

Purbrook Junior School

Aldermoor Road East, Purbrook, Waterlooville, Hampshire, PO7 5NQ

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils do not achieve well, particularly in reading and writing.
- Teaching does not always stretch the most able pupils or support lower attaining pupils effectively.
- The school's use of additional funding to improve the achievement of disadvantaged pupils has not been effective. The gap between their attainment and that of other pupils nationally is narrowing too slowly.
- Some pupils do not concentrate well enough in lessons and time is wasted.
- The school's work to improve outcomes for pupils has not been carried out with sufficient urgency.
- Leaders do not check closely enough that the work they are doing to improve teaching is boosting pupils' achievement.
- Governors have not been effective in holding the school to account for pupils' achievement, in particular that of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has gained the confidence of senior leaders, staff and governors by making positive changes, providing stronger direction and a closer focus on pupils' progress. As a result, teaching is improving.
- Achievement in mathematics has improved.
- Attendance has improved significantly since 2012 and is now above the national average. Pupils are happy and attend well. Many say that they 'love the school'.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out with no notice.
- On the second day of the inspection all pupils in Year 5 were on a school visit. Teaching in Year 5 classes was observed on the first day of the inspection.
- Inspectors observed teaching in 15 lessons and made shorter visits to several lessons.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, heads of year, subject leaders and a group of teachers.
- Inspectors met with the Chair of the Governing Body and had a telephone conversation with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the school's records of attendance, behaviour logs and documents related to safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's evaluation of teaching and information relating to pupils' attainment and progress, including the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those who are disadvantaged.
- The school's self-evaluation and improvement plan was evaluated.
- Forty five parents responded to the online survey, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to a number of parents at the start of the school day.
- Inspectors considered the 33 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to groups of pupils formally, in lessons and at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors evaluated pupils' work in lessons and a sample of pupils' books from all year groups was checked.

Inspection team

Janet Pearce, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Julie Sackett

Additional Inspector

David Shears

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Purbrook Junior School is much larger than the average junior school.
- The current headteacher has been in post since January 2014.
- At the previous inspection, in 2011, the school was judged to be good.
- The Chair of the Governing Body had been elected on the day before the inspection.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The numbers of pupils with special educational needs supported at school action is much larger than in similar schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is smaller than that found in similar schools.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium (government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or from service families) makes up nearly one fifth of the school's population, which is below the national average.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- The school meets the current government floor standards for pupils' achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, by ensuring that teachers:
 - raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly disadvantaged and more able pupils
 - take more account of the abilities of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs when planning tasks, and increase their rates of progress
 - are clear about what they want pupils to learn, rather than what they want pupils to do during lessons
 - adhere to the school's marking policy and provide specific tasks for pupils to correct and practise.
- Improve pupils' achievement in reading and writing by:
 - developing and extending all pupils' opportunities to read widely and improve their skills
 - providing more meaningful opportunities for pupils to write at length and develop their spelling, punctuation and grammatical knowledge.
- Improve standards of behaviour in lessons by ensuring that teachers:
 - take prompt action to ensure that pupils concentrate on their work throughout lessons
 - provide all pupils, irrespective of ability, with enough challenging and engaging work.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management at all levels by taking decisive action to:
 - ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is tracked more closely and that firmer action is taken when progress is slow
 - ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used more effectively to accelerate progress and that the school can account for its impact on achievement
 - judge the quality of teaching by its impact on improving pupils' progress and attainment
 - make sure that teachers are held more closely to account for pupils' progress
 - address deficiencies in the access to the school site.

