

Hart Plain Junior School

Hart Plain Avenue, Cowplain, Waterlooville, PO8 8SA

Inspection dates 21–22 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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:

- Teaching is not consistently good and, as a result, not all pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Some of the most able pupils are not challenged or stretched to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Marking does not enable all pupils to improve their work, particularly lower-ability pupils.
- Standards of pupils' handwriting and presentation are not high enough.
- A few pupils are not making enough progress in reading. Pupils do not read widely enough for pleasure.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to practise reading and writing in subjects other than English.

The school has the following strengths:

- The headteacher and the senior team have provided strong leadership and driven rapid improvements in teaching and pupils' progress.
- Inadequate teaching has been eradicated. More teaching is securely good because teachers and school leaders take more account of pupils' individual abilities and progress.
- Pupils are lively and attentive and enjoy learning. The school is a happy place in which pupils work and play together harmoniously.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are proud of their achievements and their school and appreciate the way it has improved.
- Determined and ambitious governors keep a close watch on the work of the school and hold school leaders to account.

Information about this inspection

- The school was judged to require special measures at its previous inspection in October 2012. This was because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- This inspection began as the third monitoring inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. It was changed to become an inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005 on the second day of the inspection. Evidence from the first two monitoring inspection visits was also used to support the judgements in this inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching in 18 lessons and made shorter visits to other lessons to observe reading. Seven of these observations were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, teachers, representatives from the local authority and members of the governing body.
- Inspectors also met with a group of pupils and spoke to parents and carers.
- Inspectors scrutinised school policies and records of pupils' progress. Governors' minutes, the school's evaluation of teaching, curriculum planning and documentation related to safeguarding and child protection were also considered.
- There were too few responses to Ofsted's online Parent View questionnaire to be able to use these to gauge parents' and carers' opinions of the work of the school. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and evaluated letters from parents and carers to staff in the school.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Elizabeth Cooper

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and who need more extra support, or who have a statement of special educational needs, is near the national average. The proportion that needs some extra support is slightly higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals who are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding) is above the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A very small number of pupils are educated elsewhere for part of the week at The Lennox Centre and Mill Hill Primary School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more is consistently good, and a higher proportion is outstanding, by ensuring that:
 - the most able pupils are stretched and challenged in all lessons
 - teachers use questioning effectively to gauge learning and move pupils on
 - teachers give pupils meaningful feedback through marking and specific points to improve
 - lower-attaining pupils have more help with responding to teachers' marking and feedback.
- Raise achievement by:
 - ensuring that reading for pleasure is promoted more actively through the school
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise literacy skills in other parts of their timetabled lessons, ensuring that teachers pay as much attention to accuracy and vocabulary in these lessons as they do in English lessons
 - improving pupils' forming of letters and handwriting, overall neatness and standards of spelling and punctuation.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement is not yet good and requires improvement because progress in reading, writing and mathematics is too variable from year group to year group and from class to class. Too few pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics and rates of progress in Years 3 and 4 are uneven, with many pupils needing to catch up.
- However, the school's termly checks show that pupils' rates of progress are accelerating. Term-on-term, over the last 18 months, more pupils have made reasonable or better progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is confirmed by work seen in lessons and recorded in pupils' books.
- Pupils supported by additional government funding are making progress at a similar rate to their peers. In some cases, previous gaps in attainment have closed and pupils eligible for free school meals have overtaken other pupils. Nevertheless, as with other pupils in the school, there is not a consistent picture of improved progress. For example, some lower-attaining pupils in Year 3, who are supported by the funding, are not making enough progress in reading.
- Overall, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making reasonable progress and the gaps in their achievement have narrowed over time. This is particularly the case for those older pupils who also have special educational needs and receive additional help with reading, writing and mathematics. They follow work specifically designed to help with their particular difficulties or gaps in their knowledge and, as a result, quickly catch up with other pupils. The school does everything it can to promote equality of opportunity and to ensure that pupils are not disadvantaged because of ability or background.
- The most able pupils are making more progress in mathematics. Pupils' books and lessons observed during the inspection clearly showed that pupils have more opportunities to work out challenging problems for themselves, using higher levels of mathematical thinking. However, too few of the most able pupils make good progress in all subjects and year groups.
- The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language are helped to acquire English speaking, reading and writing skills quickly.
- Some pupils benefit from extra help and guidance with their reading and comprehension skills and the library is well stocked and attractively designed. However, opportunities for extra reading and longer pieces of writing are not built in to other subjects on the curriculum and this restricts progress.
- The very small number of pupils who receive part of their education elsewhere are monitored carefully and supported well by senior leaders, in order to ensure that they continue to make the expected progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is not yet good and requires improvement because its quality varies too much from class to class and over time. Too few pupils make exceptional progress because very little teaching is outstanding. However, the quality of teaching is notably better than it was at the time of the last full inspection.
- Where teaching is most effective, especially in Years 5 and 6, pupils usually benefit from well-planned and interesting activities that build on their previous knowledge. Teachers capture pupils' interest with well-designed resources; pupils show enthusiasm for their lessons and are eager to work hard and be productive. Classrooms are orderly, with celebratory displays of pupils' work and helpful examples of current work in progress.
- Some teachers skilfully elicit confident extended answers from pupils, while insisting on pupils' correct use of grammar and expression. At times, some teachers' questioning is not sharp enough to probe the real extent of pupils' understanding. Occasionally, too much time is spent collecting pupils' responses while the most able pupils are waiting to move on.

