

Highbury Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116196
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	338757
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	295
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Gratton
Headteacher	Diana Morrell-Glenister
Date of previous school inspection	13 October 2010
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Age group	2–11
Inspection dates	12–13 October 2010
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**Number of children on roll in the registered
childcare provision**

**Date of last inspection of registered
childcare provision**

Not previously inspected

Age group	2–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors observed 17 lessons and nine teachers. In six of the lessons either the headteacher or a senior leader observed alongside the inspectors. The inspectors held meetings with teachers, senior leaders, a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, and one of the partners who works with the school. The lead inspector met with a group of parents and a community partner. The inspectors observed the school's work, checked the school's safeguarding procedures and evaluated a range of school policies, curriculum documentation, teachers' planning, the school's self-evaluation, action and improvement plans, data and information about pupils and how the school tracks and monitors progress. They scrutinised 108 questionnaires received from parents and carers, 39 questionnaires completed by staff and 124 responses from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science
- the rate of progress pupils make in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of teaching, assessment and the curriculum in raising pupils' achievement
- the extent to which changes made by those responsible for leading and managing school improvement contribute to improving pupils' progress and the confidence of parents.

Information about the school

Highbury School is larger than the average primary school and serves Cosham and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils believed known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds, with a small proportion from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Pupils are taught in 11 classes. This includes a nursery which has two classes. The youngest children start in the nursery at the age of two. The school runs childcare provision both before and after school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The school does not have the capacity to improve. This is due to:

- the governing body's failure to meet statutory safeguarding responsibilities
- inadequate leadership of teaching, learning and assessment at all levels which fails to bring about changes required for improvement
- the governing body's lack of understanding of the school's weaknesses and the failure to monitor, evaluate and challenge school improvement
- pupils' low attainment and inadequate progress
- teaching, the use of assessment and a curriculum which fail to ensure that all pupils progress well.

The school's overall performance has declined since the last inspection. From a starting point that is broadly in line with that expected, pupils make insufficient progress and, by the time they move on to secondary school, the standards they attain are below average. There is not enough consistently secure teaching to move pupils on in their learning. Despite support from external consultants, the pace of improvement in teaching, learning and assessment has not been rapid enough. Recent changes to the leadership team have rightly placed an emphasis on improving the teaching, learning and tracking performance of English and mathematics. However, too little time has passed for these actions to have an impact on raising pupils' levels of achievement. Although the school collects data on pupils' performance, these are not used sufficiently well by all leaders and managers to raise standards. Interventions for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are planned but not consistently monitored. Data from these interventions are not analysed to ensure pupils are making expected progress. The staff are enthusiastic about new initiatives such as 'Every child a reader', but these are in the early stages of implementation. Parents are happy to approach school about how to help with their children's learning. However, they feel they could be better informed about the progress made by their children.

Most pupils enjoy school and parents also confirm that their children are happy. The pupils generally behave well and are friendly and polite. They show enthusiasm about topics such as the 'Smarties' project and artwork relating to the Tudors. Some pupils report that lessons are uninteresting and lead to their lack of enjoyment. Pupils take part in music and

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sporting activities and parents are proud of their children's performances locally; for example, their participation with other schools in speaking and drama competitions. The lack of confidence of some parents in the school was identified at the last inspection. The school has worked hard to engage parents. One such example is the introduction of a weekly time for parents to meet staff. Parents appreciate the 'Family Fridays' as an opportunity to talk informally to staff and representatives from community groups. Pupils' attendance is below average, with the number of absences authorised during term time higher than the national average. This is because a number of term-time holidays are authorised and pupils' first day of absence is not consistently followed up.

