

Ashley Junior School

Ashley Road, New Milton, BH25 5FN

Inspection dates

3–4 December 2014

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Pupils in all year groups achieve well. They make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- This is a rapidly improving school. The leadership has successfully tackled previous areas of underachievement. All groups of pupils, including more-able pupils, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, and those receiving additional funding, share in the good progress.
- Teaching is good and improving. Teachers mark pupils' work very thoroughly and use pupils' targets effectively. They show pupils clearly how well they have done and how they can improve their work further. Learning support assistants play a very effective role in and outside of lessons.
- Behaviour is very good around the school and in lessons. Pupils of all abilities, and from all backgrounds, are keen to learn, and they concentrate very well in lessons.
- All pupils feel very safe in school, including those vulnerable pupils in the Learning Support Unit. The quality of care and support for all pupils is one of the strengths of the school.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, ably supported by others in the senior leadership team and the governing body, provides determined and enthusiastic leadership in moving the school forwards. Other staff share in the drive for continued success. This has led to improvements in teaching and achievement.
- School leaders check the quality of teaching and learning rigorously. The improvements already made show that the school has a strong capacity to improve further.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This reflects the importance the school places on all aspects of pupils' development.
- The Learning Support Unit is very successful in helping vulnerable pupils achieve well in their work. They also make big strides in their personal development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although more-able pupils make good progress over time, occasionally, activities are not challenging enough for them to achieve as well as they could.
- Pupils have fewer opportunities to develop good writing skills outside of literacy lessons. This means that progress in writing, especially in subjects other than English and mathematics, is less rapid than it could be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 14 lessons, 10 of which were carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also made short visits to lessons and observed the learning support unit resourced by the local authority.
- The inspectors heard pupils read and reviewed work in their books.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other staff, pupils, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also talked with parents.
- The inspection team took into account 19 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's own survey of parents' views.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documents, including the school's view of its own effectiveness, the school's most recent data on pupils' attainment and progress, the governing body minutes, the school's plan for improvement and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Laver, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Lynne Thorogood

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school has a Learning Support Unit, resourced by the local authority, for the education of pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Some of these pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. The unit has the capacity for 12 pupils.
- There have been several changes in staffing and governors since the previous inspection.
- There is an independently run after-school club on the school premises. This did not form part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that more of the good teaching becomes outstanding, by making sure that there is always enough challenging work for more-able pupils in lessons.
- Speed up progress in writing by giving pupils more opportunities to write in interesting ways and in more depth, particularly outside of literacy lessons in subjects such as history and geography.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, other members of the senior leadership team and governors are ambitious for the school and determined to build on the successes already achieved since its previous inspection. The leadership has identified the school's strengths and areas for development very accurately, and the school's planning for improvement reflects these. The school is well placed for further improvement.
- Subject leaders share the drive for success. They play an increasingly important role in checking the quality of teaching and learning. They also provide effective support for colleagues to increase their expertise and confidence when teaching in the classroom.
- The senior leadership rigorously checks behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning, including in the Learning Support Unit. Following on from this, school leaders provide support for staff where necessary, and give additional help for any pupils in danger of underachieving. The leadership links teachers' pay awards closely to success in meeting targets and ensuring progress. Decisive action has improved the quality of teaching. Teachers, several of whom are relatively new to the school, welcome the increased accountability and are keen for the school to keep improving.
- Leaders also check attendance carefully, and have successfully worked to improve it.
- Pupils enjoy the way that the school organises subjects into themes covering varied subjects. There is also a good range of activities outside the classroom, for example visits and a range of clubs. These have a high take-up. The school helps many disadvantaged pupils to take a full part in these activities.
- Leaders give a high priority to making sure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to do well in their learning and also play a full part in the school's life. Good relations are fostered and there is no discrimination. The school has rigorous arrangements for child protection and all aspects of safeguarding. All adults are well trained and aware of safeguarding requirements.
- There is very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to reflect on questions such as 'what would I ask God?' in their written work. Pupils also reflect in assemblies. There is a high standard of music in the school, with a large number of pupils learning to play a musical instrument. There is specialist music teaching, and an inspector saw pupils of all abilities responding excellently to high expectations when making music in a lesson.
- Pupils learn about life in Britain in various ways. They discover something about different faiths and values. They also learn about long established British traditions such as respect for the law and tolerance of alternative opinions.
- The school uses its additional funding well to increase pupils' enjoyment and improve their progress. Additional sports funding is used effectively and helps to provide expert sports coaching. The school uses funding for disadvantaged pupils to provide more adult support for them, and this has significantly narrowed previous gaps in their achievement compared to other pupils.
- Links with other local schools benefit pupils. For example, higher attainers in mathematics benefit from regular teaching from a mathematics specialist from the local secondary school. Staff say that they have benefited from opportunities to work alongside teachers from other schools, although the leaders recognise that such links could be enhanced further. There are good arrangements to help pupils make a smooth transition when they join Ashley Junior from the infant school and when they move on at the end of Year 6.
- The local authority has provided very good support for the school since the previous inspection. The local authority has set up training for teachers. It has also provided effective support to make the senior leadership structure more efficient in focusing on all aspects of school improvement.
- The leaders are working hard, with full staff backing, to build on existing systems to track pupils' progress effectively and to develop new ways of assessing pupils as the organisation and teaching of subjects change further.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Training opportunities have enabled governors to become more effective in supporting the school and challenging the leadership, for example about strategies to improve the progress of those pupils who may not be achieving as well as they should. They are aware of how progress for different groups of pupils has improved over time. They take their responsibilities for safeguarding seriously, and fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They understand the school's data on progress and consequently appreciate how pupils achieve in relation to schools elsewhere. They are also very aware of the school's work on refining its systems for assessing pupils and the way subjects are taught. Through their increased checking of teaching, governors also understand the strengths in teaching and the areas for improvement. Governors oversee the process by which the school

