

# Wimborne Junior School

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 116217          |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Portsmouth      |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 312220          |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 10 October 2008 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | 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 category</b>                    | Community                            |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 7–11                                 |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                                |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                      |
| School (total)                            | 303                                  |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                   |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mrs Niki Jones                       |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Mr James Ridge                       |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 21 June 2004                         |
| <b>School address</b>                     | Wimborne Road<br>Southsea<br>PO4 8DE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 02392 733 784                        |
| <b>Fax number</b>                         | 02392 873 744                        |

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the impact of the school's work on standards and achievement in mathematics and writing
- how well school managers at all levels, monitor and evaluate their work
- how well pupils know how to improve their work.

The inspector gathered evidence from lesson observations, pupils' work, school documentation and assessment data and parent questionnaires. Discussions with staff, pupils, school leaders and parents also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given its self evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Description of the school

Pupils in this larger than average junior school are of predominantly White British heritage. The numbers of pupils who have English as an additional language or come from an ethnic minority group are currently below average. However, the proportion of both groups is increasing. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also increasing but remains below the national average. These consist mainly of pupils with specific (dyslexia) and moderate learning difficulties. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The school has been nationally recognised through the Activemark, Artsmark Gold and Healthy School awards, and is an Investors in People organisation. A privately run breakfast and after-school club is situated on the school site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Wimborne school provides a good education for its pupils. There are some outstanding aspects in the areas of pupils' personal development, the curriculum and the pastoral care of pupils. Parents overwhelmingly support the school. They appreciate the excellent partnership arrangements that the school has established. For example, pupils benefit from a wide range of sporting links. Also, older pupils are trained as Young Sports Leaders and help coach younger pupils in another school. One parent wrote, 'The whole ethos of the school is positive, it promotes good manners, respect, thinking about others, responsibility and pride. There is so much more to this school than academic achievement - although that side is good too!'

Standards on entry to the school have varied, but in recent years are increasingly above average. In the 2007 national tests at the end of Year 6, standards were well above average and pupils achieved very well. Pupils react particularly well to the practical aspects of the science curriculum where there has been a trend of well above average standards in recent years. In English and mathematics, standards have been more varied although they have improved in recent years. The school has correctly identified a trend that sees boys outperforming girls in mathematics and the reverse happening in writing. To enable improvements, changes have been made to the curriculum, for example, more texts have been introduced in English to help motivate boys to write. However, the school acknowledges that there is still more to do, especially in focusing their monitoring on the tracking of the progress of these pupil groups. Provisional test results at the end of Year 6 in 2008 show that standards dipped to average. However, there were almost a quarter of pupils with learning difficulties in that cohort, with many arriving late into the school. Consequently, this reflected good achievement given the pupils' starting points.

Consistently good teaching ensures that the pupils achieve well, and the standards in work seen are above average. Pupils want to get involved in lessons because relationships are very positive. Teachers plan lessons that motivate pupils and meet their different learning styles. In one English lesson, to encourage and challenge pupils to use more imaginative vocabulary, sand was provided for pupils to feel and describe. Good questioning by teachers challenges pupils and reflects a secure subject knowledge. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because teaching assistants have good guidance, and are very active during lessons encouraging and challenging pupils well. Marking is very supportive of pupils, and pupils benefit from some teachers, but not all, giving a clear idea about how to improve their work.

The school has worked successfully to challenge and motivate pupils with a varied and very effective curriculum. Pupils learn well because they are presented with a range of different experiences. Some excellent links are made between subjects, for example, pupils apply musical skills during their history focus on the Tudors. Their personal development is extremely well encouraged through a curriculum that has been specifically designed to give pupils choices. This is seen in the approach to homework, where pupils and their teacher negotiate a range of possible work that arises from class activities. The pupils choose an activity that suits their learning style and they are then encouraged to be creative. For example, in geography, after examining a contrasting environment, one pupil developed a series of 'snap' playing cards. One parent wrote, 'Homework is enjoyable as they are given a choice of levels and how to present it - written, poems, models'; the imaginative holiday boxes reflect the success of this approach. Theme weeks help pupils to develop a deeper knowledge of a number of varied activities. They have an excellent knowledge of how to keep healthy and safe through such events as the Health and Safety week. On the day of the inspection, pirates and witches abounded, as pupils, with

obvious enthusiasm, came dressed in their favourite book character. The school use a very good range of strategies and external agencies to encourage pupils to read; book bingo and a prize draw linked to visits to the local library, were mentioned during the Book Week assembly.

