

Christchurch Junior School

Clarendon Road, Christchurch, BH23 2AA

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- The headteacher and senior leaders have made sure that teaching is good, and that pupils learn well to reach standards which are typically above average.
- Achievement is good. Leaders have tackled writing, where standards were lower than other subjects, and this is now a strength of the school. Good teaching also ensures pupils are confident readers. Pupils have a wide range of opportunities which ensure they develop and use their skills confidently.
- The recent focus on improving the teaching of mathematics is proving successful; this is now a strength of the school. Progress is increasing quickly and is now good. Leaders know that marking is most effective in mathematics because they regularly check the quality and confirm that pupils are given time to respond to comments made.
- Teachers make good use of the information they have about their pupils' learning. They plan work which is interesting and which challenges them appropriately.
- Behaviour is good because pupils are proud to be part of the school and enjoy their learning. They particularly like the opportunities they have for wider experiences, through trips, visits and the many after-school clubs.
- Attendance has improved steadily and is now above average.
- The work of the resourced provision for pupils with complex communication needs is exceptional. The pupils who attend this part of the school make outstanding progress, both academically and in their personal development.
- Governors make sure their view of the performance of the school is accurate. They check that plans to bring about improvements are effective. They also check that all statutory requirements are met, including those to make sure pupils are kept safe.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress is not consistently rapid across all classes and year groups. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can and should do are not always as high as they should be. Some teachers do not give pupils enough time to think about their own responses to questions.
- Some teachers' marking does not give pupils specific advice on what they need to do to improve. Pupils do not always get enough opportunity to respond to the feedback they get.

Information about this inspection

- The three inspectors spent the majority of their time in lessons, looking at the work pupils were doing. They also looked at the work pupils have done over time, in their books, and listened to their reading. Some of the observations were done together with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at documentation provided by the school, including: senior leaders' self-evaluation about the performance of the school; plans to bring about improvements; minutes recording discussions at a range of meetings; policies and procedures, including those about how to ensure the safety of pupils; and reports from external advisers, about the work of the school.
- The inspection team reviewed evidence for the progress pupils make, including: teachers' records and the school's systems to keep track of pupils' knowledge and skills; senior leaders' checks and feedback to teachers about the quality of teaching; and a wide range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils, staff, leaders from across the school, and with governors. The lead inspector met with representatives from the local authority, who support the school.
- The inspectors considered the views of parents, through the 70 responses submitted in the past year to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, and by talking to parents informally. The views of staff were also considered, through a survey for adults working at the school.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Fiona Robinson	Additional Inspector
Terry Payne	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average junior school, with four classes in each year group.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Other pupils come from a wide range of ethnicities. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average. In addition, the school includes a resourced provision for pupils with complex communication needs, which caters for up to 16 pupils in two rooms. This is run by the staff at the school and is known in school as 'the base'.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is average. The pupil premium funding provided by the government is used to support the progress and attainment of these pupils. These pupils include those eligible for free school meals and children looked after by the local authority.
- Most pupils come from the adjacent infant school.
- At the time of the inspection, there were two trainee teachers in the school, as part of their training. These student teachers were not observed as part of the inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher is a local leader in education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils make even greater progress, and that this is consistent across year groups, by:
 - making sure all teachers use the school's marking policy to give pupils specific advice that moves their learning forward rapidly, and give pupils time to take action
 - giving pupils more opportunities to think about their responses to the teachers' questions
 - making sure that teachers hold consistently high expectations of what all groups of pupils can do in each lesson.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders have made sure that there is a clear vision for improving the teaching and learning in the school and that this is focused on the most important issues. This means that areas that need to improve are identified quickly and tackled effectively.
- Middle leaders are well informed about the areas they have responsibility for, and are well supported to identify key issues and bring about improvements. This is particularly evident in mathematics, where improvements have been rapidly implemented. However, not all middle leaders have been as effective in making sure that teachers use the marking policy to drive pupils' progress quickly.
- The curriculum has been carefully planned to ensure pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need. Pupils develop their physical skills, for example through high-quality sports and gymnastics because of the strong teaching and leadership. Music is also a strength of the school and pupils speak enthusiastically about learning to sing or play an instrument.
- The resourced provision, 'the base', is exceptionally well led, and all the adults who work with these pupils have an excellent understanding of their needs, hold high expectations and make sure they have equality of opportunities. Other pupils who need additional help in developing their communication are particularly well supported because of the expertise in the school. Teachers work closely with parents to make sure that there is a close partnership in understanding pupils' development.
- Leaders and governors make sure that the additional funding, through the pupil premium, is used effectively, to ensure disadvantaged pupils are well supported. This includes extra teachers so that these pupils get more help when they need it most, and gives them access to opportunities for wider experiences, both at school and beyond. As a result, they achieve well.
- Pupils enthusiastically make the most of the large range of activities for them to take part in, after school or during lunchtimes. These opportunities ensure that they have plenty of experiences beyond the curriculum in their lessons which develop their confidence. These include music, chess, dance, a wide range of sports, and computing. The many visits and visitors add further experiences which enrich pupils' learning. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well planned and organised. The wide range of experiences they get helps the pupils to learn about and appreciate life in modern Britain.
- Leaders have made sure that the additional funding for physical education is used well to train teachers, provide expert coaching and enable pupils to take part in competitive sports. In particular, this has led to excellent gymnastics, dance and team sports. Pupils are enthusiastic about taking part in a wide range of physical activities.
- The school works hard to make sure that all pupils have similar opportunities so that equality is promoted and any discrimination is tackled. For example, it has made sure that the topics chosen help boys to be enthusiastic about writing.
- The high quality of administration and the training provided helps leaders and teachers to be confident about keeping pupils safe, and contributes a great deal to the excellent care pupils experience, including if they have a bump or graze at school. The school ensures there is always an adult available if pupils are worried and need to talk to someone. This includes working with families who need support.
- The local authority works with the school to validate the views of senior leaders and the governors about the performance of pupils and teachers. This helps to ensure the school's views are accurate and consistent. Although the local authority provides a light touch of support, senior leaders value the training and support available. The headteacher provides other leaders with support, in his role as a local leader in education, and senior leaders have supported other schools in developing their mathematics.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have excellent skills and knowledge because they make sure they have undertaken appropriate training to keep them up to date with developments in education and the safeguarding requirements. They check that the information they are given by senior leaders is accurate, by visiting the school and talking to staff and pupils. They use this to ask challenging questions at their meetings, to make sure the school is closely focused on improving the teaching and provision for all groups of pupils.
 - Governors are particularly well informed about the requirements for keeping pupils safe and they make sure the policies and procedures in this regard are kept up to date. They check that the adults working with pupils are safe and appropriate to do so.
 - Together with senior leaders, governors have made sure that they consider carefully how the finances of the school are used, particularly the funds allocated to improve physical education and to promote the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. They take into account the performance management of

