

Newbridge Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116227
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	338765
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2010
Reporting inspector	Richard Blackmore

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 of pupils on the school roll	318
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Anna Foster
Headteacher	Claire Stevens
Date of previous school inspection	6 December 2006
School address	New Road Portsmouth Hampshire PO2 7RW
Telephone number	023 92829424
Fax number	023 92872977
Email address	head@newbridge.e2bn.myschools.net

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons and observed 13 teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, looked at the school's monitoring of pupils' progress, the quality of provision, samples of pupils' work, attendance data and school improvement plans. The views of 148 parents and carers were also taken into account.

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

- current pupils' attainment and rates of progress in mathematics and science
- how successful the school's actions are in improving the rate of progress in mathematics and science
- how well assessment information is used to provide support and to match work to ability to challenge pupils to raise their achievement.

Information about the school

Newbridge Junior School is larger than the average primary school. It serves the local community and the surrounding area. A very large majority of the pupils are White British. A higher than average proportion is eligible to claim free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. There has been considerable change in staffing since the previous inspection. The school holds the SportsMark and the Healthy School awards. There is a before-school club for pupils at the school which is managed by the governing body.

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 school. Leaders ensure that the school provides good quality care, guidance and support and pupils enjoy their time in this caring environment. Parents appreciate the work of the school, with one commenting, 'this is a fantastic school with a friendly and welcoming environment'. Behaviour is satisfactory and pupils are generally enthusiastic about their learning and the range of opportunities they are given in classrooms. They collaborate well and show concern for each other in most lessons.

Pupils' skills and knowledge at the time that they start school are declining and are a little below that typically expected for their age, although this is variable over time. They make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, reaching average standards by the end of Year 6. However, standards in science are lower, particularly in applying scientific skills and knowledge, because pupils do not plan or carry out investigations frequently enough. Satisfactory achievement in the development of basic skills, sound competence in information and communication technology (ICT) and average attendance ensure pupils are prepared adequately for the future.

In some lessons, the quality of teaching is good but overall it is satisfactory. Where teaching is most effective, questions probe pupils' thinking beyond their initial response and relationships are well developed, fostering an atmosphere of mutual respect. Learning slows when teachers do not make learning interesting enough, when there is a lack of clarity about how pupils can improve their work and when pupils of different abilities are not given work that accurately matches their level of understanding.

The curriculum offers a satisfactory range of learning opportunities within lessons and beyond. There are some good features, including the well-planned opportunities to learn a modern foreign language and for activities in physical education. However, opportunities to develop key skills in other areas of the curriculum are too limited and there are too few practical tasks inserted into planning. Actions taken by school leaders have resulted in a number of changes to provision and the roles of staff. For example, the use of talk to inspire pupils' extended writing has enabled pupils to think about and use a wide range of ideas to make their writing more interesting. This approach has been particularly successful in raising standards in English.

The headteacher is focused on providing a high quality of education for all pupils. Suitable self-evaluation procedures provide the school with a reasonably accurate picture of its strengths and what needs to be improved; for example, the school correctly judges teaching and learning to be satisfactory. However, there is limited monitoring of teaching by subject leaders which reduces their knowledge of the provision in their area of responsibility. Checking processes are not sufficiently rigorous

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to swiftly address areas of weakness in the quality of teaching and learning. The school satisfactorily promotes equality and tackles discrimination through a range of procedures that are understood by staff. There is effective engagement with parents and carers and this, coupled with the recent improvements in progress in English and support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, demonstrates that the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
 - ensuring activities set in lessons are closely matched to pupils' ability
 - providing pupils with high-quality feedback which sets clear targets for improvement
- making it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn by the end of the lesson.
- Raise standards in science by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to ensure work set in lessons always challenges pupils, whatever their level of ability
 - providing more practical activities in lessons where pupils can work independently and explore ideas for themselves.
- Ensure the monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress by school leaders, including the governing body, has a greater impact by:
 - focusing on the outcomes of lessons in plans for improvement
 - checking that teaching leads to good learning and progress.

