

# Poulner Junior School

North Poulner Road, North Pooler, Ringwood, BH24 3LA

**Inspection dates** 16–17 December 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- Over time, pupils' progress has not been good enough. Consequently, pupils have not always reached the standards of which they are capable, particularly in writing.
- Pupils do not always demonstrate good skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling in their writing.
- On occasions, teachers do not set work at the right level for all pupils. This means that sometimes the work is too easy or too difficult for the different groups of pupils.
- Teachers do not always provide pupils with enough opportunities to write at length to extend their skills.
- Teachers do not routinely give pupils time to act on their advice in the marking. Teachers do not always check that pupils have made the necessary improvements to their work.
- Leaders, at all levels, have not checked the impact of the teaching on pupils' achievement accurately enough. As a result, they have not been precise in identifying the weaknesses in teaching and resolving them.
- Subject leaders, some relatively new to their roles, have had limited impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Governors have not checked on the work of the school for themselves in a systematic way. As a consequence, they are not able to hold leaders fully to account for pupils' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- The actions of the headteacher, the leadership team, governors and staff are helping to improve achievement.
- Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading. They read widely across a range of literature and are doing well in this subject.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly, demonstrating positive attitudes to their learning. They say they feel very safe in school.
- The support for pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is well led and managed.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning across the school, some in conjunction with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, they made a number of visits to classrooms, the dining hall and the playground.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body and school leaders. The lead inspector also met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 91 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and written correspondence. They met informally with parents before the start of the school day. They also took account of the 32 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school's improvement plans. They examined information on pupils' current progress, minutes of governing body meetings and the plans for the use of the sport funding.
- Inspectors heard pupils read, talked to them in classrooms and evaluated samples of their work.

## Inspection team

Sandra Woodman, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Shears	Additional Inspector
Sean McKeown	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is larger than the average-sized primary school. Pupils are organised in 12 classes, all of which are single age.
- The very large majority of pupils have a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils who are eligible for free school meals or children who are looked after. Currently there are very few children on roll who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The current headteacher took up his post just before the previous inspection.
- 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?

- Strengthen teaching so that all groups of pupils make at least good progress by:
  - ensuring that all teachers set work that is at the right level for pupils so that is not too hard for some or too easy for others
  - making sure that teachers give pupils enough time to act on the advice in the marking and check that they put it into practice.
- Improve achievement in writing by ensuring:
  - pupils have enough opportunities to write at length to extend their skills
  - teachers teach the basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling thoroughly so that pupils become accomplished writers.
- Increase the impact of leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - all leaders evaluate precisely the impact of teaching on pupils' achievement, to enable them to identify weaknesses and address them promptly
  - the skills and expertise of subject leaders are further developed in order to increase their impact on the quality of teaching
  - governors check systematically the work of the school for themselves so that they are better able to hold leaders to account.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not secured enough effective teaching to ensure all pupils make consistently good progress.
- Leaders check regularly on teaching, but they do not measure its impact accurately enough in terms of pupils' achievement. As a result, they do not identify precisely any weaknesses in teachers' practice and address these promptly.
- School leaders and governors recognise that achievement should be better, but considerable staff changes have slowed progress. Recent appointments have strengthened the quality of teaching and the pace of improvement is increasing.
- The changes that have been put in place in mathematics over the past year are making a difference. Rates of progress have improved and pupils are reaching higher standards. This strengthening picture indicates that the school has the capacity for further improvement.
- The newly-appointed year group leaders make good use of the information about achievement to hold teachers to account for pupils' progress. They have provided some effective support for colleagues and this is ensuring a greater consistency of practice across the school.
- Subject leaders, some relatively new to the role, are aware of what needs to improve in their subjects. So far, they have had insufficient time to evaluate the impact of their work and their contribution to school improvement is limited.
- Teachers' targets for improvement are appropriately challenging. Teachers know their pay increases are based on good performance.
- The leadership of special educational needs is effective because teaching is now carefully planned to meet pupils' needs. The provision for pupils supported by additional funding is proving to be more effective in closing any remaining gaps in attainment. This demonstrates the school's commitment to promoting equality for all pupils and avoiding discrimination.
- Learning activities across a range of subjects, together with visits and after-school clubs, enrich pupils' experiences. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well. British values are reinforced in assemblies, where pupils reflect sensitively on their feelings, behaviour and attitudes to life in modern Britain.
- Checks on the use of the school sport funding show that pupils are more active and taking part in a wider range of sports and competitions. Staff have had the opportunity to work alongside specialists to develop their skills in order to sustain these developments.
- Most parents are positive about the work of the school. Parents are appreciative of the approachability of the headteacher and his staff, and welcome opportunities to be more involved in their children's learning.
- All statutory requirements for safeguarding are met. Training for staff in areas such as child protection is up to date.
- The local authority has provided some effective support for school leaders during the period of staff changes. Consultants have provided valuable training for new leaders and helped the school to gain an accurate view of its performance.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well organised and have a clear understanding of where the school needs to improve. They ask leaders challenging questions about why teaching and pupils' achievement are not better. However, they do not check the school's work systematically for themselves. As a result, they are not able to hold leaders fully to account for the pace of improvement.
  - Governors understand how the performance of staff is being managed and how this links to pay progression. They undertake relevant training, mostly provided by the local authority.
  - Governors check that their policies and procedures for safeguarding are up to date, along with staff training in child protection. They understand their duties with regard to the recruitment of staff.
  - Governors manage the budget effectively. They have allocated more resources to support the recent developments in teaching and learning. They know how the additional government funding is being used to help disadvantaged pupils and develop sporting activities. They are aware of the impact the funding is having on pupils' achievement and their overall levels of participation in sport.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically, pupils are very polite, kind and friendly.
- Pupils are keen to learn. Overall, they show good levels of concentration and persevere well with their learning tasks. They respond quickly to teachers' instructions so that lessons usually flow without interruption.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because, on occasions, a few pupils lose focus when the work is not set at the right level, and some time is wasted.
- Relationships throughout the school are positive because the adults know pupils well. The school fosters good relations and tackles discrimination effectively.
- Pupils, parents, and staff are mostly positive about standards of behaviour. The school's records show that there are very few incidents of poor behaviour. The small numbers of pupils with poor behaviour are supported well, successfully eliminating the need for exclusion.
- A few parents expressed a concern about behaviour, but inspection evidence shows that overall this is managed well.
- Pupils say that they are proud of their school and enjoy all the activities and sports clubs on offer. They relish taking on a range of responsibilities, such as being friendship partners or house captains.
- Attendance is broadly average. Most pupils attend well and are punctual to school. The school has worked hard to improve the attendance of a few pupils and taken effective steps to reduce any unnecessary absences.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel very safe in school because the adults look after them well. Almost all the parents who completed the online questionnaire agree.
- Pupils are adamant that bullying rarely happens, but it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by the adults should it occur.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe from the different forms of bullying, such as cyber bullying, through effective training in school. They actively discourage any name calling or homophobic language they may encounter.