Two separate external reviews of governance and of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Since his appointment in January 2014, the headteacher has ensured that the school's focus has been on raising expectations and improving outcomes for all pupils. However, the pace of improvement has not been rapid enough to bring rapid improvement. Actions to improve the results of disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs have not had enough impact on their end of Key Stage 2 results.
- School leaders have an accurate view of teaching and have brought about improvement. Nevertheless, their monitoring of teaching does not always check carefully enough if it is improving pupils' achievement, sometimes focusing on what teachers do in the classroom rather than the impact on pupils' learning.
- Before the appointment of the current headteacher, leaders' and teachers' performance was not closely scrutinised. As a result, weaker performance continued to be rewarded through salary advances, even when pupils' results did not improve. The headteacher is now tackling poor performance more firmly.
- Opportunities are missed to ensure that additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is spent effectively to improve their achievement. The school can point to successes for some disadvantaged pupils as a result of extra help in reading and mathematics. However, this is not consistent and, until very recently, neither school leaders nor governors were able to assess the full impact of the money spent.
- The school improvement team of year leaders, leaders for mathematics and English, the business manager and senior team have, over the last year, improved achievement in mathematics and writing. They have increased staffing in each year group, changed pupil groupings and reorganised the timetable.
- Heads of year and the leaders for English and mathematics demonstrate a sound understanding of what needs to be done to improve pupils' results and contribute effectively to improvements in teaching.
- Plans to implement the new National Curriculum are under way, but not enough attention has been paid to ensuring activities for reading and writing will engage pupils and elicit high quality work. The programme for religious education requires improvement. It does not provide pupils with enough opportunities to study and fully understand other faiths or develop their spiritual awareness.
- The local authority has been aware of the school's inconsistent performance since its last inspection and judges the school as 'medium priority'. The local authority leadership partner has provided valuable support for the senior leaders, heads of year and subject leaders.
- Most parents are satisfied with the school and a majority would recommend it to other parents. However, attendance at parents' consultations is low and a small number of parents are not satisfied with the way the school responds to their concerns.
- Pupils are taught well about what is right and wrong. They work and play together harmoniously. The school is rightly proud of the number of extra-curricular activities on offer and rates of pupil participation in clubs are high. Staff ensure that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal chances to participate. There are many opportunities to take part in sports, music and competitions.
- The school meets statutory requirements for safer recruitment, including checks on staff. However, at the time of the inspection, not enough was being done to ensure the security of the school site during the day.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - In the past, governors took an overly generous view of the school's performance and their own effectiveness. They carried out their statutory duties effectively, for example in safer staff recruitment. However, they did not challenge teachers' and leaders' performance fully and did not know enough about how to judge pupils' achievement. When the current headteacher was appointed, governors were impressed with his vision for the school, commenting that he was 'a breath of fresh air'. This was because he outlined his determination to improve outcomes for the pupils who were not reaching national expectations. The new chair of governors is equally determined to reform and sharpen up governance. She has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and is ready to hold school leaders to account for pupils' progress, teachers' pay and performance and the impact of pupil premium funding. She is acutely aware of the need for further training, particularly in the school's use of pupil performance data.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because too many become distracted in lessons and lose concentration, particularly when their work is not sufficiently absorbing. Although pupils are respectful and respond promptly when reminded to listen, some spend too much time on unfocused chatter.

