

Peel Common Junior School

The Drive, Gosport, PO13 0QD

Inspection dates

14–15 January 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	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

- Standards are only average by Year 6 and not high enough compared with pupils' average attainment on entry to the school.
- Progress in Years 3 and 4 is too slow, especially for lower-attaining pupils. Some pupils have weak spelling, handwriting and punctuation because these basic skills are not consistently taught well enough.
- Gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally have yet to be closed in reading and writing.
- Some lower-attaining pupils' progress in reading is hindered because they lack confidence in applying phonics (the links between letters and sounds). They are not given sufficient opportunities to read to an adult in school.
- Teaching is too inconsistent to ensure all pupils achieve well. Too often lessons do not build on pupils' previous attainment.
- A few pupils do not always behave as well as they should when the work set is too easy or too hard.
- The rate of improvement since the previous inspection has not been quick enough.
- Leadership requires improvement because the leadership of teaching in Years 3 and 4 is not good enough.
- School leaders do not evaluate the impact of teaching and new initiatives for improving pupils' progress robustly enough.
- The school improvement plan lacks the detail needed to improve pupils' writing.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils make good progress in Years 5 and 6 because teaching is now good in these years.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics is improving and standards in mathematics were slightly above average in the latest Year 6 tests.
- Most pupils display positive attitudes to learning, behave well and feel safe.
- At the end of Year 6 in 2014 gaps between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils and their peers nationally closed in mathematics.
- The school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.
- Teachers' marking is a strength and much better than at the previous inspection. Marking is now effective in helping pupils to learn from their mistakes.
- Governors hold the school to account well. Their levels of challenge have improved since the previous inspection.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons, nine of these were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read in all year groups.
- Inspectors met with pupils to gain their views of the school. They spoke informally to pupils at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection, behaviour and attendance, records of how teaching is managed and the school improvement plan.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior staff and three governors. Inspectors also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 19 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janet Sharp