- Pupils make good progress when teachers challenge them to work things out for themselves and when the teacher is prepared to go over difficult concepts until learning is secure. Some teachers are extremely skilled at dealing with misunderstandings quickly and effectively, without interrupting the flow of learning.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with different groups of pupils, reinforcing pupils' learning with close questioning based on good knowledge of individual abilities and needs.
- Pupils know what their targets are but teachers' marking is not always helpful. Books are marked frequently and pupils know that they are expected to respond to their teachers' comments. However, the guidance given by teachers is not always specific enough. Sometimes pupils thank their teachers for the feedback, or note that they will try not to make the same error in future. In these cases, pupils do not have a specific task to try again, so do not learn from their mistakes directly and promptly. Lower-attaining pupils, in particular, are not given enough guidance with how they should respond to their teachers' comments and improve their work.
- Standards of pupils' presentation, handwriting and spelling are too variable and are not high enough. Too many older pupils still routinely write in pencil and their letters are not well formed and neatly joined up in a cursive style.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school site. They are polite and well motivated. Parents, carers and pupils told the inspectors that behaviour has greatly improved since the new behaviour policy was introduced. School records show that incidents of poor behaviour are rare and inspectors did not see any disruption to learning. Pupils hold doors open for adults and each other. There is no litter dropped and pupils clearly take care of the school environment.
- Pupils are lively and alert. They settle down quickly, listen attentively and most concentrate extremely well when working on their own. They work busily and productively and cooperate happily when working in pairs or groups.
- Good values are promoted throughout the school. Consistent policies to tackle bullying and bad language are in place and firmly implemented when needed. Pupils are very clear about the consequences for using insulting or abusive language. Kindness, tolerance and courtesy are reinforced through assemblies and lessons. As a result, there are very few recorded instances of poor behaviour. Rates of exclusion have dramatically reduced since the new behaviour policy was introduced.
- School records show that more pupils are receiving rewards for good behaviour. Pupils and parents and carers told the inspectors that they appreciated the introduction of the house system because it is fostering a sense of loyalty and healthy competition in the school. Pupils are proud to see their names listed in the newsletter when they receive rewards for their good behaviour and attitudes.
- Attendance has improved and is now in line with the national average for all pupil groups.
- Punctuality has also improved, as a result of close attention from school leaders who make a point of meeting and greeting pupils who arrive late and ensuring that they and their parents and carers are reminded of the importance of good timekeeping.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because in a few lessons pupils do not focus wholeheartedly on the tasks set and do not push themselves to do their best unless they are working with the teacher. A very few pupils find it difficult to concentrate when not being supported directly.
- Not all pupils take enough pride in wearing the correct uniform, particularly appropriate footwear, because not all parents and carers fully support the school's policy.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils are cared for extremely well and given appropriate guidance about avoiding risk and danger. For example, pupils are reminded frequently about safer use of the internet and social media. There are also prompts about being sensible and alert on the journey to and from school. Pupils know where to go to get help if they need it and appreciate the kindness and help they receive from staff.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her team of senior leaders have galvanised staff, pupils, governors and parents and carers into action since the previous full inspection. An optimistic 'can do' attitude and a tenacious capacity for hard work have already raised standards and set the tone for future improvements.