Various decision-making opportunities help underpin pupils' outstanding personal development. These are linked to the excellent opportunities pupils have to contribute to their community. They act as class and school councillors and governor associates and consequently feel that they have a voice in the running of the school. They feel they are valued and their views appreciated and acted upon. They enjoy school and attendance is above average. The good standards of basic skills together with the very good opportunities they have to take decisions and work in teams, help prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage in their education.

The pastoral care, support and guidance of pupils is excellent. Parents and pupils feel very well supported, and pupils speak of feeling safe and knowing who to approach if they have a problem. There is particularly strong support and encouragement for pupil achievement in a wide range of situations, both in and out of school. Whilst the school ensures equal opportunities for all pupils, including visiting the local football club to participate in its anti-racism campaign, and new facilities to allow improved access for the disabled, it has yet to overcome the difference in progress in mathematics and writing for girls and boys. Most, but not all pupils know their long-term learning targets, and say that teachers occasionally miss opportunities to refer to them in lessons other than, for example, literacy.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The very experienced headteacher and his senior managers have established, and shared a very clear vision for school development. Consequently, team work is good and has resulted in improving standards since the last inspection. The school is not complacent or inward looking. A long-term link with a university has resulted in the school being nationally recognised for its work in encouraging the pupils to have their say in school life. This has had a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and their attitudes to learning. For example, pupils, in lessons, have to evaluate what they have achieved and decide for themselves whether to accept more challenging work. When asked if this means that they take 'the easy route', pupils were adamant that this was not so. One pupil said, 'I hate when work is too easy, I get bored'. The school has embedded monitoring and evaluation systems that identify relevant areas for development, and these are well linked to the performance management and training of staff. In some development planning the impact of the school's work is difficult to identify because the success criteria, against which progress can be judged, are not sufficiently measurable. Some good pupil tracking systems are in place that allow for the early recognition of pupils requiring additional support. Although, pupil progress meetings take place with year teams, there are insufficiently formal procedures for holding teachers individually responsible for the progress of their pupils and of pupil groups. Governance is good. The actions of leaders at all levels in evaluating the impact of their work, in improving academic standards and the personal development of pupils, and using external partners to benefit standards support a good capacity to further improve the school.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure that there is a more regular and consistent focus on the progress of boys in writing and girls in mathematics.
- Improve the use of the tracking of individual pupil progress by introducing more formal meetings between individual class teachers and senior management.

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## Annex A

**Inspection judgements**

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall |
|---|----------------|

**Overall effectiveness**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 2   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection  | Yes |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?   | 1   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements   | 2   |

**Achievement and standards**

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

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 1 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 1 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education  | 2 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community                                    | 1 |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 |

## The quality of provision

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 1 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?   | 2 |

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 2   |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards  | 2   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated   | 3   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?   | 2   |
| How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 2   |
| 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  |



**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

22 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wimborne Junior School, Southsea, PO4 8DE

Thank you for your warm welcome during my recent visit to your school. Like you and your parents, I believe you go to a good school.

Here is a list of the things that I particularly liked.

- The way the school encourages you to develop as young people is excellent. I liked the many ways you have to tell the school what you feel, and that you can decide many important things for yourself. Not many pupils have such good opportunities to decide on things like accepting a harder challenge in lessons, what homework task they would like, or take part in governor meetings. You could help your teachers by telling them when the work is too easy or too hard.
- When you act as school and class councillors, and governor associates, you make an outstanding contribution to the community. Well done!
- You work hard and the standard of your work is above that normally expected for pupils of your age. You progress well because teaching is good.
- You told me that you feel safe and that the adults respect you and care for you.
- Your school makes use of an outstanding number of outside partners who help to support you. I like the range of sports that you experience and that you get the chance to develop as Young Sports Leaders.

Even good schools can improve. I have asked your school to look at two things.

- To look more closely at how well boys achieve when they write, and how well girls progress in mathematics.
- How it can track your individual progress more regularly through meetings between managers and teachers.

Thank you once again and I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead Inspector