

# Wildground Junior School

Armitage Avenue, Dibden Purlieu, Southampton, SO45 4LG

**Inspection dates** 15–16 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Although pupils' progress improved well over the past year, and continues to accelerate, their achievement is not yet good because of slow progress made in the past.
- Previous underperformance of some girls and pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding means that, although now closing the gap more quickly, their attainment is still behind that of their peers.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good enough to ensure that pupils learn well. Opportunities are missed to extend pupils' learning further during some discussions and in some tasks.
- In the past school leaders and governors were slow at responding to emerging weaknesses in pupils' achievement. The monitoring of teachers' performance did not hold teachers to account sufficiently for the progress pupils made.
- Some middle leaders are still developing the skills needed to help drive forward improvement.
- The newly-constituted governing body, although very well organised and knowledgeable about the school, has had too little time to have an effect on monitoring and development work.

### The school has the following strengths

- The recently-appointed interim executive headteacher and head of school exhibit very strong leadership skills and have the full confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils.
- Good leadership of English and mathematics this year has underpinned improvements in teaching and pupils' achievement. More pupils now reach the levels expected by Year 6, and increasingly are exceeding them.
- The quality of teaching is improving well, with the majority of learning in the lessons observed during the inspection being good.
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and good behaviour support their learning well. Attendance levels have risen rapidly due to the excellent procedures in place.
- The school's caring ethos helps pupils with significant social or emotional needs to thrive and make the best of their education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons, most of which were joint observations with the executive headteacher or head of school. In addition, inspectors heard a sample of pupils read and scrutinised a sample of pupils' written work.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff including senior and middle managers, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 15 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and responses from the 10 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including the school's records on current pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to planning and monitoring and safeguarding were also looked at.

## Inspection team

Diane Wilkinson, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Keith Homewood

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Wildground Junior School is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school in which pupils are taught in mixed-age classes.
- The school has very recently joined in federation with Wildground Infant School. From September 2013 both schools have been led by an interim executive headteacher who was previously the headteacher of the infant school. The head of school for Wildground Junior joined the school in January 2013. The federated governing body held its first formal meeting in October 2013, just prior to the inspection.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported by school action is high when compared to the national average. The proportion supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. Pupils' needs are mainly associated with learning, behavioural, social and emotional and speech, language and communication difficulties. A significant minority of these pupils enter the school with low attainment levels.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those who speak English as an additional language and the proportion of pupils from Traveller families, is low.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides funding for children in the care of the local authority, children from military families and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Breakfast and after-school clubs are held at the school for both junior and infant school pupils. These are run by a private provider and were not inspected by this inspection team.

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

- Ensure the quality of teaching is at least good or better by:
  - planning independent lesson activities that extend pupils' learning rather than just consolidating what they already know
  - providing more opportunities for pupils to plan and carry out their own tasks independently, and only giving further advice when it is really needed
  - asking questions of a wider range of pupils in lessons and making pupils aware that they may be asked to answer a question or give an explanation without having put up their hand
  - maintaining a rigorous pace throughout lessons and adjusting tasks that raise the level of challenge when pupils are learning quickly
  - introducing a programme for marking in mathematics that is as effective as that seen for reading and writing.
- Raise pupils' achievement through:
  - building on the strategies in place to ensure that all girls and those in receipt of pupil premium funding rapidly close the gap in attainment with their classmates
  - ensuring that the skills developed in handwriting and spelling activities are consistently used in other writing, including in a range of subjects
  - placing more emphasis on pupils using their number skills in a wide range of mathematical topics including in independent problem solving
  - extending the opportunities for reading regularly for those pupils who rarely do so at home.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management in tackling weaknesses and raising achievement by:

