

Cupernham Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115944
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	354513
Inspection dates	13–14 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Janet Simms

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bryan Bolton
Headteacher	Kelvin Geary
Date of previous school inspection	14 May 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 22 lessons or parts of lessons with eight teachers and some withdrawal sessions for individuals or small groups. They held meetings with senior leaders, governors and some parents. They talked to three groups of pupils formally and with many pupils in lessons and at play. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at playtimes, attended two whole-school assemblies and visited 15 clubs which happen on Friday mornings. They scrutinised much school documentation, including pupil assessment and tracking records, documents related to safeguarding, attendance data and records of the monitoring of teaching. They analysed 124 parents' and carers' questionnaires, many with additional comments, and those from staff and pupils.

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

- whether the issues which led to weaker performance in 2009, especially for some groups, are resolved, and if improvement is sustainable
- progress and attainment for pupils currently in school, especially in writing, and for groups, such as more able pupils and boys
- assessment and its effectiveness in identifying potential problems and averting them.

Information about the school

This is a two-form entry junior school where the main intake is from the adjacent infant school. More pupils than usual have recently joined from other schools part-way through various year groups. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds, using English as their native language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about average, most of the needs relate to moderate learning difficulties. The school holds the bronze Eco-Schools award. The headteacher is moving on at the end of this academic year.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is a good school. It has many outstanding features, amongst which are the leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior team. Excellent improvement in the curriculum, especially in improving writing and in resolving acknowledged issues of achievement last year, show the impact of these strengths and illustrate the team's highly effective working relationships with partners. There is outstanding capacity to maintain improvement from this strong position.

A huge sense of enjoyment in learning permeates almost all lessons, with bubbly, well-behaved pupils keen to explore every opportunity creatively and actively. Good teaching means that they achieve well in their academic work and in their personal development. Pupils move into secondary education with above-average attainment and very secure interpersonal skills which prepare them effectively for the next steps in learning and in life. They make excellent progress in understanding healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe and fit, and in their social and moral development. Pupils and staff welcome newcomers into their classes warmly, so new pupils settle quickly and learn well from the start. Parents and carers of new entrants comment highly positively on this. Many others express enormous appreciation for the outstanding, individually sensitive care, guidance and support which children receive. This characterises the exceptionally positive impact which the headteacher and his team have on pupils' lives.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are more able achieve as well as others because equality in all things and for all pupils lies at the heart of the school's work. When an issue emerges which indicates that any group is doing less well, senior staff pursue the reasons with ruthless determination, which results in rapid, effective solutions. In 2009, Year 6 test results, for instance, were highly uncharacteristic for the school because of a combination of unusual circumstances. Boys and more able pupils did less well, mainly because of weaker writing. Subsequent actions have halted this, so that the performance of these groups and others has returned to the excellence shown in previous years.

Senior leaders, advisors and governors accurately identify areas for improvement through increasingly good self-evaluation. They have excellent plans to strengthen weaker aspects, such as slightly uneven progress through different years. Recent measures to improve this have resulted in excellent progress in Year 3 but in Year 4, though improved, progress remains somewhat slower. Good marking in English provides pupils with focused advice about how they can improve work, but in mathematics and other subjects this remains an area for development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' progress is consistent in different year groups and between subjects by:
 - improving the quality of teaching in all classes to match the best practice in the school
 - maximising the use of target setting, marking and other academic guidance in mathematics and other subjects so that it provides similarly effective provision to English assessment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils in Year 6 are on track to achieve above-average attainment in key subjects, including writing. This shows good progress from their starting points and much better achievement than in 2009. In English lessons, for instance, Year 6 pupils were using a range of spoken techniques very effectively to present persuasive arguments in a debate, with excellent respect for others' points of view. In a Year 5 English lesson, writing was above average, with pupils using a good range of interesting vocabulary in paragraphs to start their own myths and stories. In mathematics in Year 3, pupils' progress was good because of very challenging questioning and good planning to create understanding of the difficult concept of mathematical inversion. Outstanding links between subjects lead to very good understanding of how subjects fit together. Good pace in a Year 3 English lesson showed pupils' excellent understanding of previous learning on the theme of 'Grandad's Suitcase'. Pupils learned very well through stimulating drama opportunities and used sophisticated vocabulary and ideas in their stories. A good physical education lesson showed pupils in Year 4 keen to be active and able to evaluate their learning effectively.

