

# Balksbury Junior School

Floral Way, Salisbury Road, Andover, Hampshire SP10 3QP

<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 April 2016
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- School leaders, supported by an effective governing body, have brought about significant improvements to the school since the previous inspection.
- Teaching has improved and is now good. Teachers know pupils well and this allows them to provide work that is at the right level for the pupils.
- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Work in their books shows that they work hard to reach high standards. The quality of their writing is particularly good.
- Pupils who have special educational needs achieve well. Staff are skilled at identifying their needs and provide the right support to help them to overcome their barriers.
- Pupils enjoy school and they behave well. They are friendly and polite and they get on well together.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They know how to stay safe from external dangers, including those related to modern technology.
- The curriculum is well planned to provide enriching experiences for pupils. It contributes effectively to pupils' understanding of life in modern Britain and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- There is a good choice of clubs and activities for pupils to enjoy after school. The range of sporting activities has improved and pupils have gained some success in inter-schools competitions.
- Leaders and governors are ambitious. They know the school well and have plans in place for further improvement. There is a clear sense of purpose among staff, who work closely together.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some leaders are new to their roles and do not make enough use of all available information to provide challenge and support to other teachers.
- Not all teachers follow the school policy to provide opportunities for pupils to respond to the guidance and advice they are given as feedback on their work. A few teachers do not always insist on the highest standards of presentation of work in pupils' books.
- Pupils do not make consistently good progress in every class. Not all teachers deepen and extend pupils' understanding by posing questions that make them think hard.
- The school's website does not provide parents with all the required information.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils in all classes make consistently good progress by:
  - providing opportunities for pupils in every class to act on guidance and feedback provided by teachers
  - challenging pupils in all classes by asking questions that make them think hard to deepen their understanding
  - ensuring that all pupils present their work to the highest possible standard.
  
- Strengthen leadership and management by:
  - providing those teachers new to their roles with training and support to help them to challenge and support their colleagues
  - ensuring that the school's website complies with all statutory requirements.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- School leaders have high expectations and have worked hard to improve teaching. They have created a calm, purposeful learning environment in which pupils and staff strive to do their best. Consequently the quality of teaching has improved and pupils achieve well.
- The school values all pupils and endeavours to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities. Consistent with the school's core values of respect and tolerance, staff ensure that all pupils are included and that discrimination on any grounds is not accepted.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have successfully addressed issues for improvement identified in the previous inspection and have ambitious plans for further improvement. All staff are involved in shaping the future direction of the school and setting priorities for further improvement. Teamwork among all staff is a strength of the school.
- Teachers are accountable for pupils' progress. They receive effective support from leaders to develop their skills and improve the quality of their work. Leaders visit classrooms formally as well as informally and provide guidance to teachers about how their work can be further improved. Each teacher has training and support based on their needs and aspirations.
- There is an effective system in place that records pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics. This allows staff to track pupils' progress and to put into place support for those pupils who are at risk of falling behind. Teachers work with each other and with teachers from other local schools to ensure that their assessments of pupils' work are accurate.
- Leadership of special educational needs is good. The leader has a secure knowledge of these pupils and works closely with teachers and teaching assistants to provide exactly the right sort of help for them. Consequently, pupils who have special educational needs and disability achieve well.
- Some subject leaders, new to their roles, have not yet developed the skills to challenge and support weaker teaching of their subject. They do not make enough use of all available information to target those few remaining classes where pupils do not make enough progress.
- The additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils has been used effectively to support both their academic and social needs. Part of the funding provides additional support in classrooms and part has been used to subsidise the costs of school visits and trips. Consequently these pupils develop confidence and achieve equally well as other pupils.
- Staff provide pupils with rich experiences that bring the curriculum to life and provide pupils with memorable experiences. For example, during the inspection, Year 3 pupils took part in a Roman workshop in which they learned about life in the times of the Romans. They thoroughly enjoyed this and spent time the following day reading and writing about the Romans, which consolidated their knowledge and understanding of life at that time.
- While there is a strong emphasis on English and mathematics, other subjects are incorporated into topics or themes linking subjects together. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills when learning other subjects and this helps to develop and consolidate these skills.
- There is a good variety of additional activities that add to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school has reviewed the use of the primary sports funding to increase the range of sports on offer. This has led to more pupils enjoying sporting activities that keep them fit and healthy. Pupils take part in a variety of local tournaments and competitions and this has increased their sense of achievement.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They understand the concept of democracy and they know why rules and laws are needed. Through assemblies and the curriculum they learn to respect the lives and beliefs of those from different backgrounds. This makes an effective contribution to the development of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has responded well to the support provided by the local authority. They have used advisory staff for training and development at all levels and consequently the required level of external support has decreased as the school builds its own capacity to continue to improve.
- Parents who responded to the online survey and those who spoke to inspectors during the inspection felt that the school was well led and managed and had shown marked improvements in recent years.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governors visit school regularly. They meet with staff and pupils to gain an understanding of how well the school performs. They provide challenge to school leaders and hold them to account for the