measures teachers' pay and performance effectively. They know how good teaching is rewarded and how underperformance has been tackled so teaching has improved. The governing body assesses the impact of additional funding for those pupils eligible for the pupil premium and it also evaluates the impact of additional sports funding, which has had a positive impact on the increased take-up of activities and staff expertise.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. It is good around the school, for example at lunchtime, and pupils are very polite and welcoming.
- The behaviour of all groups of pupils is usually very good in lessons. The level of pupils' concentration in lessons and their desire to learn were key features of lessons which inspectors observed during the inspection. According to parents, staff and pupils themselves, this is typical of pupils' experiences most of the time.
- Attendance has improved, and is now above average. This is partly due to the excellent work of the home-liaison worker in helping and encouraging those parents who need support for their children to get the best out of school. All groups of pupils attend regularly, and there are rigorous procedures for ensuring this.
- Children enjoy taking on responsibility, as in the school council.
- Pupils know their targets and are confident in explaining how they help them achieve well.
- Behaviour is not outstanding, as parents and pupils recognise, because occasionally incidents of silliness still occur. However, pupils are very confident that staff will always tackle any untoward behaviour quickly and effectively. The school's records confirm this.
- The school has a series of positive behaviour strategies which ensure that the school is both an orderly and vibrant community.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Both pupils and parents confirmed this.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what different forms of bullying mean. They are confident that most types of bullying are not an issue at all, and the school deals well with the few examples of misbehaviour. There has been one instance of racist name-calling in recent times, and the school dealt with it effectively and recorded it appropriately.
- The school uses assemblies and lessons to teach pupils how best to be safe, and also gives advice to parents, for example about avoiding online bullying.
- The learning support unit is a haven for a number of vulnerable pupils, especially those with behaviour issues. Both the school and the local authority have ensured that the pupils concerned get a high level of care and support. The results are very evident in the pupils' sense of security and the hard work they do in the unit. The pupils are integrated into the main school where appropriate, for example in subjects like music.
- There are very good links with agencies outside school. This means, for example, that children in care get excellent support. This is also the case for all other pupils in the school.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good. It has improved since the previous inspection, as was evident from the inspection and from the school's own records, which show how the leadership checks the quality.
- The teaching has been particularly successful in improving the achievement of all groups of pupils, including those with special learning needs, more-able pupils, and those disadvantaged pupils in receipt of additional funding. Pupils' work in books also shows the improved learning.
- Pupils are very clear about what they are expected to learn in lessons, and about their targets.
- Pupils' work is marked very informatively, especially in their literacy books. Pupils respond to teachers' comments, and know what they have to do to improve their work even more.
- Learning support assistants give much-valued support to individuals and small groups of pupils. Inspectors saw this both in lessons and around the school, for example when pupils were busy in one of their regular reading sessions. Learning support assistants work very well with teachers, and also use their initiative when appropriate to ensure that pupils get the best out of activities.