- making wider use of all strategies in place for enhancing the quality of the school’s monitoring and development work
- ensuring that all middle managers and subject leaders acquire the skills needed to check and develop the quality of teaching and pupils’ achievement in their area of responsibility, and are held to account for their effectiveness
- fully implement the work of the federated governing body so that it rigorously and regularly checks how well the school is performing and constantly challenges staff to work towards providing the best possible quality of education for pupils.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- On entry to the school most pupils are at average attainment levels. However, attainment on entry was below average for current pupils in the older year groups, partly because a significant number have learning difficulties and their attainment on entry was low.
- In all year groups, pupils made better than expected progress last year, but progress was not as good in the past. However, recent progress has ensured that, by the end of Year 6, most pupils made the progress expected of them during their time in this school, although it is not yet good.
- The attainment of last year's Year 6 in reading, writing and mathematics was slightly below average, a good improvement on 2012 when it was significantly below average, partly due to low expectations of pupils. Most pupils now reach the level expected in national assessments in English and mathematics and the proportion exceeding this figure is rising well. The attainment of current Year 6 pupils is broadly at the level expected, with Year 5 pupils already doing better than this so attainment is well placed to rise further.
- Most Year 6 pupils confidently read unaided, referring to the text to describe the story or characters. Higher attainers' comprehension skills are very good. Although less able pupils' phonic skills (the sounds letters make in words) are secure, some have limited opportunities for increasing their skills further through reading at home.
- A very strong focus on writing last year ensured far more Year 6 pupils reached the level expected than in 2012. Most use language effectively to engage the reader, with higher attainers using a wide range of features to enliven their work. Although pupils' spelling and handwriting are improved, their presentation skills are weaker.
- Good progress in calculation skills has ensured that most Year 6 pupils reach the expected level in national tests, although other aspects such as problem solving are less well developed.
- The school's firm commitment to equality of opportunity is evident in the rapid improvement made over the past year in the quality of support for pupils with different needs and starting points, and enhanced procedures for checking their progress. As a result, the previous inadequate progress of some groups has been eradicated, although it is not yet good.
- Until last year, girls were not performing as well as boys. Although they are now making adequate progress, their attainment is not quite as good as that of the boys.
- Higher expectations last year of those in receipt of pupil premium funding led to increased progress and the majority reached the levels expected for their age. This is helping to close the gap more swiftly; although, partly because of some pupils' learning difficulties, their overall performance in English and mathematics is still about a year behind their peers.
- Improved in-class support and programmes to help disabled pupils and those with special educational needs catch up ensure these pupils achieve at least as well as they should, increasingly reaching the levels expected for their age.
- The achievement of pupils from different ethnic groups or Traveller backgrounds and pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to that of their classmates.
- Higher attaining pupils make the progress they should and attain above average standards.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Effective support from the executive headteacher, head of school and the local authority has eradicated inadequate teaching and seen the quality improve well, although it is not yet consistently good.
- Occasionally, the independent tasks provided only consolidate what has already been learnt rather than providing opportunities for extending learning further.
- Staff do not capitalise well enough on pupils' enthusiasm for learning and taking on responsibilities. Where pupils do get to make decisions about their own learning, for example choosing which of the lesson targets will help them to do their very best, pupils indicate an

excellent awareness of what they could achieve. However, staff provide too few opportunities for pupils to plan and work by themselves. Sometimes adults provide too much information. These factors limit learning and pupils' ability to acquire good skills in working alone.

- Teachers explain and demonstrate new learning clearly, but too often pupils sit passively listening because teachers do not ask questions of a wide range of pupils, often only those who put their hand up to answer a question.
- The very positive ethos and behaviour management ensure lessons are rarely interrupted, pupils concentrate well and work hard. Staff do, however, miss opportunities to increase the pace of learning and there are occasions when work is completed quickly and extra activities do not always promote new learning.
- Teaching in reading, writing and mathematics has improved well over the past year. In particular, good assessment information helps teachers to plan work which is well matched to the level at which different groups are working. Pupils say that work is challenging, one typically commenting, 'I know what I have to do, but it's hard for me, although I don't mind.'
- Target setting is well established so that pupils know the level they are working at and what they need to do to improve. Marking in English clearly identifies achievement and areas to work on, but marking in mathematics is much less effective.
- A much stronger emphasis on enhancing the learning of the higher attainers and pupils who might be at risk of underachieving and regular assessment of their progress have ensured their progress is improving in line with that of their peers.

