

Brockhurst Junior School

Avery Lane, Gosport, Hants, PO12 4SL

Inspection dates

10–11 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- In mathematics, standards are not yet high enough and pupils' progress is not rapid enough.
- The quality of handwriting varies across the school.
- Limited use is made of information and communication technology to improve pupils' learning across the curriculum.
- While teaching in English is consistently good, and the teaching of mathematics has improved significantly this year as a result of a series of actions taken by school leaders to improve provision, the quality of teaching in other subjects is much less consistent and requires improvement.
- Across the school, there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' written work.

The school has the following strengths

- Leadership is good. Monitoring is thorough. Senior leaders have taken appropriate actions to deal with weaknesses in achievement. They have put in place clear procedures for managing the performance of teachers. These procedures are linked to targets and training opportunities.
- Governance has improved significantly and is now a strong element within the leadership.
- The recently revised range of curriculum activities contributes well to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school provides a safe, nurturing, calm and attractive learning environment. This contributes to pupils' good and often excellent behaviour and their good attitudes to learning.
- Reading is taught well and, as a result, pupils enjoy reading a wide range of texts.
- Assessment procedures are well established.
- Significant improvements to the teaching of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs have added to the increasingly good progress made by this group of pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school’s middle and senior leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 22 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at a range of school documentation, including records of checks on the quality of teaching, the school improvement plan, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and extracts from the school’s tracking of pupils’ progress. A scrutiny of pupils’ written work was also undertaken and inspectors listened to pupils reading.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Margaret Faull	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Brockhurst is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average. The proportion of pupils at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school offers a Breakfast Club, which is managed independently and inspected separately.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and for whom the school receives additional income (the pupil premium) is around the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school gained a number of awards in 2012, including the Eco-Schools Silver Award, the Gold Sing-Up Award and the Leading Parent Partnership Award.
- The school has experienced a significant level of staff changes recently; six of the eight class teachers were new to the school in September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the proportion of good or better teaching is increased, so enabling pupils to make consistently good progress, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, by:
 - providing creative, stimulating activities which challenge pupils of all abilities
 - sharing examples of good practice across the staff team
 - making sure that all staff have high expectations of the quality of pupils' written work
 - seeking agreement with the school's partner infant school for a joint strategy for the development of a consistent, legible style of handwriting
 - making more creative use of information and communication technology to support more dynamic learning across a range of subjects.
- Sustain and build upon current efforts to raise standards and improve achievement, particularly in mathematics, by:
 - planning opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills in subjects across the curriculum
 - close monitoring to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to tackle challenging mathematical activities, with the most able aspiring to even higher levels.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- While pupils' test data on entry to the school indicate that they are working at slightly below average levels in reading, writing and mathematics, the school's own evaluation suggests that attainment levels, as measured at the beginning of Year 3, are somewhat lower.
- Attainment by the end of Year 6 rose in 2010 and 2011, but dipped slightly in 2012. Overall, it is broadly average, although results in mathematics lag behind those in reading and writing. The school's data indicate that results look likely to rise in 2013, with an increased proportion of pupils potentially attaining the challenging Level 5.
- Pupils made satisfactory progress in 2012. However, there were significant variations across year groups and within subjects, reflecting inconsistencies in the teaching at that time. In addition, the evaluation of progress over time is made more difficult because of the uncertainty about the standards pupils had reached when they entered the school in Year 3. What is clear is that current progress in the key skills of reading, writing and, to an extent, in mathematics is largely good. The quality and legibility of handwriting remain variable.
- Pupils' improving progress reflects effective action to secure consistently good teaching, supported by effective assessment. Additional small group support is available to ensure that pupils have a good understanding of the sounds which letters represent (phonics). This underpins pupils' increasingly good skills in reading. An intensive focus on writing has had a positive impact on pupils' writing skills.
- The school has used pupil premium funding to provide additional support for the development of basic skills in literacy and numeracy, and can prove the positive impact of these actions. Data indicate that the progress of these pupils has improved significantly and scores from national tests show that the gap between the attainment of identified pupils and the majority has significantly reduced. For the pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium, including those eligible for free school meals, funding has supported additional extra-curricular and other activities which contribute effectively to their well-being.
- The support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs has improved, under effective leadership, so ensuring that pupils' needs are met successfully. As a result, these pupils are now making better and frequently good progress. The school has made significant progress in 'closing the gap' in attainment between pupils who may be in danger of achieving less well than the majority and the others.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The high proportion of new staff has provided significant challenges for establishing common practice and expectation across the school. The indications are that while some aspects of teaching require improvement, there is already a significant proportion of effective teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. Weaker teaching is largely confined to other subjects. Relationships are a strength in almost all lessons.
- When lessons are most effective, the pace is brisk and pupils are engaged by the activities. This was seen in several lessons where pupils were taking part in the weekly independent writing activity. All staff were working to the same model of good practice, using materials of good quality and setting clear expectations that the outcomes would be of high quality. All teachers created an appropriate atmosphere for the writing, often playing music to encourage stillness and concentration.
- The teaching of reading and the progress made are mostly good. The school has additional teaching available to deal with any weaknesses in pupils' knowledge on entry to the school of the sounds letters make. This contributes to improved reading skills.
- Despite those areas of emerging strength, teachers' expectations remain inconsistent across the school. Although staff work to the same, shared expectations for presentation and marking,

variations in the quality of pupils' written work remain and the school recognises this as an area for improvement.

