

Northern Junior School

Richmond Rise, Fareham, PO16 8DG

Inspection dates 12–13 March 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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

- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 are too low, particularly at the higher levels.
- The most able pupils are not always offered sufficient challenge to enable them to achieve well.
- While improving strongly, teaching is not yet consistently good. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils' learning.
- There are a few instances when teachers' knowledge of some of their subjects could be stronger. Teachers do not always show pupils what good handwriting looks like.

The school has the following strengths

- The outstanding executive headteacher, strongly supported by governors, has swiftly raised expectations in the school. Teaching is improving strongly as a result.
- Leadership in the school has become stronger as a result of well-judged appointments and careful deployment of staff.
- Most pupils currently in the school make fast progress as a result of improving teaching.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They are polite, friendly and well behaved. The school keeps them safe and looks after them well.
- The additional tuition given to pupils who need extra support in English and mathematics ensures that these pupils progress well.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector saw teaching in every class. He observed eight lessons and pupils' behaviour in the playground and at lunchtime. Two lessons were observed jointly with the executive headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with pupils, three members of the governing body, the executive headteacher and other members of staff.
- The inspector observed many aspects of the school's work, including supervision and support for pupils who need extra help. He heard pupils read and examined pupils' work in their exercise books and on classroom and corridor wall displays.
- The inspector looked at a number of documents, including plans for what pupils will learn in each subject, plans for the school's future development, the school's use of sports premium and pupil premium funding, the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe, pupils' attendance records, minutes of governing body meetings, records of how pupils' learning is checked and tracked and records of how the quality of teaching is checked.
- The views of parents were taken into account through taking note of the 29 responses to the school's survey of parental views and through discussions with several parents. The online Parent View survey was also consulted, but too few responses had been received for any information to be available.
- Staff views were taken into consideration by looking at questionnaires completed by 12 staff members and through discussions with several members of staff.

Inspection team

Steven Popper, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a smaller-than-average-sized junior school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations of pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for additional government funding, known as the pupil premium, is lower than the national average. This extra money is provided for children in local authority care, children with a parent in the armed services and those known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with a parent in the armed forces is higher than the national average. There are no pupils in local authority care currently on roll.
- The proportions of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action and through school action plus are above average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational needs currently on roll. Some pupils have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, while others have a range of other needs.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The number of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at the usual times is higher than in most other schools.
- The school currently operates alternative provision for one child.
- The school has been part of the Northern Schools Federation along with Northern Infant School since February 2012.
- The executive headteacher of both schools in the federation took up her post in November 2012. The deputy headteacher took up her post in September 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good by:
 - continuing to establish a high level of challenge, especially for the most able pupils
 - making certain that teachers' expectations of pupils' learning are consistently high
 - continuing to develop teachers' knowledge of the subjects they teach
 - making certain that all teachers model neat, accurate and well-formed handwriting to pupils.
- Ensure that more pupils attain results which are at least broadly in line with national levels in reading and writing, and at the higher levels in all subjects, at the end of Key Stage 2.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because too few pupils reach standards which are broadly in line with national averages in reading and writing and too few pupils attain results at the higher levels in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' results at expected levels in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved, but results in reading and writing have declined. The most able pupils' results at the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics have also declined. However, all groups of pupils currently in the school are on track to achieve better and reach higher standards than pupils in previous years.
- Previous cohorts of pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points. All groups of pupils currently in the school progress at a faster pace. This is because of strong improvements to teaching.
- The gap in progress between pupils eligible for pupil premium funding and other pupils has been closed successfully by the school. Eligible pupils now make progress in line with and often faster than non-eligible pupils.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs typically make rapid progress from their starting points. This is because they receive effective extra tuition in English and mathematics.
- The school works well to ensure that any pupils who receive alternative provision have the best chance of making good progress.
- A very large majority of parents who offered an opinion expressed positive views about their children's progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement as pupils do not consistently attain at or close to national averages. Previous cohorts of pupils were not taught well enough to ensure their good progress.
- Teaching is not yet consistently good. A small minority of teachers do not always have high enough expectations of pupils' learning, with the result that a few pupils can go off-task and use time poorly. The most able pupils are not always offered sufficient challenge to enable them to achieve well.
- Sometimes teachers' knowledge of some of their subjects is not strong enough to ensure high quality learning. Teachers do not always model handwriting well, which does not help pupils to develop good handwriting habits of their own.
- However, teaching is improving strongly. Much more teaching is effective than in previous years. As a result, all groups of pupils currently in the school make fast progress.
- The best teaching in the school features high quality questioning that deepens their learning. Teachers communicate clearly about their subjects in a way that engages pupils and develops their understanding. Pupils are given clear and helpful advice about how to improve their work. The best teaching also contains an increasingly high level of challenge which has been instrumental in speeding up pupils' progress.
- Trained teaching assistants support learning well. They communicate clearly to the pupils that they work with and ensure their understanding. The extra tuition that they give to pupils with particular learning needs ensures their swift progress in English and mathematics.
- An overwhelming majority of parents who offered an opinion considered that their children were taught well. However, inspectors judge that overall teaching requires improvement.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and are proud of their achievements. They are keen to take on challenges. Their good attitudes to learning contribute to the fast progress that they make. However, a few pupils can go off-task and use time poorly when teachers' expectations are not high enough. This is why the behaviour and safety of pupils are not outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons, in the playground, during lunchtime and when travelling around the school is good. They work and play happily and co-operatively and are polite and friendly towards staff and each other.
- The school has worked successfully to educate pupils about bullying, for example through anti-bullying weeks. Pupils understand why bullying and other forms of poor behaviour are not acceptable and to be avoided.
- The school manages pupils' behaviour well. Pupils whose behaviour falls short are expected to make up for poor behaviour through actions as well as words. Pupils who talked to the inspector felt that there was little poor behaviour in the school, and that staff would deal with any incidents effectively, fairly and swiftly.
- There have been some incidents of poor behaviour and bullying over time, but the number of these has reduced. Incidents of poor behaviour have been dealt with effectively by the school in a way that has led to improvements in the behaviour of pupils involved. The school has supported some pupils in difficult circumstances and helped their behaviour to improve.
- Attendance is higher than in most other schools. This is because of the school's good relationships and successful work with parents, and because pupils enjoy coming to school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Playtime and lunchtime are supervised well. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in different situations, including when online. For example, pupils who talked to the inspector explained the importance of not giving out personal information on the internet. They said that they felt safe and understood how to keep themselves safe.
- An overwhelming majority of parents who expressed an opinion thought that the school dealt effectively with bullying, that behaviour in the school was well managed, and that their children were happy and well looked after in school.