## The quality of teaching requires improvement

- In the past, there has not been enough consistently good teaching to ensure that all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Although teaching has improved, teachers do not always set work at the right level for all groups of pupils. On occasions, some pupils complete the work too easily, while some others find it too difficult. This slows the pace of learning.
- Teachers do not always teach the basic skills of grammar, punctuation and spelling thoroughly enough. This prevents some pupils from becoming fluent writers. They do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length to practise and extend their skills.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils about how well they are doing is much improved. Nonetheless, teachers do not routinely allow time for pupils to act on their comments. They do not always check that pupils have made the necessary improvements to their work.
- Over the past year, teachers and teaching assistants have begun to work more effectively to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, as well as those supported by additional funding. Teaching is more carefully targeted so that these pupils make better progress.
- Increasingly, teachers use their subject knowledge to good effect in mathematics, devising activities that promote pupils' skills and understanding. Pupils say the work is getting 'trickier' and makes them think hard about their answers.
- Overall, reading is taught well and teachers are developing pupils' comprehension skills systematically. They ensure that pupils read a wide range of literature and encourage them to try new authors.
- Teachers are keen to become more effective and are benefiting from well-targeted training activities to help them improve their practice. They use information and communication technology well to support learning.

**The achievement of pupils****requires improvement**

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because not all pupils have made good enough progress over time. This has been the case particularly in writing. However, the school has addressed this legacy of underachievement and current progress rates show improvement.
- Attainment in all subjects rose in 2014, most notably in mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 6 were above average in mathematics and reading but below average in writing.
- When writing, pupils do not always demonstrate the necessary skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling. This hampers their progress in becoming accomplished writers. They do not have sufficient opportunities to write for longer periods and so extend their skills.
- In the past, the most able pupils were not challenged consistently by the work they were given. As a result, they did not always reach the standards of which they were capable. In their current learning, they are being stretched more effectively and, consequently, making faster progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are making better progress because of the carefully planned support they receive. They are challenged more routinely because there are higher expectations of what they can achieve.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium have achieved less well in the past. By the end of Year 6, their attainment has been over a year behind their classmates and others nationally. However, they are making faster progress across the school currently and any remaining gaps are reducing quickly.
- Pupils read confidently and capably, with a clear understanding of their reading. They speak with enthusiasm about the range of new authors that teachers have introduced to them.
- More pupils are participating in a variety of sporting activities and competitions, supported by the school sport funding. They say they enjoy competing in events such as the football 'World Cup' day and the school's triathlon tournament.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115999
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	449163

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	337
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stuart Dingle
<b>Headteacher</b>	James Stanford
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6–7 July 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01425474590
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