- The school has improved the practice and effectiveness of learning support staff and there have been significant recent changes. Support staff have had extensive additional training and new roles, and their effectiveness has increased as a result. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- Overall, assessment is a strength and is usually used effectively across the school to ensure that work is matched closely to pupils' needs. Some minor inconsistencies in the marking of pupils' written work remain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Even in less confined settings, such as the lunch-hall or playground, it is often excellent. Pupils are consistently polite and eager to learn. They have few concerns about the behaviour of others and say that the school is always calm. If lessons are not stimulating, pupils tend to respond only with quiet, but polite, lack of interest. They readily support the extra-curricular activities. Of those parents and carers who expressed a view, most feel that behaviour is good.
- There have been a very small number of exclusions this year. Where exclusions arise, they generally relate to a few pupils with identified needs. Racist incidents, inappropriate behaviour or disruption of lessons are all rare. Pupils have great confidence in the adults around them and feel that they are always available to deal with any issues. If incidents occur, robust procedures ensure that they are managed effectively.
- The school is inclusive and provides well for pupils with a wide range of needs. Pupils who are identified as likely to benefit from extra help are supported effectively.
- There have been only isolated instances of low-level bullying in the current year. Pupils are aware that bullying may take different forms, such as internet bullying or in response to physical differences or gender issues.
- Pupils have a good understanding of risk, supported by the school's extensive teaching of personal safety, including road, fire and internet safety. Pupils recognise the need to keep themselves safe in different circumstances.
- Secure systems ensure that pupils' attendance is firmly in line with the national average, year on year. School leaders recognise the potential to raise this further. Persistent absence is rare. Pupils almost always arrive punctually.

The leadership and management are good

- Leadership and management have improved significantly since the last inspection. Although extensive recent staff changes have limited the pace of change, senior leaders show a shared and passionate commitment to excellence. They are firmly focused on raising pupils' achievement through continued improvement in the quality of teaching, strengthening of effective assessment systems and thorough analysis of information about pupils' progress.
- Evidence indicates that senior leaders responded successfully to the requirement in the last inspection report to develop effective middle management roles. When these middle leaders moved on to promoted posts in 2012, it was necessary to re-establish a team of middle leaders. This process has drawn upon the successful model that was already in place, and new middle leaders are already contributing well to the spread of good practice.
- The arrival of new staff has provided challenges in relation to staff induction, support and development. There are strong systems which enable the school to manage the performance of teachers effectively. Decisions about salary progression are firmly linked to pupils' progress. Monitoring systems are very thorough. Staff feel positive about the good opportunities for professional development and say that these have supported the improvement of both teaching

and middle management skills.

- Although circumstances, particularly staff changes and extended staff absences, have slowed the pace of improvement, there is every indication that the school has made considerable progress since its last inspection and, with strong and effective leadership, has good capacity for further improvement. Good support from the local authority has contributed to the progress achieved.
- The curriculum has been significantly improved, although with priority given to reading, writing and mathematics. Provision to support the development of pupils' writing skills is a significant strength. However, there are missed opportunities to use information and communication technology to enrich pupils' learning and engagement across the curriculum. The remaining subjects, including science, are taught regularly, sometimes in the context of themes and topics. Singing is a particular strength. Pupils indicate that they enjoy their learning.
- Pupils' spiritual and moral development is supported well through collective worship and religious education. Pupils have relatively few planned opportunities to engage with other cultures. Links with parents and carers are a strength.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - With active and influential new members, the governing body has gained significant momentum in recent years. Governors are now intrinsic to the life of the school. They have a close understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and an accurate perception of its overall effectiveness. Governors have a close knowledge of the school's performance data and understand the school's priorities and strengths. They provide rigorous challenge to the school's performance, persistently questioning areas of weaknesses. They closely evaluate the effectiveness of decisions made and are visibly present in the school community. They are aware of the need to ensure that pay and promotion are firmly linked to teachers' effectiveness. Governors undertake regular training. They recognise the school's responsibility to ensure equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination. They have managed the budget effectively, ensuring, currently, that class sizes are relatively small. They contribute to decisions about the use of pupil premium funding and the analysis of its impact, and can demonstrate that this funding is helping to close the gap in pupils' achievement, regardless of initial disadvantage. Governors ensure, along with senior leaders, that safeguarding arrangements are secure and effective.

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	116161
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	401565

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joan Kerr
Headteacher	Paula Taylor-Williams
Date of previous school inspection	10 November 2009
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