

# Herne Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115940
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	319467
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 June 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Marshall

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	423
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Maureen Page
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Tony Markham
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Love Lane Petersfield GU31 4BP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01730 263746
<b>Fax number</b>	01730 268448

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Herne Junior is larger than most primary schools. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average and a very small proportion speak English as an additional language or come from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is higher than the national average. Having led and managed the school in an acting capacity since January 2006, the current substantive headteacher took up his post in January 2007. The length of time that teachers have been in post at Herne ranges from 24 years to newly appointed teachers. There has been a high turn-over of staff over the last year and 30% of the teaching staff will be new for September 2008. At the time of their last inspection, in May 2007, the school was judged to be providing an inadequate quality of education and given a notice to improve.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Herne Junior School has improved significantly since its previous inspection. As a result, in accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires a notice to improve. Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, with the recently appointed deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, has steered the school forward very effectively. The local authority has supported improvement very well. The school's capacity for continued development is good. Many parents agreed with the one who wrote, 'I am extremely pleased with everything that is happening at the school. Mr Markham is a fantastic head, who is liked and respected by pupils and parents. I feel very optimistic about the school and feel lucky that my children are there.' This highly effective leadership ensures that all staff are working tirelessly to identify and tackle the many areas identified to move the school forward. There is a genuine feeling of teamwork amongst all adults who share a vision of continued improvement. Leaders and managers have worked hard and acknowledge they are now ready to take on further responsibility in accelerating the rate of change. Middle management and subject leaders are enthusiastic, have worked hard and have a good grasp of what needs to improve. They are now ready to take on further responsibility in the staff team to enhance the quality of provision in their areas of responsibility and accelerate the rate of improvement.

The wide range of systems and strategies put into place to address the school's weaknesses has been successful and their overall effectiveness has risen from inadequate to satisfactory. Some elements, such as the provision for pupils' personal development and well-being, are now good. Pupils are catching up on some of the ground lost in previous years and their achievement is now satisfactory. This improvement has been enabled by the use of information gained from new, effective systems of assessment of pupils' work. Very specific training, based on careful analysis of the teaching, has helped staff to take responsibility for meeting the needs of all pupils. The standards pupils attain are above average and all are now making sound progress. Standards in the current Year 6 are above average and pupils are on track to reach their challenging targets before they leave school.

Throughout the school relationships between staff and pupils are good and contribute to the positive ethos for study. The development of the 'Improving Standards Team' was a well-judged and important first step to creating greater consistency of approach across the school. As a result, teaching has improved. Staff are generally clear about what pupils are expected to learn in each lesson, and plan activities to hold pupils' interest. However, the level of challenge in pupils' work and the pace of lessons is inconsistent from class to class. The targets provided for pupils usually contribute to the feedback they are given, but there are inconsistencies. As a result, some pupils do not have a very clear understanding of how they are doing and, crucially, what they need to do to improve.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. The pupils have a good understanding of how to make safe and healthy choices and make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Attendance has improved and is now good. Pupils' behaviour, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils clearly enjoy school very much and are keen to learn.

The curriculum is becoming increasingly well adapted to suit the pupils' needs and learning styles. There is an appropriate emphasis on speaking, listening and practical work. Relationships

with parents have vastly improved and the staff have a strong commitment to partnership with them. This contributes very well to the good pastoral care the school shows for its pupils.

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

- Ensure the pace and demand of teaching is consistent across the school to meet the needs and enthusiasms of all pupils and further improve their achievement.
- Enable the pupils to use their challenging targets effectively in all classes.
- Build the middle leadership team so that they continue to develop their roles as leaders and managers.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils generally join the school with standards that are above average and all are now making sound progress. Standards in the current Year 6 are higher than last year because more pupils have reached higher levels and are on course to reach much more challenging targets before they leave school. Across the school, pupils' rates of progress have improved recently, particularly in mathematics, which has been a focus of school development. Staff's higher expectations of pupils' progress are reflected in the challenging targets set for individuals and all year groups. Although these are leading to generally improved progress, there is some unevenness between classes. Sometimes the most able pupils do not achieve to their full potential because their work does not always challenge them sufficiently. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. This is linked to the high priority the school gives to meeting their needs and the good support provided for them.