- Senior leaders have set up effective systems to improve teaching and check pupils' progress. The finer details of pupils' achievement term by term have been examined meticulously. School leaders can pinpoint individual needs and successes and clearly identify what needs to be done to improve pupils' skills and knowledge.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Plans to improve the school are thorough, ambitious and regularly reviewed. Senior leaders' top priority has rightly been to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers have worked together to improve their work; some have had individual programmes of support and some have had the chance to see good and better teaching in practice. As a result, achievement, teaching and pupils' behaviour are improving rapidly.
- School leaders have wisely identified and developed leadership skills in existing staff, in order to strengthen leadership and ensure that pupils' progress is not adversely affected by unavoidable changes in staffing. Teachers are set challenging targets in line with the school improvement plan in order to qualify for pay rises, which are linked to pupils' progress.
- The school has positive relationships with parents and carers. For example, parents and carers told inspectors that they valued the opportunity to visit their children's classes and take part in mathematics workshops. The school's partnership with the local infant and secondary schools is a real strength because it creates a strong sense of continuity for pupils in the community.
- Pupils' moral sense and their ability to be sociable, together with varied cultural experiences and opportunities for reflection and quiet time, are promoted through the interesting range of subjects and assemblies. All around the school there are visual reminders and displays about the world around us. The school's consistent approach to managing behaviour has led to pupils' strong sense of right and wrong.
- A strong focus on improving the outcomes for those pupils supported by additional government funding has ensured their rapid progress and closed the gap between their achievement and that of other groups.
- School leaders have made sensible decisions about how the sports premium funding should be spent. They are intent on ensuring that they get value for money from new gymnastic equipment in order to capitalise on the interests of the pupils and ensure that more participate in active sports. School leaders have not yet evaluated the impact of this initiative on pupils' lifestyles or performance levels.
- The range of subjects on offer at the school is a growing strength. For example, pupils told the inspectors that they were enjoying science more because they had the chance to do practical experiments and find out more first hand. However, there are missed opportunities in teachers' planning to ensure that pupils reinforce their literacy skills in a range of subjects across the school.
- Safeguarding and child protection meet all statutory requirements. All staff are committed to ensuring that pupils are kept safe and secure.
- The school has benefited from good advice and strong support from the local authority over the last 18 months. Advisors have endorsed school leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching and their assessment of pupils' progress. School leaders themselves now take full responsibility for directing improvements to the school, choosing appropriate levels of support where needed.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a good knowledge of the work of the school and have benefited from useful training to enhance their understanding of how pupils' progress is measured. Minutes of governing body meetings provide unequivocal evidence that no aspect of the school's performance is overlooked, including how pupils' attainment and progress compare with national expectations. Governors closely scrutinise information provided by the school and

then ensure that they challenge the headteacher and her senior team with searching and direct questions. They are kept fully informed about the quality of teaching and ensure that teachers are only rewarded if their pupils achieve well. Governors make sure that the pupil premium funding is directed towards improving achievement for eligible pupils. They have developed a better understanding of how to measure the impact of the additional funding by evaluating pupils' improved progress.

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	116244
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	423979

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	278
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Quinn
Headteacher	Nicola Tettmar
Date of previous school inspection	2–3 October 2012
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