

Muddeford Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113740
Local Authority	Dorset
Inspection number	325874
Inspection date	9 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	257
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	T Page
Headteacher	C Hancock
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2005
School address	Muddeford Lane Muddeford Christchurch BH23 3HP
Telephone number	01202 473217
Fax number	01202 476783

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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.

Whether all pupils achieve as well as they can.

How well the school guides pupils so that they understand what they need to do to improve.

The effectiveness of support given to pupils new to the school.

Evidence was gathered from observations of pupils at work and play, discussions with staff, governors and pupils, scrutiny of documentation and an analysis of parents' views. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is an average sized school. Nearly all pupils are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is average. The attainment of pupils when they first enter Year 3 is broadly average. The proportion of pupils entering the school other than at the normal times is slightly above average although in the current Year 6, this is considerably higher.

The school has been successful in gaining several awards including the Rights Respecting School Award, Level 2 Healthy Schools Award, and Activemark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is excellent in this outstanding school. Superb leadership by the headteacher, with excellent support from other leaders, has been the key to maintaining high standards for several years. Pupils are exceptionally well guided, supported and cared for, enabling them to flourish both academically and socially. The pupils greatly enjoy school and have an outstandingly clear voice in the school. Most pupils are keen to come to school and attend very regularly. They say they feel very safe and are respected by adults. Much of this is a consequence of the school's work on respecting pupils' rights, and many pupils' comments reflect the exceptional work done in this area. For example, they say, 'We know we have a right to have things but also the responsibility to look after them. We have a responsibility not to disturb others in their learning and to respect other people's property.'

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Relationships between classmates and adults are superb. Pupils say their teachers always help them a lot. Their excellent behaviour and very positive attitudes make a considerable contribution to their learning. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is outstanding because of the plentiful opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own and other people's lives through the school's coverage of global issues. Pupils are involved in many community events. They have actively raised considerable funds to support school activities and those children who are not as well off as they are in other countries. The school's contribution to community cohesion is outstanding. Pupils have a keen awareness about issues such as climate change, and they know what they can do to help. At break times, the pupils are very active, keeping fit by letting off steam in the extensive playgrounds and field. They say they often resolve things for themselves such as when there is an occasional 'falling out'. They enjoy each other's company when playing together and there is a wide range of equipment provided to enhance their experience. Pupils understand why they should eat healthily and often choose healthy snacks. They talk enthusiastically about sporting opportunities available and turn up regularly in large numbers. Parents rightly hold the school in very high regard. One parent commented, 'I feel privileged that my children have gone through such a fantastic school.' This view was echoed by many others, who say that their children are very happy. Another parent said, 'There are excellent levels of support; I cannot praise the school enough.'

Standards are high because of the excellent teaching and a highly innovative curriculum which stimulates pupils' imagination and captures their interest. The Year 6 results in 2008 were exceptionally strong with high proportions of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English, mathematics and science. They frequently exceed their personal targets. In the current Year 6, which includes a high proportion of pupils who joined the school from Year 4 onwards, standards are not as strong. However, nearly all pupils are on track to meet very challenging targets from their different starting points. Standards in Year 5 are high.

Teaching is excellent because lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils learn exceptionally well because of the clarity with which teachers explain ideas and the wide range of activities used to stimulate their interest and understanding. Teachers are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and rightly confident. Their encouragement helps the pupils to tackle difficult problems and to persevere. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning, skilfully supporting those with learning difficulties both in class and in small groups. The provision for these pupils is very carefully monitored and adjusted to ensure it continues to meet their needs, and as a result, they make exceptional progress. The use of

targets in lessons ensures that the pupils know what they need to do to improve. These are referred to regularly to help pupils check on their learning. However, pupils do not have enough time set aside to reflect on what they can do to improve and to set themselves new learning challenges. Leaders have rightly identified that this is an area for development. The excellent curriculum offers a rich learning experience for pupils with a very good balance between the development of basic skills, creative subjects and personal and social skills. This has ensured that pupils' preparation for their next stage of education and the future are exemplary. Provision for music is a considerable strength, and teachers give pupils plenty of opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) so that they develop good computer skills.

The school is led and managed exceptionally well. Sustained progress since the previous report shows that the school is outstandingly well placed to get even better. Improvement is driven strongly by all leaders, and rigorous monitoring and accurate self-evaluation are embedded across the school. The school provides a very safe learning environment and has robust procedures that meet statutory safeguarding requirements. There are good arrangements in place to alert pupils about e-safety. Pupils new to the school have been supported exceptionally well through well thought out programmes, helping them to make outstanding progress. Leaders are successfully developing areas of innovation such as being healthy and the respecting rights agenda with great enthusiasm. Teaching staff are set and meet very challenging targets that reflect leaders' high expectations. The governors have a very clear grasp of the strengths and areas for development and often challenge to seek improvements in practice.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend opportunities for pupils to be involved in assessing their own work and setting themselves new learning challenges to improve even more.

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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
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
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	1

Achievement and standards

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

¹Grade 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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

10 October 2008

Dear Pupils Inspection of Mundeford Junior School, Christchurch, BH23 3HP

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me when I visited your school. I enjoyed talking with you and was impressed with your friendliness and confidence. The valuable information you gave me was a great help. I agree with you that your school is excellent and that teachers do a lot to help you. You are making outstanding progress because of your hard work and the excellent teaching and curriculum.

What your school does particularly well.

- Your headteacher and other leaders have ensured that the standards you reach are high.
- You have an excellent understanding about rights and responsibilities.
- The school ensures you are very safe and secure.
- Your very positive attitudes to learning and outstanding behaviour are helping you to exceed very challenging goals.
- You enjoy school greatly because work is challenging and activities are interesting.
- Your parents or carers rightly think very highly of the school.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and their support helps you to be confident learners.
- You develop skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT that provide you with an excellent start to your next school and future life.

I have asked your headteacher and the other adults to do these things.

- Give you more opportunities for you to assess your own work and set yourselves new learning challenges so that you can improve even more.

You can help your school to improve even further by continuing to always do your best.

Yours sincerely

Peter Clifton Lead inspector