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

- The strong commitment of staff to prevent discrimination and foster good relationships is evident in the very good range of programmes in place to support pupils' social and emotional needs, including through the nurture group and enhanced reward and sanction procedures. These, together with improved lesson activities, help keep pupils well focused in lessons.
- Good behaviour in all aspects of school life is evident in the warm and welcoming ethos, where pupils are unfailingly polite and helpful and very considerate of one another. These skills prepare pupils well for their future.
- The school is a very happy and harmonious place where bullying in any form is rare and pupils can be totally confident that it is always dealt with effectively.
- Pupils who find good behaviour difficult are especially well supported and their behaviour improves well over time. Exclusions have decreased significantly, ensuring that all pupils are included in what the school can offer them.
- Pupils have welcomed opportunities to play a larger role in the smooth running of the school and are very proud of their contribution; for example as 'Bookworms' (library monitors) which they carry out well. However, less has been done to encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own learning or to carry out lesson activities independently.
- Current systems for promoting good attendance are excellent and have raised the levels, which had begun to decline, to above average. Very few pupils are poor attenders.
- Rigorous attention to pupils' safety not only helps keep them free from harm but ensures pupils develop a good awareness of how to avoid risk, including when using the internet.

### **The leadership and management require improvement**

- Leadership and management require improvement because the school did not address emerging weaknesses quickly enough. Consequently, pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, although improved, are not yet good.
- In the past, systems for checking pupils' achievement and teacher performance were not regular or rigorous enough to support improvement work, and some staff including middle managers did not have sufficient expertise to check these areas effectively.

- The new interim executive headteacher, the head of school and staff, with the support of the local authority, have helped achieve marked improvements over the past year and subject leaders in English and mathematics have carried out their roles effectively. This gives confidence that the school is well placed to improve further.
- More thorough, rigorous and regular checking of pupils' progress, involving all staff and governors, is now in place and monitoring of teaching clearly indicates the impact that it has on pupils' progress. As a result, self-evaluation is accurate and strategic planning is well targeted at remaining weaknesses, although some middle leaders are still developing their expertise.
- The curriculum provides good advice on how to promote different pupils' progress including through intervention programmes. Pupils' personal development and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered well.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet requirements and the school pays rigorous attention to its child protection procedures and the vetting of staff. The school works well with a wide range of agencies to support pupils' education and well-being, including family support workers and the speech and language therapy service.
- Parents' views of the school are very positive. Staff work hard to involve them in their children's learning and are keen to increase the level of support for homework, especially for reading.
- The local authority intervened quickly when pupils' achievement declined and has provided good support and challenge to help move the school forward since then, most notably in increasing staff and leaders' expertise. It now considers the school to need only moderate support in the near future and is confident it will soon return to being a light touch school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The current governing body is very new and has had little time to have made any impact on the school's work. Previously, weaknesses in governance, together with checking systems which did not sufficiently emphasise the need for pupils to make good progress, limited its effectiveness.
  - The new governing body is well organised, with all required support and monitoring systems in place to help governors carry out their duties effectively, including with regard to performance management. They have been fully involved in current planning for the future.
  - Governors' commitment to training, especially in monitoring teacher performance and pupils' achievement, has been exemplary. The current Chair of the Governing Body is very experienced and has a proven track record in good governance, as do a number of other governors.
  - Procedures are in place to ensure that pupil premium funding is spent well to help to close the gaps in attainment quickly, with extra support staff and a range of programmes, activities and resources to enhance pupils' progress. A standing agenda item for checking the effectiveness of this spending is backed up by a rigorous monitoring programme now in place.
  - Although the extra funding for physical education and sports has not yet been received, the school has set out a good plan for increasing staff expertise as well as enhancing pupils' experiences.

## 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>	115883
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	427346

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>	163
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Fiona Weston
<b>Interim Executive Headteacher</b>	Amanda Mullett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18–19 May 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 842042
<b>Fax number</b>	02380 877976
<b>Email address</b>	admin@wildground-jun.hants.sch.uk

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