school's performance. Governors know about the quality of teaching and they support leaders' actions to bring about further improvements. They ensure that arrangements to manage the performance of staff are effective and that teaching is good. Governors know that, until recently, pupils' progress had not been good enough and questioned school leaders to find out how they planned to improve pupils' achievement.

- Governors' minutes show that they are well organised and use a variety of tools to help them to check the progress the school is making towards meeting the objectives in the school improvement plan. The headteacher's report to governors is comprehensive and provides a clear picture of the work of the school.
- Governors meet their statutory responsibilities for financial management to ensure that the school provides good value for money. However, there are some omissions from the school's website that need to be rectified. They are in the process of ensuring that all statutory information is included.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The headteacher has ensured that all staff have been trained to recognise signs that pupils may be at risk of harm. The school works in close cooperation with external agencies to ensure that those pupils and families whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable get the help and support they need. Any concerns about pupils' safety are securely recorded and promptly followed up.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good**

- Teachers plan together and pool their ideas to provide learning experiences that enable pupils to make good progress. They have raised their expectations since the previous inspection and most provide a good level of challenge to all pupils.
- Teachers use assessment information to plan work for pupils that is at the right level. They adjust activities so that pupils who have special educational needs and disability can join in with lessons and make good progress. The most-able pupils are provided with harder work and helped to extend their learning in both English and mathematics. This is seen in pupils' books that show a high level of attainment in both subjects.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to explain ideas and concepts to pupils. They question pupils and provide opportunities for pupils to respond with their own ideas and explanations. However, there are times when some teachers fail to ask pupils the sort of questions that make them think hard to deepen and enrich their knowledge and understanding, and this slows their progress.
- In some classes, teachers provide imaginative resources to support pupils' learning and this helps pupils to make at least good progress. For example, in a Year 3 writing lesson, pupils had books, word lists and illustrations to help them to learn about an aspect of life in Roman times. They used these resources to share and discuss their thoughts in preparation for their writing task. Consequently, they produced writing of very high quality.
- Leaders have introduced a new policy to support teachers in providing good-quality guidance and feedback to pupils. Most teachers make good use of this by ensuring that pupils have time to respond to any comments they make and as such learn from their mistakes. However, this good practice is not evident in all classes and so progress in these classes is not so rapid.
- There are good working relationships between staff and pupils and so pupils want to learn. Consequently pupils have positive attitudes to learning and readily settle to work. Teachers treat pupils with respect and act as good role models. They ensure that all pupils are included and that there is no discrimination.
- Teaching assistants provide good support in classrooms. They work in close cooperation with teachers and benefit from many of the training opportunities offered. They attend meetings and discuss with teachers work for individual pupils so they offer good support. They say they feel valued as staff members and play a full role in school.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils feel safe and secure in school and say they trust adults to care for them. This is reflected in the confident way in which they speak to adults, including visitors.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. They care for each other and readily help each other in class and in the playground. They are very welcoming of visitors and take pride in talking about their work and their achievements.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are attentive and respect each other's views and opinions. They enjoy school and this is shown in their attendance, which is above average.
- Most pupils take pride in their work and enjoy working hard. However, not all teachers are diligent in ensuring that all pupils produce their best work. In a very few classes, work is poorly presented with spelling and other errors that are not corrected.
- School leaders place a high priority on making pupils safe in and out of school. The deputy headteacher leads weekly assemblies to promote different aspects of safety. Pupils know about different forms of bullying, including that related to modern technology. They understand it is unwise to give out any personal information when using computers and to know to tell an adult should anything make them feel uncomfortable.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. One parent wrote, 'The children who attend this school are very well mannered. They treat each other with respect and children who fall out of this behaviour are dealt with in an appropriate manner and brought back in line.'
- Most teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and so pupils know how they are expected to behave. Pupils understand the rewards and sanctions but mostly they behave well because they know it is the right thing to do.
- There are a very few pupils who struggle to cope with some aspects of school life and receive extra support from skilled staff. They are provided with help in the nurture room where they work in a small group with an adult until they are ready to return to class.
- Just occasionally, when teaching lacks pace and challenge, a few pupils begin to chat among themselves and fidget with equipment. However, incidents of low-level disruption are rare. School records show few reported incidents of poor behaviour and there have been very few recent exclusions.
- The large majority of parents who spoke to inspectors or responded to the online survey felt that the pupils were happy and safe at school and that behaviour was good.

## Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen steadily and is significantly above average by the end of Year 6. Work in pupils' current books shows that they make good progress overall but progress is uneven in a small number of classes. Boys do as well as girls in all subjects, including writing. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Although historically pupils have not made as much progress as they should, there is now a much greater emphasis across the school on the amount of progress pupils make. Consequently, current performance information and work in pupils' books shows that pupils make good progress in most classes.
- The most-able pupils are provided with suitably challenging work and this helps them to reach standards that are above those typically expected for their age. From Year 3 onwards, pupils develop resilience, confidence and perseverance and this helps them to tackle new work with enthusiasm.
- School leaders have targeted disadvantaged pupils to receive extra support and consequently these pupils do as well as other pupils. They have grown in confidence owing to the help given by trained teaching assistants. Their attainment has improved and previous gaps have closed rapidly.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and disability make good progress. This is because of the strong leadership of this aspect of the school's work. The leader ensures that staff who support these pupils are adequately trained to help them to learn effectively. Sometimes pupils receive extra help in class while, at other times, they have special programmes of work to help them to catch up with their classmates.

- Pupils have made particularly good progress in writing. Pupils enjoy writing and express their thoughts and ideas confidently and fluently. Their writing is imaginative and engaging and they have a good awareness of the reader. Pupils' spelling, punctuation and grammar are mainly accurate and they use well-chosen vocabulary. They have plenty of opportunities to write when learning different subjects and this has helped them to progress well.
- Pupils enjoy reading and make good progress from their starting points. They read frequently in school both in their English lessons and other subjects. They have a range of strategies, including phonics, to read unfamiliar words and they use punctuation effectively to read with meaning and expression. They understand what they have read and express their views about books with supporting evidence.
- In mathematics, pupils learn new skills and concepts rapidly and apply them to solving real-life problems. They explain their thinking and apply reasoning to deepen their understanding. They are becoming more fluent in their quick recall of numerical facts such as multiplication, and this helps them to complete their work quickly.
- Pupils make good progress in other subjects as well as in English and mathematics. For example the quality of art on display is good and they learn about different times in history. Pupils in Year 6 used coding to create a programme to manipulate shapes using negative and positive numbers in four quadrants, demonstrating high-level skills, knowledge and understanding of information technology.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115852
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012263

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<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>	347
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Catherine Hegerty
<b>Headteacher (executive)</b>	Patricia Murley
<b>Telephone number</b>	01264 365 642
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.balksburyjuniors.ik.org">www.balksburyjuniors.ik.org</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:adminofficea@balksbury-jun.hants.sch.uk">adminofficea@balksbury-jun.hants.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9 January 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is larger than most primary schools and pupils are taught in single-age classes.
- The school is part of the Balksbury federation of schools.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below average. This is additional funding provided by the government to support those pupils who are entitled to free school meals or who are looked after.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and disability is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is a breakfast club that is managed separately and did not form part of this inspection.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils working in 16 lessons or parts of lessons, most of which were seen jointly with school leaders. They looked at work in pupils' books and they observed pupils in classroom, in the playground and as they moved around the school. Inspectors listened to pupils reading in Year 3 and in Year 6.
- Among the information scrutinised were records relating to pupils' learning and progress, school improvement plans and minutes from governors' meetings. Inspectors also looked at documentation showing how the school keeps pupils safe and reported incidents of behaviour relating to bullying and racism.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, three governors, including the chair of governors, and school leaders. Inspectors also met with teachers and a representative from the local authority.
- The views of parents were taken into account by analysing the 62 responses to the online survey Parent View. Inspectors also met informally with parents during the inspection.

## Inspection team

Joy Considine, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Debra Anderson	Ofsted Inspector
Christopher Crouch	Ofsted Inspector



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