

Court Lane Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116185
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	338753
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Eileen Chadwick

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Greenwood
Headteacher	Susan Egglestone
Date of previous school inspection	13 February 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Seventeen lessons were observed and 14 teachers were seen. Inspectors also held meetings with pupils, staff with key responsibilities, and representatives of the governing body and local authority. In addition to observing the school's work and evaluating documentation such as policies, the school improvement plan, pupils' work and records of their learning and progress, inspectors examined 184 completed questionnaires from parents and carers.

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

- children's attainment on entry to Year 3 and the extent to which the school builds on pupils' attainment when they join in Year 3
- pupils' current attainment in Year 6 and their learning and progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 3 to 6
- whether initiatives to raise attainment, especially in mathematics, are having a positive impact on raising achievement
- the consistency of good teaching and learning from Year 3 to Year 6 and the impact of the school's initiatives to improve teaching
- the quality of leadership and management at all levels and their impact on raising achievement.

Information about the school

This large, four-form entry school serves the local community and its surrounding area. Most pupils have previously attended the infant school on the same site. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average and most pupils are of White British heritage. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities is average. These pupils' difficulties are mainly emotional and behavioural or they have learning difficulties in literacy and numeracy.

There have been significant changes to senior leadership since the previous inspection with the deputy headteacher taking up post and a new assistant headteacher appointed from September 2009. The school's awards include Activemark, Gold Artsmark and Bectamark for information and communication technology (ICT). A pre-school and before- and after-school clubs are held on the school's site but these are privately managed and are reported on separately.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory and improving school where pupils' personal development is a particular strength. Pupils benefit from an attractive and well-organised learning environment where they are well cared for and kept very safe. These, together with an interesting curriculum, lead to pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, good behaviour, high attendance and enjoyment of school. Pupils contribute well to the community in which the school plays an important part. The strengthening of the senior team has enabled the headteacher to take a hard look at pupils' achievement and take action to raise attainment and improve pupils' progress. Senior leaders have accurately judged that pupils were not doing well enough because overall attainment has been average compared with their above average attainment on entry to the school in Year 3.

Better teaching is central to the school's plan for improving achievement. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory because their current progress is good, which is helping pupils to catch up. Year 6 pupils' attainment is above average in English, average in mathematics and a little above average in science. The increased focus on improving pupils' scientific investigative skills is raising attainment in science. Mathematics shows signs of improving for the current Year 6 but there is still work to be done to increase the proportion reaching higher levels. In mathematics, pupils' mental skills are sometimes slow and they cannot always clearly explain different ways of solving problems. In writing, pupils quickly learn to write fluently for a range of purposes but spelling and punctuation are relatively weaker aspects across the ability range and this prevents attainment rising more quickly.

The quality of teaching is now good overall. Improvements have been achieved because previous performance has been rigorously reviewed. This has led to pupils making better progress. Evidence from school data indicates that many of the older pupils did not always perform as well as they should in the past and they are in the process of 'catching-up'. New initiatives such as setting by ability groups in mathematics and developing teachers' ability to teach the subject are having a positive impact on improving pupils' learning. However, there are still a minority of lessons when challenge for more capable pupils slows. In these lessons, teachers do not make the best use of assessment by consistently planning for the range of abilities in their mathematics sets. Assessment systems have been tightened and rigorous checks by senior leaders help to identify any gaps in pupils' progress. The school has thorough procedures for helping average and lower-attaining pupils to 'catch up' from any past underachievement. However, the school recognises that there are fewer intervention programmes for more-capable pupils apart from those in Year 6.

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Leadership and management are satisfactory, as is the school's capacity to improve. Self-evaluation procedures have been strengthened and their impact is satisfactory. However, the school improvement plan does not show enough attainment targets for more-capable pupils. Middle managers are being trained to take a fuller part in checking how well pupils are doing, and observing teaching across the school. The governing body is dedicated and is currently strengthening its ability to evaluate pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics, especially the proportion reaching higher levels, by:
 - improving pupils' mental skills in mathematics
 - improving pupils' spelling and punctuation
 - increasing intervention programmes to challenge and stretch potentially higher-attaining pupils and, where necessary, to help them catch up.
- Improve the consistency of good teaching and pupils' good learning and progress by:
 - making better use of assessment to ensure that work is consistently matched to all pupils' abilities when they are taught in mathematics sets
 - ensuring mental starter sessions are long enough to develop pupils' skills in mental arithmetic and their ability to explain their thinking.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

- Ensure all those with leadership responsibilities, including governors, actively monitor the quality of provision and use the outcomes to bring about improvement in pupils' attainment by:
 - ensuring the school improvement plan clearly shows the proportions targeted to reach higher levels of attainment in different years and sets by the end of this term
 - increasing opportunities for middle leaders to observe teaching and evaluate how pupils are doing.
 - strengthening governors' ability to evaluate data so they can ask the right questions to provide greater levels of challenge in matters of attainment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Pupils enjoy learning. Classrooms are calm, pupils feel safe and lessons engage pupils because they are relevant to their daily lives. In a good mathematics lesson in a higher Year 4 set, pupils made particularly good progress in developing their mental arithmetic skills during the brisk mental session. Pupils were challenged well because activities were planned carefully so they matched the range of pupils' abilities during the mental

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starter as well as for the rest of the lesson. This good quality learning occurs in most lessons, although pupils' overall progress is only satisfactory because older pupils are still catching up from some earlier underachievement. Pupils' above average attainment on entry to Year 3 is now being carefully built upon and, in both Years 3 and 4, larger proportions are reaching higher levels than for the current Year 6.