- Pupils' play at breaktimes and lunchtimes is sometimes overly boisterous and goes unchecked by staff on duty. Some pupils are unnecessarily chatty when moving around the school in between lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement. Access to the school site needs to be more carefully supervised and controlled. However, there are strengths in the care of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Staff are vigilant and take swift action when there are concerns about pupils' well-being. Staff training in safeguarding and child protection is strong and there are well-managed systems for making referrals to the local authority.
- Serious incidents of poor behaviour, racism or homophobic bullying are extremely rare and dealt with effectively. Pupils are taught well about keeping safe when using the internet or social media.
- Pupils reported that although there used to be some bullying, this is rare now and is dealt with well by staff. Pupils also confirmed the school's records that there are very few instances of derogatory language or swearing. There are very few concerns from parents about behaviour in the school.
- Attendance has improved since 2012, when it had declined. Attendance for all pupils is now above the national average.
- Pupils are punctual at the start of the school day and at the beginning of lessons. They take care of the school site and are proud to keep it clear of litter. The majority of pupils adhere to the uniform code, although some do not support the school's stance on, for example, appropriate footwear or the wearing of nail varnish.
- Pupils are friendly, work together very supportively and are courteous to staff and visitors alike.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is not strong enough to ensure good progress for all pupils. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs do not make rapid progress because some activities are not matched well enough by teachers to their varied abilities, or to plug gaps in their learning.
- The most able pupils are not challenged enough in some classes. Some groups of pupils do not have enough work to do and have to wait while teachers and teaching assistants work with the other pupils.
- The teaching of reading requires improvement. Weaker readers and disadvantaged pupils do not have enough opportunities to read regularly to adults. Some pupils become discouraged from reading because the books they are directed to are too easy or too hard. Texts used in guided reading lessons are often of too low a level.
- Some teaching is ineffective because teachers do not make clear what they want pupils to learn. Aims for lessons and pupils' targets are sometimes muddled or too vague for teachers to track progress effectively.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved. Pupils find their mathematics lessons stimulating and make progress. For example, in Year 6 lesson, pupils were highly engrossed in investigating a game involving the ordering of decimal place values. They made good progress because the teacher demonstrated just enough to show them how to think mathematically and apply their existing knowledge. The teacher checked their understanding frequently throughout the lesson and made sure that each pupil was concentrating and participating to the best of their ability. She reminded them not to be 'passengers' in their learning: they were not allowed to let others do all the work while they daydreamed or wasted time.
- The teaching of writing has also improved for most groups of pupils. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, particularly relating to grammar, punctuation and spelling. As a result, pupils make good progress with this aspect of their writing. However, there are fewer opportunities for pupils to sustain accurate spelling, punctuation and grammar in meaningful extended writing. The school has worked to improve pupils' handwriting, but this is still too variable in quality.
- Pupils' books seen during the inspection were marked and up to date according to the new policy. However, some marking is not helpful because it is not precise enough about what pupils need to do to improve and does not give the pupil anything specific to correct or practise.
- The work of teaching assistants is inconsistent. Inspectors saw some examples of very effective teaching, in which selected groups of pupils worked with a teaching assistant to practise new skills and consolidate previous learning. In some lessons, teaching assistants routinely plan and work alongside the teacher, mirroring or adapting approaches to meet the pupils' needs. However, in some lessons teaching assistants are not directed to make useful contributions, for example while the teacher is talking to the whole class.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are warm and respectful. However, not all teachers insist on pupils' full concentration for the whole lesson. It is too common for pupils to drift away from the work, daydream or chat about things other than their work when they are not being directly addressed or helped by the teacher and teaching assistant.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement has been inconsistent for some years. While there are clear signs of improvement in the Year 6 2014 statutory assessments and in the progress of other year groups, these are variable across subjects, and in between different groups of pupils. Improvements are stronger in mathematics and writing than in reading, where progress has dipped, particularly for disadvantaged pupils, those with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils.
- More able pupils make variable progress. Attainment in mathematics is showing improvement and rates of progress increased in 2014. However, not enough pupils reach the highest levels in reading and writing by the end of Year 6.
- The performance of boys and girls varies too much. For example, girls do markedly less well in mathematics, particularly at the higher level, and boys do less well in writing.
- Although there are signs of improvement, the progress of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is not good enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not do well enough. Last year, Year 6 pupils' attainment in mathematics was approximately four months behind their peers in the school and 14 months behind pupils nationally. There was less of a gap in reading and writing, with some disadvantaged pupils achieving better results than their peers, but a gap remains nonetheless. The school can point to improvement in disadvantaged pupils' progress for those in school now, mirroring overall improvements, notably in mathematics. The school is not doing enough to close the gap, ensure equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination.
- Closer work with the feeder infant school has resulted in more accurate assessment of pupils' attainment on entry. The headteacher has implemented changes to Year 3 programmes of study to strengthen pupils' skills and fill gaps in their knowledge. Leaders rightly insisted on higher expectations in Year 3 so that current Year 4 classes have made better progress than Year 4 pupils in previous years.
- The school library has had a much needed reorganisation. A new librarian has been appointed and it is a welcome move that each class has a weekly session in the library. More pupils are reading widely and there are also opportunities for pupils to choose books with their parents at the end of the school day. Competitions and rewards for frequent readers are strong incentives and appreciated by pupils. However, lower ability readers and some parents told inspectors that pupils do not have enough opportunities to read regularly to an adult. As a result, some pupils are falling behind with their reading and becoming discouraged.
- School leaders were also able to demonstrate improvements to teachers' skills in physical education and sports as a result of effective use of the sport premium. Pupils have had good opportunities to try out different physical activities and sports. As a result, more pupils participate in, and are enthusiastic about, physical education and games.

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	116022
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	449237

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	374
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Claire Moase
Headteacher	Craig Williams
Date of previous school inspection	3–4 March 2011
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