The governing body has failed to meet its statutory responsibilities in relation to child protection and safer recruitment. Governors have not rigorously monitored and evaluated the work of the school. Plans developed to improve school performance are not robust. Consequently, the school is not performing as well as other schools nationally or locally. The senior staff are aware of gaps in the leadership of key areas, and are in the process of recruiting. Middle leaders lack the capacity to contribute to bringing about the urgent changes needed. The school fails to ensure a coordinated approach to school improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the governing body meets its statutory requirements for safeguarding.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management so that leaders at all levels know how to analyse progress data and use challenging targets to eliminate pupils' low attainment and raise standards.
- Ensure that governors rigorously challenge and support leaders and managers, holding them to account for tackling underperformance and improving the achievement of all pupils to at least satisfactory.
- Provide a rich curriculum that is designed to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to at least consistently satisfactory or better, ensuring that:
 - teachers' subject knowledge and use of assessment strategies is secure
 - planning is differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils
 - pace and level of challenge in lessons enables pupils to make progress
 - other adults supporting learning are involved at all times
 - expectations of pupils' learning behaviour are consistently high
 - lessons encourage active learning and are enjoyable.
- Improve attendance to broadly average, reduce the number of authorised absences and put measures in place to follow up pupils' first day absences.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

School leaders recognise that pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are underachieving. Inspection observations of learning in lessons shows that pupils are not routinely moving forward in their learning at a rate related to their abilities

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and to national expectations. Leaders are pleased with improvements to the 2010 results for Year 6 pupils in English, which were broadly in line with national expectations. However, from lesson observations and scrutiny of work during the inspection, pupils across the school are not making the expected progress in English and mathematics. Performance data indicate that attainment in science remains low. As a result, overall achievement is inadequate.

Relationships are generally positive. Pupils appreciate talking to adults in the nurture group if they have a worry or concern. Pupils engage with their talk partners in lessons. However, they are not always clear about the focus of the activity and consequently, progress is too limited. The development of wider skills such as speaking to an audience supports pupils' confidence. However, because of the low standards in English and mathematics, the application of basic skills of literacy and numeracy is weak, and pupils are not well prepared for future learning. The school council and class representatives are respected by the school community. They play a constructive role in school life, such as putting forward suggestions for a common room for older pupils. Pupils understand how to stay healthy but this is not always evident from their packed lunches. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. They are enthusiastic about finding out about other countries and cultures through projects such as 'Water Aid' for Africa. However, their knowledge of a wide range of religious beliefs is less well developed.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

Although evidence of good teaching skills can be found in each key stage, the quality of teaching and learning remains too variable to improve pupils' attainment. Where teachers have secure subject knowledge, it is used to provide explanations to pupils. For example, in a literacy lesson for older pupils, the teacher supported pupils' use of adjectives so that one pupil wrote about the 'blistering light'. However, too many teachers have weak subject knowledge. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils discussed data from a chart to solve a crime. While this activity interested pupils, they were confused as to the mathematical purpose of the task. As a result, pupils made little progress in applying their mathematical skills. Learning intentions are identified at the start of the lesson but not always referred to during the lesson to move pupils on. There is too much variation in the quality and frequency of assessment during lessons. This means that work is not always matched to meet the specific needs of pupils. Responses from pupil questionnaires indicated that a small proportion of pupils felt that behaviour of individuals was not always positive in lessons. Inspectors found that the more interesting lessons, which constituted fewer than half of all sessions observed, engaged pupils. In ineffective lessons, pupils tended to chat while the teacher was talking and therefore were less motivated to complete tasks. Teaching assistants generally work well with pupils but are not always deployed effectively in lessons, for example during whole-class discussions.

The curriculum does not provide enough challenge in English, mathematics and science to ensure that pupils make good, consistent progress in these subjects. The opportunity for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is limited and this means that they do not gain experience in using their knowledge. Links made across different subjects are in the early stages of development and the needs of every child are not being met. Nevertheless, a good range of extra-curricular activities is offered and the take-up is high. A strong contribution to pupils' development is the lunchtime gardening club. The club provides the opportunity for pupils to learn about healthy eating and growing vegetables, and contributes to pupils' social development.

The school provides nurture opportunities that support pupils' personal development and well-being. For example, pupils self-register in the lunch club, which helps them develop responsibility for their own behaviour. However, as a result of lapses in safeguarding procedures, care, guidance and support are inadequate overall.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	4

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How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are not successful in ensuring that all groups have an equal chance to do well or that the much-needed improvements to the quality of teaching have been made. Partnership with the local authority has led to tentative improvements in the school's drive to raise attainment and progress, but the pace of change has been slow. Consequently, the impact on performance is limited. Even with the changes to the leadership team, leaders, including middle leaders, do not have the capacity to quickly bring about improvements needed. Results from staff questionnaires showed a lack of confidence in school leaders and managers. Partnership with parents is satisfactory and parents report feeling comfortable about talking to teachers. Parents appreciate the opportunity to join classes related to parenting skills. Partnership with outside agencies leads to support for families whose circumstances have made them vulnerable; for example, pupils are encouraged to participate in holiday clubs and activities. Links with other schools in the area are used to promote sports activities. The school encourages community cohesion within the school context, for example through the success of its nurture group. International work is planned through the curriculum and, as a result of visitors from other countries, links have been set up.