Pupils enjoy and benefit from an increased emphasis on problem solving in mathematics and science. They apply their basic skills for a broad range of purposes and make good progress in applying mathematics to science. However, irregularities in spelling and punctuation occasionally mar standards of written work. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress and small group work for vulnerable pupils in English and mathematics contributes to pupils' sound achievement. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are supported well and incidents of poor behaviour are rare.

Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and the strong community ethos enables pupils of all backgrounds to get on well together. They show great thoughtfulness when raising funds for charities. They are keen to engage in the many opportunities to take on responsibilities and to become involved in helping the school make some decisions. Pupils' work on ecology is good and they gain first-hand experience of recycling and energy conservation. Their good understanding of healthy lifestyles is reflected in their keenness to take part in sport and is recognised in national awards.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2

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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The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers are skilled at making learning interesting for pupils, who understand and respond well to their high expectations for behaviour. New technology is used well to make lessons interesting. Good feedback and marking inform pupils well about what they need to do to improve their work. Support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' learning during group work. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and tracking their progress towards their challenging targets have been overhauled and are now good. As a result, planning has improved so most lessons provide activities which match pupils' needs. A particular strength is the way in which pupils in the very highest mathematics sets are challenged and given good opportunities to learn at a year ahead of their age. However, in the second to highest sets, such opportunities are not always provided and this prevents more-capable pupils making consistently good progress.

The broad curriculum focuses on embedding the key skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) and also includes a modern foreign language. A rich array of creative, practical activities, for example in art and design and music, enliven the curriculum and bring relevance to academic learning. A very wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including visits and visitors, sports and music tuition, also enhance pupils' learning opportunities. The teaching of mental skills in mathematics has recently been stepped up but time spent on these sessions can still be too brief. Partnerships with other schools, including secondary, enrich pupils' learning, for example the transition project in literacy between Years 6 and 7 really supports pupils. Pupils are well looked after and there are well-managed systems for child protection and health and safety across the school. Good induction arrangements help to ease the transition from one stage of education to the next. Adults provide strong support for pupils' social and emotional development. Pupils have clear targets and they know what they need to do to reach them.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has developed a positive school ethos where teachers, pupils, parents and carers, and governors work in partnership. Her restructuring of leadership, including the new deputy and assistant headteacher appointments, has added much to leadership capacity. Senior leaders work well as a team and communicate their vision for improving pupils' achievement clearly to staff. Their monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress by evaluating assessments provide good information about how well pupils are progressing towards their demanding targets. Senior leaders have developed a more robust tracking system so that the progress of classes and groups of pupils can be better assessed. Close attention is being given to using assessment information from the infant school as well as the school's own baseline assessment to set pupils' individual attainment targets. However, the school improvement plan does not provide enough information about the proportions of pupils targeted to achieve higher levels in each year group and mathematics sets. This hampers senior leaders, governors and staff in their evaluation of the impact of efforts to raise attainment for more-capable pupils. Middle leaders have begun to evaluate teaching and assessments but this is at a relatively early stage. The governing body is restructuring to focus more on pupils' achievement. Support provided by the local authority for improving mathematics attainment has been welcomed and is well managed by the school.

Systems for safeguarding and risk assessment are good and receive priority. The school is active in tackling discrimination and promotes equality of opportunity satisfactorily. It makes a good impact on promoting community cohesion locally. Global links are well established, but the school has rightly evaluated that further work is needed to reach out to the wider British community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money

3

Views of parents and carers

Inspectors' findings are in line with the views of most parents and carers who are pleased with the school. Parents and carers agree that the school keeps their children very safe and their children enjoy school. Nearly all parents and carers are happy with their children's experiences at school. While the majority of parents and carers are pleased with the progress their children are making, a minority felt this was inconsistent, especially for more-capable pupils. The inspection team finds that progress is improving but this has not always been good enough in the past. A minority of concerns also centred on the behaviour of a few pupils. The inspection team finds behaviour is good and the strong support for the few pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties means that classrooms are calm and happy places for learning.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Court Lane Junior 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 184 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 480 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	58	71	39	5	3	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	120	65	61	33	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	68	37	106	58	4	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	80	43	87	47	10	5	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	96	52	85	46	0	0	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	41	96	52	10	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	75	41	103	56	5	3	0	0
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)	80	43	92	50	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	44	94	51	5	3	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	62	34	99	54	12	7	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	51	28	107	58	11	6	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	97	53	82	45	1	1	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	105	57	73	40	4	2	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 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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 pupil's 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.



13 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Court Lane Junior School, Cosham, Portsmouth PO6 2PP

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. You are a credit to yourselves and the school ' well done! This letter is to tell you what we found out about your school.

The school provides you with a satisfactory education and here are some of the things your school does well.

- You enjoy school and this shows in your excellent attendance rates.
- You help to make your school a special place because you behave well and are very helpful.
- You understand how important it is to keep fit and healthy and enjoy sport.
- You have many interesting learning opportunities, including visits, visitors and clubs.
- Staff take very good care of you and keep you safe.
- You know what you need to do to improve your work and teachers give you clear guidance on this.

This is what we are asking your school to do to improve.

- Help some of you to reach higher standards in mathematics and improve your spelling and punctuation.
- Make all lessons as good as the best ones so that the work is just at the right level and never too easy for you.
- Ensure school leaders, teachers in charge of subjects and governors keep a closer check on how well you are doing.

We hope you will continue to enjoy school and continue to work hard in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Eileen Chadwick

Lead inspector

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