

# Court Lane Infant School

Hilary Avenue, Cosham, Portsmouth, PO6 2PP

**Inspection dates** 13–14 November 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Attainment by the end of Year 2 has been consistently high since the time of the previous inspection.
- Achievement in reading is a strength of the school. Shared reading in lessons has been a successful focus for development.
- Pupils are well taught and, as a result, they make good progress. Lessons are typically lively and interesting and grab the pupils' interest.
- Pupils' writing skills are being developed strongly in Year 2 across different subjects.
- Good questioning by teachers and discussion help pupils to develop their ideas and extend their vocabulary.
- In lessons, pupils work together well and are keen to share what they know.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and behave very well. They say they really enjoy coming to school and feel safe.
- Good leadership and management by governors, leaders and managers have ensured standards of teaching and pupils' achievement have remained good since the previous inspection. Regular checks are made on the quality of teaching to promote improvement and leaders have a clear and accurate understanding of teaching strengths and areas for improvement.
- Governors have strengthened school leadership. They pose challenging questions to leaders about school improvement.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Activities provided for pupils are occasionally too easy or difficult, and when this happens the pace of learning slows and some pupils lose focus.
- The role of middle leaders is not fully developed. They have not had sufficient opportunities to promote high quality teaching in lessons, for example through coaching.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons of which three were observed jointly with the headteacher. They also scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with staff, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 56 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View). Parents' views were also gathered from informal conversations at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documents, including improvement plans, checks on the quality of teaching, records relating to attendance, and the school's data on pupils' progress.

## Inspection team

Peter Clifton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Robert Arnold

Additional Inspector

Jacqueline Good

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Court Lane Infant School is larger than the average-sized school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The pupils are taught in 12 classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups, is well below average. Currently, the school's pupils in receipt of this support are those known to be eligible for free school meals and those from other groups.
- Over the past two years, less than half of the teaching staff have worked continuously in the school.
- The acting headteacher has led the school since September 2013.
- The school is over-subscribed.

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

- Raise the quality of teaching so that it is as good as the best in the school, in order to increase the proportion of lessons where learning is outstanding, by:
  - making sure that activities in lessons fully meet the needs of all pupils and that, as a result, learning moves on at a consistently brisk pace
  - developing the role of middle leaders so that they can promote high quality teaching, for example through coaching, and check carefully on the outcomes.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment by the end of Year 2 shows that pupils achieve well from their different starting points. As a result, they are very well prepared for their next school.
- Achievement in reading is particularly strong. By the end of Year 2 in 2013, almost all pupils reached the expected National Curriculum Level 2 and about two thirds reached the higher Level 3. In 2012 and 2013, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in the phonics screening check exceeded the national level.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage children achieve well. They start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Children have good speaking and listening skills. In 2013, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development by the end of Reception exceeded the national average.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress which is similar to their classmates. In lessons, teaching assistants typically provide additional support and encouragement, which promotes effective learning. In addition to this, the school has a well targeted intervention programme to boost basic skills.
- More able pupils make good progress and numbers of pupils reaching the higher National Curriculum Level 3 by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics are increasing. The school's procedures to check the accuracy of writing levels are robust.
- The school's records for pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium show that they make progress which is at least as good as other pupils in reading and mathematics. However, their achievement in writing is not as strong as other pupils and there is a gap in performance between this group of pupils and their classmates. This is being addressed by leaders through the provision of additional support, although it is too early to judge the outcomes.
- Learning observed during the inspection and the samples of work showed that pupils of different abilities usually make good progress. This confirmed the school's own view of pupils' achievement and progress. Learning observed was strongest in Year 2. However, there are some lessons where the pace of learning is not brisk enough.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Since the previous inspection teaching has remained good and this is reflected in the school's progress information. There is some outstanding teaching, particularly in Year 2.
- Learning is usually good because tasks provided are well thought out and capture pupils' interest. In the best lessons observed, for example, pupils worked together to improve writing to move it to the next level and used features such as alliteration and different connectives in their own work. Pupils continue to develop these skills when writing in different subjects such as science.
- The regular use of 'big books' to share and discuss stories is well established and, for example, in successfully encouraging pupils to look for 'hidden' meaning in texts.
- Discussion and questioning feature strong in lessons from Reception onwards to help children to develop their ideas and understanding. Many pupils relish the opportunity to say what they think, for example in paired talk and group work.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support for different groups of pupils, including helping more-able pupils, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Some individual support for pupils with more complex needs is very effective.
- In Reception, children make good progress when learning about the names and properties of different shapes. Reading areas are well resourced and encourage the children to re-enact stories. The 'police station' role play area encouraged plenty of speaking and was much enjoyed by boys; although, there was a chance of being arrested.