The governing body is supportive of the school. However, the strategic monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the school's work is not developed rigorously enough to raise standards. It has not ensured that all statutory safeguarding requirements are met, nor does it guarantee that all pupils have equality of opportunity in terms of their learning.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

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Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision for the youngest children in the nursery enables them to grow into confident young learners. Children join the nursery with skills broadly in line with those typically seen for their age. They make a sound start and by the time they have reached the Reception class, they have made satisfactory progress. Parents speak warmly of induction arrangements for their children and, as a result, they settle happily. Adults know all children well and key workers in the nursery carry out observations and monitor the progress of their particular children. There are planned learning opportunities inside and outside for both nursery and Reception classes which are enjoyed by children. During the inspection, three-year-olds were observed exploring and talking with confidence about objects that float and sink. There was much excitement when the plastic dinosaur floated across the water! In the nursery and Reception classes, there is an appropriate balance between adult-led and child- initiated activities, which encourages the children to be active in their learning.

The regular assessments undertaken by staff inform the children's learning journeys and next steps in planning activities. Risk assessments are carried out daily, but staff are not always clear about what action to take. The nursery and Reception staff have begun to work more closely together. However, the leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage lack a strategic approach to evaluating children's progress throughout this key stage and this negatively affects children's learning.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are happy with aspects of their children's experience at school. A significant minority of parents expressed the view that learning was interrupted by individuals displaying poor behaviour. Inspectors observed positive behaviour and attitudes from pupils in lessons, during playtimes and lunchtimes. A significant minority of parents expressed the view that the school's response to poor behaviour was inconsistent. However, during the inspection inspectors observed teachers in lessons using consistent methods to reinforce positive behaviour.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Highbury Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 108 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 295 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	50	46	30	28	9	8	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	50	35	32	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	35	32	47	44	11	10	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	31	52	48	10	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	38	44	41	8	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	31	49	45	11	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	44	41	39	36	8	7	13	12
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	39	35	34	31	9	8	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	35	47	44	10	9	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	29	43	40	15	14	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	28	40	37	7	6	5	5
The school is led and managed effectively	38	35	34	31	20	19	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	39	42	39	8	7	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 October 2010

Inspection of Highbury Primary School, Cosham PO6 2RZ

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team to your school on our recent visit. We enjoyed talking to you and finding out about your school. This is what we found.

You are polite and know how to behave. You enjoy your learning when it is active and teachers make lessons interesting. You know how to be healthy and how to keep yourselves safe. You welcome opportunities to take part in sporting, musical and drama events. The choir sings enthusiastically and the gardening club provides you with a great opportunity to learn about growing plants and working as a team. Those of you who have just started school play well together. You come to school as confident young learners but over all the time you spend at Highbury Primary, you do not make enough progress in your learning. The overall standards you achieve in your work are not high enough and are made worse by a significant number of you who do not come to school each day. Some of the teaching is good, but many of your lessons do not challenge you or make your learning interesting. The curriculum gives you the opportunity to visit places such as London but it is not broad enough to meet your individual needs. The school takes care of you satisfactorily, but the governors are not trained in the important responsibilities they have to look after you.

We have judged that your school needs 'special measures' to help it to improve quickly. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to focus on a number of areas to improve your achievement. The first is to make your lessons interesting and ensure your curriculum gives each one of you the opportunity to achieve well. We have asked the governors to put in place the training they need to know how to keep you safe. We have also asked the leaders at all levels in your school to contribute strongly to improving your school's performance so that your school does as well as other schools.

Inspectors will visit again to check on the progress being made. I am sure you will all do all you can by behaving well in lessons and trying very hard with your learning.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech

Her Majesty's Inspector

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