



# Newbridge Junior School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 116227  
**Local Authority** Portsmouth  
**Inspection number** 290462  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Pye

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior	<b>School address</b>	New Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Portsmouth
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11		PO2 7RW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 829424
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	359	<b>Fax number</b>	02392 872977
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs C McGovern and Mr G Wade
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs C Stevens
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 November 2002		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This is a larger than average junior school. Most pupils come from the older, terraced housing that surrounds the school. The numbers of pupils entitled to free school meals has risen since the last inspection and is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average, although the number with statements of special educational need is below average. The pupils are of predominantly White British background; there are below average numbers of pupils from other ethnic backgrounds, but this is gradually changing. The current headteacher was appointed within the last year.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. The pupils' personal development and well being are good because of the strong care, guidance and support it provides. A wide range of outside agencies and partners is used to give good academic and pastoral support to pupils. A parent accurately wrote, 'since the present headteacher has been appointed the standards of behaviour have gone up, and the children respect that'. The role of the behaviour support manager has been developed and pupils now behave well and adopt positive attitudes to their school life. This has helped lay the basis for the recent improvements in their academic performance.

The positive impact of the headteacher and the emerging management team is further demonstrated by the improving standards and achievement. Measures taken to improve teachers' understanding of how to use assessment data have resulted in the more accurate tracking of pupils' progress and more effective target setting. The underachievement and resulting decline in standards over recent years has now been arrested. School data, lesson observations and work seen during the inspection confirms this improving picture. Overall, in 2006, standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 were broadly average. Achievement is satisfactory although it is less secure in mathematics where standards remain below average.

Senior managers effectively monitor teaching and learning and give good feedback. This has contributed to teaching and learning now being satisfactory with some good aspects. The use of assessment to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils is more secure, although there are inconsistencies in the quality of work planned for pupils whose first language is not English, and in the pace of some lessons.

There is an increased sense of responsibility amongst staff. Subject managers and year leaders are more closely monitoring their areas of responsibility. Some lack experience and training to ensure that monitoring and evaluation leads to sufficiently detailed analysis. However, self-evaluation approaches are now well embedded and future planning is taking place. The curriculum is satisfactory and moves have been made to improve pupils' motivation. Boys have reacted particularly well to the use of the interactive whiteboards and there is a renewed emphasis on investigations and problem solving approaches in mathematics. These measures, along with improving achievement, an effective governing body and school management team, indicate a good capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and achievement in English, science and particularly mathematics
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good across the school
- Ensure that subject managers and year leaders receive training to enable them to carry out their monitoring and evaluation roles effectively
- Improve teachers' planning for pupils whose first language is not English.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement is satisfactory. The 2006 national tests at the end of Year 6 show that the majority of pupils made satisfactory progress and attained average standards overall. This is an improvement on previous years when pupils did not make as good progress as they should. This was partly because of shortcomings in the use of assessment and the tracking of pupils' performance.

Inspection evidence shows that the decline has been halted as a consequence of the changes introduced by senior management. The school has identified that some pupils in the current Year 6 are struggling to make up the ground lost in previous years and consequently additional support is being given to them. Elsewhere pupils are progressing satisfactorily, although it is slower in mathematics where teaching has been weaker.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well. They do so as a consequence of good management which identifies their needs at an early stage and builds in appropriate intervention strategies. This additional support includes some good small group and one-to-one work conducted by teaching assistants. Teachers' planning does not always meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language and their progress is often uneven. Girls outperform boys but the gap is now closing.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils show enthusiasm for their physical education lessons and for after-school sport activities. Overall they have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The behaviour manager is highly regarded by pupils who will approach him about any problems. Pupils confirm that bullying is rare and any incidents are quickly dealt with by staff. They say that behaviour has certainly improved and during the inspection it was judged good. Most pupils enjoy coming to school with one pupil saying, 'teachers are kind and it's a friendly, happy school'. Attendance is improving slowly but remains below average.

Social, moral and cultural education is good, although there are missed opportunities for pupils to reflect on life and to develop spiritually. Pupils contribute well to their local community, particularly through their music, singing and charity work. Within school they enjoy acting as playground 'buddies'. The pupils respond well to being school councillors although opportunities to further develop their citizenship skills are sometimes missed. Pupils are being adequately prepared for later life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving. Pupils' improved progress is resulting from teachers making better use of assessment data to plan work that builds on what pupils already know. However, the quality of planning to meet the needs of pupils whose first language is not English is inconsistent, as is the pace of some lessons.