- In lessons, pupils are regularly reminded about using their targets, for example to help with writing and to assess their own work. Marking is detailed and helpful and gives pupils clear steps to improve their work.
- While there is good teaching in all year groups, there are some occasions when learning slows, for example when tasks are not challenging enough and pupils complete them too easily and quickly. On some occasions a few boys, particularly in Year 1, do not maintain their concentration well enough and have to be reminded by the teacher to pay attention.

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

- Pupils' attitudes to coming to school and learning in lessons are typically very positive. Pupils like what they do in school and comment that their teachers are really good. They attend very regularly.
- Pupils get on well together and do not see that those from other backgrounds are any different; they know that they should treat each other with kindness.
- Children in Reception have settled quickly into class routines and are learning to work on their own and together in groups, for example to share painting activities and read stories together. Across the school, pupils are clear about classroom procedures to help them to concentrate well and listen carefully.
- At playtimes and around the school, pupils are considerate and help each other. Older pupils enjoy taking on responsibility as playground buddies and try to sort out any problems. Discussion confirms that pupils feel safe and secure in school and they say there is an absence of bullying. They know how to keep safe when using the internet.
- Parents confirm that pupils' behaviour and their safety are strong aspects of the school. Parents' responses to the online survey are highly positive about the school and about how well their children are cared for.
- Behaviour is not outstanding because there are a few occasions when boys do not maintain their concentration and they find it difficult to work independently without direct support by an adult. There are also some occasions when pupils do not pay attention when they should be listening carefully. However, pupils' comments confirm that it is uncommon for their learning to be disrupted.

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

- Leaders have a very clear understanding about the school's strengths and those areas of the school's work which need to be improved in order to move achievement and teaching from good to outstanding. The inspection confirms that the school's development plans address all of the right issues. Strategies to promote reading have been particularly successful.
- The acting headteacher has ensured that there has been a smooth transition following recent changes to middle and senior leadership. She brings considerable knowledge of the school and rightly has the confidence of staff and governors. Parents spoken to comment positively about good levels of communication with staff.
- A key strategy for improvement is to develop the role of middle leaders, many of whom are newly appointed. They recognise that their roles are not yet fully developed, for example to promote outstanding teaching in their subject areas. However, they have made a very positive start in analysing subject strengths and weaknesses and monitoring pupils' progress and attainment.
- The school's curriculum strongly promotes reading, writing and mathematics skills, as well as providing a broad range of learning in other subjects including a study of the local area. Values such as kindness, respect for feelings and doing as well as you can are reflected in the way staff interact with the pupils.
- Leaders have drawn up plans to use the additional money from the primary school sports

funding to enhance gymnastics and extend the provision of sports clubs after school to increase pupil participation rates. It is too early to judge the impact of this additional funding.

- The local authority has rightly judged that the school requires only light touch support and has confidence in the acting headteacher to effect further improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a good understanding about how well the school is doing in comparison with the national average, are fully involved in evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses and are fully aware of the school's current focus on improving writing. They are very ready to challenge leaders and ask questions about pupils' progress, including the impact of the pupil premium funding, which enables them to know about the quality of teaching. The governors make regular visits to lessons to gain further insight into how well pupils are doing. Recent training includes safeguarding and safer recruitment; they have also completed an audit of skills in order for them to identify any gaps in training. The school has appropriate performance management arrangements to hold teachers fully to account for the progress made by pupils, and to make decisions about whether or not teachers should move up the salary scale. The required procedures about safeguarding children are followed and spending decisions are carefully monitored and evaluated.

## 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>	116198
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	426593

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	360
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stuart Barrand
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Geddes (Acting Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 October 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 378890
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