The leadership and management are good

- The executive headteacher, leadership team and governors have high aspirations for the school, and the leadership of the executive headteacher herself is outstanding. The executive headteacher has swiftly and successfully raised expectations among teaching staff and pupils, and restructured the school so that pupils' learning needs are better met. There have been strong and sustainable improvements to teaching and to pupils' progress as a result. This is why leadership and management are good.
- However, the school's strengthened expectations have not yet resulted in sufficient pupils attaining high enough results at the end of Key Stage 2. This is why leadership and management are not outstanding overall.
- The executive headteacher has deployed staff in leadership positions very well across both schools in the federation in a way that enables both schools to support each other and make the best use of staff expertise. She and the governors have ensured careful and well-judged appointments to the leadership and teaching teams that have enhanced the quality of both and ensured that the school is in a strong position to improve further. As a result, expectations across both schools are now in line with each other and pupils in the junior school make faster progress than previously.
- Senior and middle leaders are strong. They monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching

in their subjects and areas of responsibility. They are developing new approaches to the subjects pupils learn and are preparing the school well for the implementation of the new National Curriculum.

- The school's self-evaluation accurately identifies the school's strengths and areas for development. The school's improvement plan includes well-judged actions designed to bring about the desired improvements. Leaders have a clear idea of how they will monitor the effectiveness of any changes that they introduce.
- Leaders carefully monitor the quality of teaching and teachers are expected to perform well and produce good progress and results. Performance management arrangements ensure that strong performance is rewarded appropriately and that any weaker performance is not allowed to continue. Staff are given considerable training and support, and these have contributed well to the improvements in teaching.
- The school teaches a broad range of subjects and makes good use of imaginative themes (such as 'Doctor Who') to engage pupils well and excite them about learning.
- There are good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, pupils engage in charitable work and are actively encouraged to reflect about rights and responsibilities. The school actively works against discrimination and promotes equality through its inclusive approach. A wide range of clubs provide creative and sporting opportunities and promote a valuing of achievement.
- Sports premium funding is spent effectively on enhancing pupils' engagement in sports and developing teachers' sports skills and knowledge.
- Pupil premium funding is spent on effective use of teachers and trained teaching assistants to deliver one-to-one and small-group tuition in English and mathematics for eligible pupils. These measures have contributed to the closing of the gap between eligible and non-eligible pupils.
- The school ensures that all pupils are safe. It keeps appropriate and up-to-date records of its work in this area and meets statutory requirements.
- The local authority knows and understands the school thoroughly and has supported it well through the establishment of the Northern Schools Federation and the appointment of the executive headteacher. It has given training to governors and teachers and helped monitor the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils.
- Almost all parents who offered an opinion considered the school to be well led.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very active and have strongly supported the executive headteacher's raising of expectations in the school. They have received training about pupil performance data, safeguarding and other aspects of school provision. Governors understand data about pupils' achievement and scrutinise it regularly and with precision. They offer a notably high level of challenge, as well as support, to the school. Governors scrutinise the quality of teaching and help ensure that teachers are properly held to account through performance management procedures. They also make certain that teachers are given the support they need to improve, and that strong performance is properly rewarded. Governors scrutinise school finances carefully, including the use and impact of pupil premium and sports funding. Their impact on the school's drive for improvement is good.

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	115935
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	431712

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	161
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Ryan
Headteacher	Carol Walters
Date of previous school inspection	24–25 January 2011
Telephone number	02392 370613
Fax number	02392 383308
Email address	carol.walters@northern-jun.hants.sch.uk

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