Behaviour is good and, in many lessons, contributes outstandingly well to pupils' learning. Occasionally, when teaching engages them less effectively, attention 'slips' and teachers need to use the school's behaviour protocols. However, pupils' attitudes towards learning are usually exceptionally positive. Attendance is above average and the school has been very effective in reducing persistent absence. Many parents and carers comment on how keen children are to come to school. Aspects of pupils' spiritual and cultural development are good, but the school recognises that there is scope to provide further opportunities to develop stronger understanding of other cultures. Many pupils make outstanding contributions to the school community, such as the very active work of the school council. They have successfully involved the rest of the school in creating their new play trail. These contributions form part of pupils' development of good social consciousness, as does work in the Eco Club, charitable fundraising and in involving the elderly in school events.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The new curriculum has provided a major positive impetus for more effective learning. It is underpinned by rigorous planning at all levels and a deep understanding of how pupils learn best, so that topics interest and engage staff and pupils alike. This creates a 'learning together' feel. The school modestly recognises that this approach is new, but the outstanding impact on learning is already very clear. In addition to this, an excellent range of extra-curricular and intra-curricular activities, such as the Friday clubs, add excellent range and depth to pupils' experiences. They provide opportunities for pupils to learn from non-teaching adults, such as governors. Where outstanding teaching was observed, creative, innovative planning, secure subject knowledge and excellent relationships all combined to provide stimulating, dynamic lessons where adults and pupils thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Where lessons were less successful, but learning is satisfactory nonetheless, this adaptable, dynamic atmosphere was less evident. In the best lessons, good ongoing assessment is a key component. Staff adapt lessons intuitively and reinforce less secure learning before they move on. Marking in English is very good and gives pupils short-term and achievable targets and advice. It is less good in mathematics and other subjects, so pupils are often less clear about what they need to do next to improve. Excellent care, guidance and support is exemplified by that for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are integrated very effectively into all aspects of provision.

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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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and senior staff have very high ambitions for the school, which staff, parents and carers, governors and others share sincerely. They work outstandingly well with partners, deliberating highly self-critically and evaluating all performance openly and frankly. Many changes, for instance in the structure of the school as numbers have fallen and risen, have been managed successfully and, where problems arise, they are tackled with forthright honesty. Subsequent actions are highly effective and many procedures, such as progress tracking, have been strengthened to ensure that potential difficulties are averted. The school's deep commitment to equality of opportunity for all is clear in improved provision for lower and higher attainers, for instance. Senior staff show excellent ability to strike the balance between professional objectivity and personal empathy in their high quality management of teaching and learning. They place properly high expectations on all staff to be accountable for pupils' progress and well-being. Governance is good, and members challenge managers increasingly effectively about all aspects of provision and outcomes. Outstanding safeguarding procedures keep pupils feeling very safe. The school's partnership with parents is outstanding, with the effect that many wished to inform inspectors personally about their appreciation of the school's effective home/school approach where they and the school are partners together in promoting children's learning. These and other local and wider partnerships are key to the good development of community cohesion.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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	
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents and carers completed and returned the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of these reflected highly positive views about the school, as indicated below. Many made additional comments which were overwhelmingly positive and the few difficulties expressed were mainly about individual, one-off concerns. There were many extremely appreciative comments about the excellent quality of leadership and management, outstanding induction to Year 3 and for pupils entering at non-standard times, excellent extra-curricular opportunities, the welcoming and friendly ethos of the school and many more. Inspectors agree with all these. Those which attracted more critical comment were followed up in depth, even though numbers were very small. The relatively 'flat' quality of learning in Year 4, for instance, was discussed with managers and pursued through observations and data tracking. Inspectors agree with parents and carers about this, though improvement in pupils' progress is evident now, and the senior team is tackling the issue robustly. The consistency of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, an issue raised by a few returns, was explored as part of the inspection plan, but inspectors found this now to be secure. In-class and withdrawal support was observed and current provision and progress tracking were examined. These show positive outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and much tighter academic and personal monitoring procedures operating as a result of recognised weaknesses last year.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cupernham 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 124 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 210 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	56	52	43	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	88	73	31	26	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	60	50	55	46	3	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	61	51	49	41	3	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	75	63	40	33	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	58	48	56	47	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	62	52	54	45	1	1	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)	66	55	46	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	65	54	48	40	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	50	53	44	2	2	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	55	46	53	44	4	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	86	72	31	26	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	85	71	32	27	2	2	0	0

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.



17 May 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cupernham Junior School, Romsey SO51 7JT

Thank you very much indeed for welcoming us into your school so warmly when we came for the inspection. It was a pleasure to be there, to join your lessons and assemblies, to see your work, to talk to many of you and to see you at play. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Yours is a really good school with lots of excellent things happening there. You and your parents and carers told us this is so and we agree. Your attainment is above average by the time you leave the school and you work very well together. We were especially pleased to find out about the welcome you give to newcomers in your classes, which makes your new friends settle quickly and learn well. All the adults take very good care to keep you safe and secure and look after you very well indeed. They make learning fun by organising lessons and extra-curricular activity very imaginatively, so you are interested in all the things you do and you behave very well. All this makes teaching good so that you make good progress. In some cases, you make excellent progress, and we have asked the school to make this consistently good all across the school. We were impressed with how well you understand healthy eating, growing food in your allotment, and how to keep fit and active. We found the ways teachers assess your work generally to be good, but they give you clearer help and advice about how to improve in English than in other subjects. We have asked the school to work on making this clearer in mathematics next, then in other subjects. You can help them with this by reading carefully what adults say in their marking and then doing what they advise, so you can help yourselves to improve. We agree with your parents and carers who feel that the school is managed excellently well so that you all enjoy yourselves as you learn.

Thank you again for your welcome

Yours sincerely

Janet Simms

Lead inspector

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