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is similar in size to most junior schools. The numbers entering Year 3 have risen slightly in recent years and there are now two classes in each year group.
- Most pupils are White British and few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above average (these are pupils eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and children in local authority care).
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school during the school year other than at the usual times is slightly above average.
- A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in September 2014.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school provides a breakfast club for its pupils.
- Peel Common Infant School occupies the same site as this school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Establish consistently good teaching in Years 3 and 4 so that pupils make good progress by:
 - ensuring teachers give pupils opportunities to write at length and to complete their work during lessons
 - ensuring teachers and support assistants consistently help pupils to apply their phonics knowledge when reading and writing
 - ensuring learning support assistants receive clear guidance about how to best enable lower-attaining pupils to write in sentences
 - ensuring that the most able pupils are challenged to achieve the highest levels they are capable of.
- Improve pupils' achievement, including for disadvantaged pupils, by increasing the proportions reaching average and higher levels by:
 - ensuring pupils' handwriting improves by using a systematic approach throughout the school for teaching handwriting
 - enabling pupils to make consistently good progress in learning to spell and punctuate their work and to use correct grammar
 - ensuring lower-attaining pupils are frequently heard to read in school.
- Strengthen the leadership of teaching in order to increase the pace of improvement by:
 - ensuring senior leaders and governors evaluate the impact of initiatives for improving pupils' subject achievement, including for groups in receipt of extra help and those supported by additional funding
 - ensuring school improvement planning provides more specific information for improving subject teaching and learning in writing
 - ensuring senior leaders' checks on teaching focus on how well different groups are learning and increase opportunities for middle leaders to help to raise achievement in Years 3 and 4.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are not good enough. As a result, the pace of improvement over time has been too slow.
- The school has capacity to improve. This is shown by the rise in pupils' overall achievement from a low base to average in the last two years, pupils' good progress in Years 5 and 6, rising standards in mathematics and strong improvement in teachers' marking since the last inspection.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher regularly observe lessons but their analysis of the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is sometimes overgenerous. Senior leaders' observations do not focus enough on the progress of different groups in the subject being taught. This prevents weaknesses in provision being quickly remedied.
- Senior leaders have recently increased the amount of support for improving the progress of lower-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4, especially in writing, including for some disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Leaders' checks on the impact of these actions on pupils' learning are not robust. Currently, their lesson observations consider the teaching of the pupils in these groups as part of whole lesson observations and do not spend enough time on checking how well these particular pupils are learning.
- School improvement planning focuses on the right priorities but does not provide enough detail about specific actions to improve writing, for example spelling and handwriting. This hinders school leaders in evaluating effectively the impact of new systems for raising standards.
- Where school leaders have robustly checked some initiatives for improving achievement, for example in specific reading and phonics lessons, this has led to good learning. However, they have not made enough checks to ensure teachers and support staff enable pupils to apply their phonics when writing and reading.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic and knowledgeable but their impact is more effective in Years 5 and 6. They have insufficient opportunities to observe and develop teaching in Years 3 and 4, given the higher need for improvement in these years. A few middle leaders are new to their roles, for example the special educational needs coordinator, and are receiving training to enable them to play a full part in raising achievement.
- School leaders have established routines to review teachers' targets, pay and career provision. Teachers' pay is linked to their performance. Teachers are supported effectively by planned training provided by the school, visits to other schools and coaching to enable them to learn from one another.
- The local authority has provided timely help for the school since the last inspection with limited impact. For example, it has provided training for governors and is currently working with the school to improve writing.
- The school is inclusive so positive relationships are clearly evident and discrimination is not tolerated. The headteacher successfully promotes the well-being of pupils. Leaders are fully aware that pupils' progress is still too much of a mixed picture across the school and are taking action to bring improvement.
- The gap between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils compared with others nationally has reduced considerably in the last few years. However, while disadvantaged pupils' progress in mathematics is now in line with others nationally, not enough pupils make good progress in reading compared with others nationally. Both writing attainment and progress remain lower than others nationally. The school would benefit from a review of funding for pupil premium to identify how to quicken these pupils' progress.
- The curriculum is broad and subjects are designed and taught in ways to develop pupils' literacy through topic themes and real-life experiences. Mathematics is taught more often as a discrete subject, where pupils are given opportunities to apply their mathematics to real-life problems. The extra sports funding is enhancing teachers' subject capacity through the development of sports coaches and an extensive range of sports, including dance, tennis and competitive sports.
- A range of good opportunities helps to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This serves to reinforce pupils' understanding of being British, the diversity of different cultures and the importance of democracy. For example, Year 4 pupils visited 10 Downing Street to present their letters arguing the case for children in an underprivileged country to have the same opportunities to attend school as British children. The school council is a forum for pupils to debate and help to make decisions about how to improve the school.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements. They are effective and include robust background checks on adults working with pupils and risk assessments covering aspects of school life, such as educational visits.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body is ambitious and determined that the school should improve to become a good school. It is led and managed well by an experienced and knowledgeable Chair of Governors who has significantly improved the governors' range of expertise. Since the last inspection the governing body has reviewed its effectiveness with support from the local authority and received appropriate training, including in understanding pupils' assessment information and in judging how well the school is performing in relation to other schools nationally. Governors ask challenging questions and show good levels of support. Members ensure statutory requirements are met. The governing body has its own regular monitoring procedures which include scrutiny of pupils' assessments and reports on teaching from the headteacher. Governors are aware of the strengths in teaching and that improvement in writing remains a pressing priority. They are limited by some of the reports from senior leaders on teaching as these have not identified weaker areas of progress quickly enough. There is not enough information about how well pupils are learning in the more recently introduced groups in Years 3 and 4 where these pupils receive extra help. Nevertheless, governors conduct regular reviews of the impact of spending on the achievement of different groups, including for those in receipt of the pupil premium. They are aware that while improvements have been made to these pupils' achievement there is more to be done to ensure their progress in reading and writing is at least in line with other pupils nationally. All governors have completed the required training for safeguarding.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and settle quickly to their work but, at times in Years 3 and 4, they lose concentration when activities are too hard or too easy. At other times, particularly when the pace of lessons slows in Years 3 and 4, they become distracted, start to fidget and distract the learning of others.
- The school's behaviour logs show few incidents of poor behaviour. The few pupils with poor behaviour benefit from carefully planned support. This is helping to promote acceptable behaviour and is successfully eliminating the need for exclusions. This group includes a number of later entrants who have been excluded from other schools, a clear indication of the school's comparatively good progress in this regard.
- Relationships are good. Pupils are polite, friendly and cooperative around the school and in the playground because they feel secure and are well known to staff. Later entrants are supported well so they adjust as quickly as possible. They say they feel welcome and enjoy attending this school.
- Pupils understand the sanctions for managing behaviour and as a result their conduct in classrooms and around the school is usually acceptable. Pupils behave consistently well in Years 5 and 6 where learning activities are well suited to their needs.
- The school has taken rigorous steps to improve attendance. As a result, pupils' attendance is average and the proportion of pupils with persistent absence is decreasing.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. The very large majority of parents who completed Parent View agree.
- Pupils are clear about what constitutes bullying and the different forms it can take, such as cyber-bullying or racist name-calling. They say instances of such bullying are very rare. Adults address any occasional unkind behaviour quickly and effectively.
- Pupils have good understanding of how to keep themselves safe, for example through streetwise training and regular e-safety training. Pupils are taught how to stay safe when participating in sport and educational trips and visits.
- Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable receive good levels of care to improve their own safety and well-being. Procedures for child protection are robust because staff are well trained and vigilant, and they keep detailed and accurate records. Staff are well trained in matters of First Aid.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not ensure that pupils make fast enough progress as they

move through the school.