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

Staffing turbulence has had a negative impact upon standards over recent years. The observation of lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' books show that many more are now working at the expected level for their age, which is an improvement on recent national test results. Pupils apply themselves conscientiously and show they can work well together in sharing their ideas with a partner in thought-provoking discussions. Progress in English is faster than in other subjects because teachers have a greater understanding of how to improve pupils' skills and knowledge. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the effective use of a 'Toolbox of Criteria' ensured pupils knew how to use stylistic features to create lively newspaper reports. However, in mathematics and more especially science, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and understanding through practical tasks. This limits their progress, for example, when researching materials and their properties in science. As a result, pupils' enthusiasm lessens and their progress slows. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in lessons, and progress accelerates when adults provide additional one-to-one support or in small groups. For example, one small group received constructive guidance on how best to use their knowledge of letter sounds. As a result, they subsequently wrote sentences of good quality. Other groups of pupils, including

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those who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Pupils told inspectors they feel safe and that if they have any concerns, they are confident that adults will listen to them and address their concerns. All groups of pupils take on leadership roles within the school, such as organising the healthy school tuck shop. This helps pupils to have a good understanding of a healthy lifestyle. However, involvement in the wider community and links across the United Kingdom are not as strongly developed, which limits pupils' awareness of different groups of people. Pupils have a satisfactory sense of right and wrong, but their knowledge of other cultural traditions and lifestyles is limited.

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching observed during the inspection was of variable quality. In the best lessons teachers ensure learning is at a brisk pace, the use of ICT harnesses pupils' interest and pupils routinely work well together to discuss and generate ideas. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson, the teacher carefully demonstrated on the interactive whiteboard a range of strategies for pupils to evaluate and use to solve a problem. However,

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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inconsistencies in the use of assessment information means tasks set in lessons are not always well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Feedback to pupils does not show pupils clearly enough the next steps in their learning and their new targets once they have reached previous goals. Consequently, pupils' overall progress is satisfactory rather than good.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is beginning to provide pupils with relevant and creative learning experiences. Learning is enriched by a good range of educational visits, and visitors provide pupils with useful information and real-life experiences to enhance their learning. Visits have included those to Fishbourne Roman villa, and residential trips to Fairthorne Manor and to an outdoor centre.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good, with one pupil saying, 'we know all the adults and they know us'. Relationships with staff are supportive and this helps all pupils to overcome potential barriers to learning. There is a well-organised programme of tailored support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The inclusion manager and behaviour manager work well with teachers, parents and carers to support pupils' learning, and arrangements to support learning for pupils whose behaviour is challenging and those new to the school are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior leadership team is focused on school improvement and has deployed resources satisfactorily and developed partnerships, including those with speech and language specialists, ensuring a flow of professionals into the school to support pupils' learning and well-being. However, the quality of the school's monitoring is limited by the lack of specific targets linked to learning in subject action plans. This means it is difficult for the school to judge how well planned actions are improving the rate of pupils' progress. Connections with churches, other faiths and businesses are helping to support pupils' personal development through improving their understanding of moral and spiritual issues. There is a comprehensive range of policies in place and high priority is given to ensuring that safeguarding procedures are up to date, effective and include rigorous checks on staff. Community cohesion is promoted satisfactorily with an analysis of the school and its context. However, some of the school's work in this area is not systematically evaluated to determine the impact on pupils' understanding of the diversity of modern Britain. Governors provide a satisfactory balance of challenge and

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support and are aware that there needs to be a more consistent focus on raising achievement.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers believe that the school keeps their children safe and ensures that they enjoy school. The vast majority are of the opinion that the school meets the individual needs of their children through effective teaching and good quality support and guidance. A few parents believe the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The inspection team found that challenging behaviour was dealt with adequately and that behaviour in the school was satisfactory overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Newbridge 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 148 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 318 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	34	80	54	12	8	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	71	48	73	49	2	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	43	83	56	13	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	36	78	53	14	9	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	56	38	85	57	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	46	31	90	61	8	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	47	32	87	59	7	5	1	1
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)	41	28	93	63	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	34	85	57	6	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	32	74	50	18	12	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	22	93	63	10	7	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	51	34	85	57	6	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	45	69	47	8	5	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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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.



10 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Newbridge Junior School, Portsmouth PO2 7RW

We enjoyed meeting you on our recent visit to your school and would like to thank you for taking the time to speak to us and for making us feel so welcome. I would like to share our findings with you.

- You are friendly, polite and helpful to visitors and each other.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress, but those of you who find work a little harder make good progress.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory and you enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
- Adults look after you well and make sure you are safe.
- Teaching is satisfactory, and your teachers work hard to make lessons interesting and exciting.
- You show a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe.
- You make a good contribution to the life of the school.
- You are adequately prepared for the next stages in your education.

To make your school even better, we have asked the headteacher and staff to do three things: first, to improve the quality of teaching by telling what you will be learning in your lessons and how you can improve your work; second, to raise standards in science through providing more practical activities and giving you tasks that really make you think; and third, to look more closely at how well you are learning in lessons. I know you will help your teachers to carry on making your school even better by continuing to work hard and telling your teachers if you do not know how to improve your work.

Yours sincerely

Richard Blackmore

Lead inspector

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