Good behaviour management skills contribute to positive relationships, and pupils are happy to get involved in lessons. They say their views are listened to and respected. Pupils know what they are expected to learn because teachers make clear to them their learning objectives and targets. Teaching assistants give good support to the pupils and work particularly effectively with small groups. On occasions a minority of pupils when left to work independently lose concentration. Pupils' motivation is increased because teachers plan good opportunities for the use of interactive whiteboards in lessons, for example in mathematics.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The school recognised that the needs of many pupils were not being met by the curriculum. As a result, changes have been successfully introduced, such as in the planning of mathematics and the school focus on writing and reading. Consequently, standards are rising and, for example, the gap between boys and girls' achievement is closing. The curriculum is now satisfactory, with some good aspects. The pupils' awareness of safety is well provided for through a comprehensive personal, health and social education programme. There is good enrichment. Pupils enthusiastically attend a wide range of after-school clubs and enjoy local visits, such as to the Roman palace at Fishbourne. Music education is particularly strong, with no better evidence than when pupils sing in preparation for their carol service, and in a parent's view that her son 'has great opportunities to participate in music, choir and to go out to events'.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Good quality care, guidance and support contribute well to pupils' personal development and well-being. Parents value the care given to their children, with one writing, 'the school is caring towards the children, helpful, and has kept me informed'. The school maximises the use of specialist staff and external agencies to provide a wide range of care and support for pupils, including vulnerable children. Particularly effective is the support provided by the school's welfare assistant, and the work of the behaviour manager, who have helped reduce poor behaviour and provide good support for pupils at risk. Pupils say they know who to approach if they have a problem, that the school quickly responds to their concerns, and that they feel safe. Provision

for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. Pupils know their targets and most know how to use them to improve their work in English and mathematics.

Rigorous procedures for health and safety and child protection are in place.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with some strengths. The high quality leadership of the new headteacher has established a clear vision which is shared by staff, governors and parents. The commitment to improving standards and achievement is given a high priority and is having a positive impact. The focus on raising standards in English has been particularly effective, as has the introduction of systems that more accurately identify pupil progress and those pupils who need extra support. Behaviour has also been improved.

The headteacher has extended the role of middle managers to make them more accountable for achievement and standards. They are now involved in monitoring and evaluation and identifying areas for development. However, not all have sufficient experience or training to carry out these new roles to full effect. Meanwhile, senior managers carry out rigorous monitoring which involves lesson observations, analysis of assessment information and the overseeing of teachers' planning. This is helping the school to accurately identify what it has to do to further improve standards. Such monitoring led the headteacher to seek a programme of intensive additional support from the local authority, designed to raise the performance of the school. The subsequent actions taken are now impacting on the quality of teaching, the use of assessment and pupils' performance. The school recognises that pockets of underachievement remain amongst older pupils, and in mathematics. Consequently a whole-school focus on mathematics has been established and there are strategies in place to give further support to these pupils. All staff now have performance management targets which are appropriately linked to pupil performance and professional development.

The governors give good support to the school. Their knowledge of the school is particularly well advanced by the regular reports from subject managers. This contributes to them being able to raise relevant questions of the school.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for making us welcome during our recent visit to your school. We enjoyed talking to you and learnt much from what you had to tell us. We hope your carol concert goes well - we really enjoyed your singing.

We believe that your school provides you with a satisfactory education and that it is improving.

- There are many good features. Your headteacher and her staff have brought about many improvements.
- You are now making better progress in your work.
- You told us how much you enjoy school and that the teachers make lessons fun for you. You certainly like the interactive white boards!
- Your behaviour has improved.
- Those of you who find learning difficult or who are disabled are making good progress.
- The school looks after you well and a good range of people help you and support your learning.
- How well you are using your targets to improve your work.

We have asked the school to continue to improve the standards of your work, particularly in mathematics. You could help by telling your teachers when the work is too easy or too hard for you. We have also asked that the school makes sure that you all have good lessons in which the work is challenging and helps you to make good progress.

Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead inspector