- There are excellent relationships in lessons, which motivate pupils well. Parents and pupils acknowledge this as a strength.
- Teachers talked to inspectors about how the increased opportunities for professional development since the previous inspection have given them more confidence and expertise.
- Increasingly, there is some outstanding learning. Inspectors saw this, for example, in mathematics when more-able pupils were working on challenging problems involving the real-life application of numeracy skills. Pupils were able to explain their methods of working things out and enjoyed finding different ways of resolving problems.
- Occasionally, the work that more-able pupils do is not challenging enough for them to achieve their best, and so learning is more limited.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils join the school with varying levels of skill and knowledge. Since the previous inspection, there have been accurate assessments, verified from outside the school, which show that many pupils join the school with attainment similar to, or just above, that expected for their age. They increasingly leave school with above average levels of attainment, in response to the good teaching.
- Past test results indicated some underachievement by various groups of pupils. The leadership has put several strategies in place to tackle this, and they have helped to improve teaching and the use of assessment data. The result has been rapid and accelerated progress. Large numbers of pupils already achieve well, and increasingly large numbers are firmly on track to meet challenging targets. This is evident from observations, talking to pupils, analysing the extensive school data and looking at pupils' work.
- More-able pupils make particularly good progress. For example, some more able pupils benefit from skilled teaching in school and additional learning opportunities elsewhere so that they are on track to attain the highest levels in mathematics.
- Although there are still some gaps between the progress of boys and girls in some classes, these have significantly narrowed.
- Judicious spending of the additional funding provided by the pupil premium means that disadvantaged pupils now mostly achieve well. Up until last year, in some classes, the attainment of these pupils was up to two terms behind other pupils in English or mathematics, although it was in line with similar pupils nationally. This gap between disadvantaged and other pupils has largely disappeared.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs mostly make good progress. Data from previous years suggest that some of these pupils underachieved. However, a notable success of the school has been its ability to move these pupils on quickly so that they move off support. Then numbers of other pupils with particular needs join the school, and they in turn benefit from the high-quality support, so that the numbers of such pupils are more fluid than in many schools.
- Pupils in the learning support unit face several challenges, both personal and academic, but staff are very successful in both providing care and support and teaching them basic academic skills which will help them when they leave the unit.
- The pupils from ethnic minorities or who speak English as an additional language are too few to make any statistical comparisons with other pupils reliable. However, individually, they make at least good, and sometimes outstanding, progress, as they have for some years.
- Attainment in reading is above average and a high proportion of pupils make better than expected progress. Many pupils read confidently and fluently. The school keeps meticulous reading records which analyse pupils' reading and illustrate its breadth. Attainment and progress in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection, partly through good training opportunities for staff, some of which the local authority has provided.
- Many pupils of all abilities make good progress in writing. However, this progress is slower and more variable than in mathematics and reading. This is partly because teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop writing skills outside literacy lessons. Pupils take great pride in the presentation of their work and many write fluently in their literacy books. However, the same pupils do not get enough equivalent opportunities for in-depth and interesting writing when studying subjects with another focus, such as in a history or geography topic. Therefore, although pupils enjoy the activities, they do not always achieve as well when writing on these occasions as when working in their literacy lessons.

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	116488
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	449085

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	James Rand
Headteacher	Ian Rix
Date of previous school inspection	4–5 December 2012
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