- Teaching of writing does not enable pupils to make good progress in Years 3 and 4. Basic skills such as handwriting, punctuation and spelling are not taught systematically enough. The appropriate standards of grammar and handwriting are not insisted upon.
- Teachers do not consistently enable pupils to apply their understanding of phonics when reading and writing. This limits pupils' correct spelling of words and causes lower attainers to struggle when combining sounds as they read new words. Lower attainers are not heard to read frequently and regularly enough to an adult in school in order to help them make up lost ground more quickly.
- In literacy lessons, teachers provide interesting contexts and ensure pupils develop their vocabulary and speaking skills well. However, they do not consistently ensure pupils have enough time to complete their work and, in some classes, their writing books show some work is unfinished. Pupils are not given enough systematic opportunities to write at length, which particularly affects the progress of more-able pupils.
- The teaching of mathematics is good in Years 5 and 6. These teachers have good subject knowledge, high expectations and provide a good balance for pupils to develop basic skills and their subsequent applications to problem solving. Effective teaching of the most able mathematicians helps to raise these pupils' attainment to the highest levels.
- In Year 3 and 4 mathematics lessons more-able pupils sometimes repeat too much of what they already know. This happens when pupils complete too many examples of sums before moving on to harder work.
- The teaching of guided reading sessions has improved well since the previous inspection. All groups of readers, including those working with the teacher or independently, learn well. For example all groups in a Year 5 reading session made good progress. This was accomplished through the teacher's careful planning to ensure all activities focused on reading and built well on pupils' existing reading skills.
- There is strong teaching of phonics in discrete sessions for pupils in Year 3 and older pupils still in need of this. Staff leading these sessions have good subject knowledge and assessment is used well to ensure the activities provided build well on pupils' previous learning.
- The support provided by learning support assistants is of variable quality. These staff are sometimes limited by the work given to them by the class teacher and their own subject knowledge. They do not show pupils clearly how they should apply phonics when spelling, especially when teaching lower-attaining pupils in small groups. They do not consistently help these pupils to develop their ability to write in sentences and are inclined to do too much for the pupils.
- Teachers' marking is a strength and shows pupils clearly what they need to do to improve. Pupils have clear targets for improvement and their responses to marking now help them to learn from mistakes.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress requires improvement because pupils do not make consistent progress throughout the school. Progress in Years 5 and 6 is good while progress in Years 3 and 4 is slower and this prevents pupils' attainment rising more quickly.
- Year 6 pupils' results in national tests in the last two years have risen to broadly average from the low standards attained in previous years. However, this is still not good enough compared with pupils' average attainment on entry to the school.
- Standards are not rising more quickly because pupils in Year 6 have needed to catch up from previous underachievement when in Years 3 and 4. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is still not good enough.
- The most recent school assessment information, scrutiny of work and hearing pupils read show that the current Year 6 are on track to attain average standards in reading and writing and slightly above average standards in mathematics. There is clear evidence that the school has overcome the dip in writing for Year 6 in 2014.
- Pupils do not make good progress in reading and writing in Years 3 and 4. Lower-attaining pupils do not always confidently use phonics when reading new words. In some classes these pupils do not read regularly enough on an individual basis to an adult in school, which also limits their progress.
- Pupils' books show they do not write at length often enough in Years 3 and 4. This improves markedly in Years 5 and 6 but, by Year 6, a few pupils of all abilities still have weaker spelling, punctuation and handwriting than they should. This prevents standards rising more quickly. Grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting skills are not developed systematically enough in Years 3 and 4 which limits the proportions reaching average and higher levels in writing by Year 6.
- More-able pupils' progress in reading is improving through regular opportunities to read challenging texts. However, the proportions reaching higher levels by Year 6 are still a little below national averages. More-able pupils make good progress in mathematics in Years 5 and 6. In the 2014 Year 6 tests, the

proportions at both Level 5 and Level 6 increased and were a little above national figures. In Years 3 and 4 more-able pupils sometimes repeat too much of their earlier learning in mathematics.

- The progress made by disabled pupils and those with special educational needs requires improvement. Pupils are often taught in small groups but tasks are not tailored precisely to their needs. Sometimes their work is too hard in reading and writing. In younger classes, the lowest attainers do not develop their ability to form their letters and to write in sentences well enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils' attainment has improved considerably over the past few years in reading, writing and mathematics although some weaknesses in their progress remain in writing and reading.
- In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils leaving at the age of 11 was in line with other pupils nationally in reading and mathematics although one and a half terms behind in writing. They were one term ahead of their classmates in reading and writing and in line with their classmates in mathematics.
- However, like their peers, disadvantaged pupils' progress in writing was inadequate and fewer made good progress in reading compared with other pupils nationally. Their comparative progress in mathematics was good. Their progress overall is currently similar to that of their peers in school.

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	116175
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	453670

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	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glynis Alexander
Headteacher	Carole Bishop
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2013
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