teachers when making decisions about how pay is awarded, so that any underperformance is tackled and the best practice is promoted.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' attitude towards their learning is good. They enjoy the topics teachers plan for them and are ready and eager to do the work they are given. Although, pupils keep their work neat and tidy, not all are as determined as they could be to make the improvements teachers suggest when marking their books.
- Pupils say that there are a few occasions when some pupils call others names, particularly among younger pupils. Any incidents where pupils fall out with each other are sorted out by peer mediators, or by adults if it is more serious.
- Many older pupils make the most of opportunities to apply for jobs or responsibilities, in the library, as school councillors and as sports leaders, for example. Pupils are enthusiastic about raising funds for a variety of charities, and particularly enjoy taking part in the enterprise opportunities supported by governors. The pupils' contribution helps to make this a positive, happy place to learn and develop.
- The behaviour of pupils in 'the base' is excellent, because adults know them very well and help them to understand how their behaviour affects their learning and that of others. These pupils have very positive attitudes towards their learning and experiences.
- All pupils understand clearly the school's approach to managing behaviour, which works well. Pupils need only brief reminders about what is expected, and most live up to the school's expectations readily.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that the school makes sure the environment is safe and they understand how to keep safe themselves.
- Pupils understand what bullying is and different ways it might happen. They say it is rare, but if or when it happens, they know how to respond, and adults help them sort it out.
- The safety of pupils in 'the base' is excellent because they are helped to develop the social skills they need, and are taught how to be safe when on trips and visits or with visitors. This gives them the confidence to enjoy the experiences available to them and to others.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils develop the knowledge and skills they need because teachers work well together to plan interesting work for them to do. Pupils work hard because there is a strong sense of mutual respect between adults and pupils.
- Teachers have good knowledge about the topics they are covering in all subjects, including literacy, reading and mathematics. They also know their pupils well, particularly those who need extra help. There is a strong sense of teamwork among all the adults and they promote good learning through their enthusiasm for what they are teaching. Teaching assistants make a good contribution towards pupils' learning and good behaviour.
- During lessons, teachers check that pupils understand what they are learning, and use questions well to probe where further explanation may be needed. However, not all teachers expect pupils to work to the full extent of their capability and this occasionally slows pupils' progress.
- Improving the teaching of mathematics has been a focus and the implementation of consistent approaches to teaching pupils about calculations, for example, means teachers are more confident and the rate of progress has increased. There is also a good emphasis on phonics (the linking of letters and the sounds they make) so that all pupils develop their confidence in reading and spelling more complex words. Those who need extra help with this get it quickly.
- Pupils say that adults help them if they are stuck, or if they need more challenge during lessons. Occasionally, some teachers do not give pupils enough time to think for themselves, and a few pupils rely too much on other pupils to provide the answers to questions the teacher is asking.
- Following the introduction of the clear and detailed marking policy, improvements have been noted in some classes. However, there are still too many occasions when marking does not explain to pupils what they need to do to improve further. Occasionally, some teachers do not expect pupils to respond to the comments they have made, or do not give them the time to do so. This means some pupils do not always

make as much progress as they could.

- Teaching in 'the base' is excellent; adults know the pupils extremely well and use a wide range of strategies to encourage and nurture their learning. Expectations are very high and pupils enjoy rising to these challenges. Consequently, pupils have a very positive experience of school and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection and are now typically above average for most pupils, particularly in reading and writing.
- Some pupils start at the school with very low standards, but many others with standards above those expected for their age. Whatever their starting points, all groups of pupils make good progress over time, particularly so in reading and writing. More recently, progress in mathematics has accelerated because of the improved quality of teaching and the increased confidence of teachers in what they are teaching. Consequently, standards in mathematics are also rising and are now slightly above average.
- The most able pupils are given good opportunities to work on tasks which stretch their thinking and push them to develop their skills in tackling much harder work. Consequently, they make good progress and more pupils than average reach the highest levels in reading and writing. Opportunities in mathematics have increased and pupils' progress is now at least good.
- In 2014, the gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in the school was larger than previously, because this group of pupils faced particularly difficult issues outside of school. Disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are working at the same standards as other pupils, and above those of pupils nationally, in reading and writing. In mathematics, they are very slightly behind other pupils, by about two months.
- Pupils in 'the base' make exceptional progress because the activities they do are carefully planned in the light of teachers' assessment and pupils' capability. Other disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they get, both in their lessons and the additional support when they need it.

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	113733
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	449235

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	513
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fiona Richardson
Headteacher	Simon Adorian
Date of previous school inspection	6–7 October 2010
Telephone number	01202 485579
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