progress and are addressing the issues to improve the percentage of good and outstanding teaching.

- The accuracy and detail of the 'Learning Reports', which analyse class and year group assessments termly and which are shared with all staff and governors, now provide real understanding of attainment and progress throughout the school.
  - The curriculum is rich, broad and balanced. It is well planned and pays strong attention to numeracy and literacy. There are many enrichment activities linked to topics, such as the Roman day, a trip to a mosque and the visit to the Paralympics last term. The school is rightly proud of the 'Take One Picture' project at the start of the school year, which is at the heart of work in many other subjects throughout the year. The school has been chosen once again to have its artwork displayed in the National Gallery this summer.
  - There is a good range of after-school and lunchtime clubs and the school participates in a wide range of activities with other schools, such as football and music, on a regular basis.
  - Leaders track how well pupils are doing systematically and are aware of the strengths in attainment as well as the need to address the lack of progress by some pupils, including the less able, as they move through the school. The systems are developing constantly and show that the school is well placed to improve further.
  - School communicates well with parents, with regular meetings and an interactive website, with a weekly update on all aspects of school life by the headteacher. The website also includes details of how the pupil premium is beginning to narrow the gap between these pupils and others in school.
  - All statutory requirements relating to safeguarding and the promotion of equal opportunities are robustly managed.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Members of the governing body are very committed to the school and making sure that pupils achieve well. They check carefully that policies are up to date and that finances are managed well. They ensure that the pupil premium budget is used to support the pupils for whom it is intended. Governors have a good overview of the school's performance through regular visits, through discussions with senior managers and annual visits by the local authority. They know how well pupils are achieving and what is being done to improve teaching, particularly in supporting new teachers. They challenge leaders by asking searching questions about the school's performance and checking that the improvements being made lead to higher attainment, but are not yet checking progress in a similar way. The systems in place demonstrate that the governing body has thorough arrangements to ensure that pay awards link to performance management and procedures to measure performance are good. Governor training is relevant and up to date, for example in ensuring that the school meets all safeguarding requirements.
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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>	116054
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	403284

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>	367
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	John Landeryou
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andy Howard
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	31 January 2008
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