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

### **Grade: 2**

In Herne, each pupil is treated as a valued member of the school community and their confidence and independence grow. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the different cultures through specific subjects but their understanding of living in a culturally diverse Britain is not yet sufficiently developed. Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above the national average. Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to staff and to the visitors. They develop a good understanding of healthy eating and know the importance of exercise and actively participate in a wide range of sports and other planned activities such as the 'multi-skill and the 'Activate' sessions. Pupils participate in the life of the school and the local community well. They take on their responsibilities as Young Governors and as helpers around the school seriously and play a major role in making a difference. They welcome the many opportunities they have to contribute to the local community by organising fund raising for charities and taking part in local competitions. Their secure basic skills together with their good interpersonal skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

All teachers foster good relationships and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. The school has effective systems to monitor where pupils are in their learning and what they need to do next. As a result, teachers' plans enable pupils to make good progress through activities that are relevant and well matched to their abilities. Pupils are excited and interested in their learning. In the best lessons, pupils know what is to be learned and what is expected of them. However, this is not consistent. Occasionally teachers do not build sufficiently on what pupils already know and their work lacks challenge and pace, resulting in them making less progress than they should. Pupils with specific learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants. This enables them to access lessons and make at least satisfactory progress. In the best lessons seen, pupils were aware of their targets and were able to describe what they need to do to improve and work confidently. However, teachers use of this information is inconsistent across the school and in some lessons teaching was not sufficiently adapted to take account of what pupils already know or their learning needs. Although the marking of pupils' work is generally good, it is inconsistent. Pupils appreciate comments that help them to know how well they have done and leave them in no doubt about how to improve.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

Following a recent review, the school has taken promising steps to strengthen aspects of the curriculum by planning a wider range of imaginative cross-curricular topics. This approach is still in the early stages of development and the full impact has yet to be seen. There are however strengths already that add to the pupils' enjoyment and broaden their range of experiences. The extensive range of extra-curricular activities, which pupils are very keen to attend, contribute much to the pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and add to their enjoyment of school. The 'School's Sports Partnership' also provides very good opportunities for pupils to hone their skills and develop a strong sense of teamwork. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to perform their music in community events such as the 'Petersfield Music Festival'. One parent commented, 'We are very grateful for the many extra-curricular activities the school offers.' The curriculum is enriched well through the organisation of a variety of visitors and visits. For example, the Rainbow Theatre and visits to Butser Ancient farm. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to promote pupils' skills.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 3

'This is a caring school because the school listens to our views and it makes a difference,' commented one Year 4 pupil. As a result of this good pastoral care, all pupils feel safe and happy. Children talked of the rainbow cards and the suggestion boxes that help them to deal with specific issues effectively. The support and guidance offered to pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are satisfactory overall. However, the focused support offered to pupils with moderate learning difficulties and those with behaviour and emotional difficulties is good. As a result, these pupils make good progress towards their targets. The child protection procedures and arrangements to safeguard pupils are thorough and meet the statutory requirements. The academic guidance offered to pupils is satisfactory. The school has effective

systems in place to track pupils' progress and identify underachievement. The recently revised targets to guide learning in reading, writing and mathematics are more child-friendly and easy to monitor. However, pupils' use of this to evaluate how well they are doing and what they need to improve is inconsistent across classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The recently well established leadership team has developed a clear, very well articulated vision for the school, underpinned by very good development plans based on astute school self-evaluation. The time taken to get robust systems in place to monitor the effectiveness of staff and pupils' performance and set challenging targets for improvement has been well spent. Resources are now satisfactorily deployed for the benefit of pupils, to promote high quality and achieve value for money. The middle managers are developing their roles and are enjoying the additional responsibilities they now hold, although they appreciate that they have not yet been able to fully grow into their roles. The work of the reorganised governing body has been very good. Many became involved with the governance of the school at a very difficult time. They provide an excellent mix of constructive challenge, support and guidance. Their work to improve the school's standing in the local community has been invaluable. Performance monitoring is good.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<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
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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	3

### 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well 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	2
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>	3

<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.

## Annex A

**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 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

23 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Herne Junior School, Petersfield, GU31 4BP

This letter is to tell you about the findings of the recent inspection and to thank you for taking the time to talk to us about your school and your work. We think the school provides you with a satisfactory education, but we agree with what you told us - it is getting better and better. The headteacher and teachers have created a caring school community where you enjoy learning and feel safe. You behave well in lessons and like to concentrate on your work. You also enjoy and benefit from the range of opportunities the school provides in clubs and visits to interesting places.

By the end of Year 6, standards are above average but they could be higher. Some of you told us you find the targets that the teachers set you are a bit confusing. We have asked the headteacher and teachers to make sure you always understand what they have told you to do so that you all make good progress in every lesson. We have also asked your teachers to make sure that no matter which class you are in all your lessons are as good as most of them are.

The headteacher is keen to keep improving the school and, with the staff, knows exactly what to do to make the school even better. We have asked the subject leaders to speed up the changes they are planning to give you even more opportunities to learn. You must continue to listen carefully and take note of what they say.

Finally, we would like to thank you once again for all your help. We wish you well in the future.

Yours sincerely

David Marshall

Lead Inspector