

Langstone Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116213
Local Authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	357909
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sandra Downs
Headteacher	Lisa Dunning
Date of previous school inspection	26 March 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 16 lessons and a further 9 guided reading lessons were visited. A total of 11 teachers were seen. Inspectors spoke to parents and carers and held meetings with members of the governing body, pupils and staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data relating to pupils' attainment and progress. The school's development plans, lesson and curriculum plans, governing body documentation, and school policies and procedures, particularly those relating to the health and safety and safeguarding of pupils, were scrutinised. Inspectors also looked at completed questionnaires returned by staff and those from 69 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the apparent improvement in attainment and progress in 2010 has been sustained in current year groups.
- Whether there is a sufficient proportion of good teaching, particularly in English and mathematics.
- How well teachers are using assessment information to plan work that challenges pupils, and do pupils know how to improve their work.
- The impact of leadership and management at all levels in driving progress.

Information about the school

Pupils in this larger than average junior school come from a predominantly White British background. The next largest ethnic group consist of pupils from a range of other White backgrounds. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, and the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is just below average. The main group consists of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. The headteacher has been in post for approximately 18 months. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school holds the national Healthy School award.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. Parents and carers praise the changes introduced since the arrival of the headteacher. 'Excellent job', 'very impressed', 'approachable', are comments from the returned questionnaires. Inspection evidence supports these views with recent improvement in the attainment and progress of pupils and the proportion of good teaching increasing. Furthermore, the personal development of pupils is good. The pupils tell of feeling very safe in school and consequently they are settled in lessons and prepared to learn. One older pupil displaying enjoyment of school by saying Year 6 was 'the best year of my life'. The impact of the school's work to obtain a national award is seen in pupils' good knowledge of how to stay healthy. Behaviour during the inspection is judged good. Partnerships with parents and carers are good.

Attainment on entry is low. In the past, pupils have left at the end of Year 6 with similar low attainment. However, in 2010, the national tests showed pupils leaving with broadly average attainment in English and mathematics. This constitutes satisfactory, and improving, progress for pupils given their entry levels, and this includes those believed to be entitled to free school meals. Writing remains a weakness and is a whole-school focus. Work scrutiny reveals an inconsistency in the expectations of teachers regarding the quality of pupils' handwriting, spelling and use of rich vocabulary.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. This includes teaching in English and mathematics. Almost half of the lessons observed during the inspection were judged good. This reflects the positive impact of the school's programme of lesson observations and guidance, as well as peer coaching between teachers. Occasional inconsistencies remain between classes. Teachers use information and communication technology well to illustrate aspects of learning. For example, typical good use was when line graphs were linked to an active display of the varying rates of water entering a bath. However, progress, on occasions, slows when the lesson objective is linked to the task rather than the learning expected of pupils. Similarly, not all teachers use assessment information well enough to set work that challenges pupils of different abilities. Relationships in lessons are very positive and pupils are consequently prepared to offer answers, knowing that their views are valued. The pupils like the feedback they get from teachers, but marking does not consistently show clearly enough how pupils can improve their work or their potential target grade.

The satisfactory curriculum is undergoing a major review to provide more cross-curricular links where pupils' literacy and numeracy skills can be supported in all subjects. It is also introducing themes which challenge pupils to think more creatively. This is increasingly giving teachers the means to deliver lessons that are enjoyable and motivational. Currently there are missed opportunities to maximise the benefits of this approach.

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The highly focused headteacher has effectively distributed managerial responsibilities and core leaders are consequently well involved in monitoring their areas of responsibility. Self-evaluation is accurate and leads to very appropriate development objectives. For example, in mathematics there has been a successful move towards providing more opportunities for pupils to solve problems and to use and apply their knowledge in different contexts. The maximum 'five sums' strategy results in pupils experiencing a change in approach on very regular occasions. Progress reviews are resulting in more accountability amongst staff as well as quickly identifying pupils requiring more support. Along with improvements to pupils' progress, attainment and increasingly good teaching, such factors demonstrate the school's satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement. The governing body makes a sound contribution to monitoring of the school but its analysis, and that of subject managers, is, on occasions, insufficiently focused on the attainment and progress of pupil groups. Subject development plans do not show clearly how they support the objectives in the whole school plan.

About 40% of the school's whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' attainment and progress in writing through ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of pupils' presentation of work, their use of enriched vocabulary and the accuracy of their spelling.
- Accelerate the proportion of good teaching by ensuring that teachers consistently:
 - use assessment information to challenge pupils of different abilities
 - identify lesson objectives that highlight the learning expected of pupils
 - give clear guidance to pupils about their target grade and how they can improve their work
 - provide imaginative and creative opportunities in lessons that stimulate and motivate pupils.
- Sharpen the skills and knowledge of subject leaders, especially subject coordinators other than English and mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - they deeply analyse the attainment and progress of pupil groups across the school
 - action plans clearly show how the subject supports the priorities identified in the whole school development plan.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy their learning and achieve satisfactorily. This was typically seen in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were eager to model a conversation based around café life in France. They show good respect for each others' views. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils listened carefully while their peers read a play script using various expressions.

Pupils enter the school with well below average levels of skills and knowledge. Historically their progress has been below that expected nationally. Current work shows that progress has improved and is satisfactory. While attainment has improved, and is now broadly

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average, the school has identified where a legacy of underachievement means that a minority of pupils are not attaining at expected levels especially in writing. These pupils are carefully tracked and school data show that their progress, along with their peers, is accelerating. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress. In current year groups, pupils from ethnic minority groups and those for whom English is an additional language also make satisfactory progress.

Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They are proud of their role in decision making. School councillors give their views on learning, while 'school associate members' give answers to governor queries. Increasing links are being developed with the local community. They include visitors and participation in environmental projects. However, there are missed opportunities to broaden the range of activities that link with the wider community. The level of basic skills, together with average attendance and some good opportunities to work in teams and participate in entrepreneurial activities, demonstrates that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next stage of their education.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' social development is good; pupils adapt well to differing social occasions, for example in assembly or lessons. Pupils learn about other cultures, but there is an insufficiently developed understanding of the values and beliefs of different societies beyond the school.

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
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

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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How effective is the provision?

Teachers' secure subject knowledge is evident in their questioning. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson the teacher built well on pupil answers, challenging them to think deeply and to write imaginatively about rough terrains. There are some good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work with 'talk partners'. For example, pupils debated in a mathematics lesson the 'story' behind a graph based on the distance travelled by a lorry driver. Teaching is improving but some inconsistencies remain with regard to expectation levels, planning for pupils of different abilities, marking and the focus on learning when planning lesson objectives. In the satisfactory lessons, opportunities are sometimes lost for pupils to be more creative.

The curriculum satisfactorily meets the needs of pupils. It is enhanced by some good external provision, including sport coaches. Theme work is being trialled. The Portsmouth topic provides a good opportunity for pupils to be creative and be imaginative. It also provides good links between subjects such as literacy, art, history and religious education. This approach is not yet fully embedded. A good range of visits, including residential trips, undoubtedly contribute well to the personal and social development of pupils.

The care, guidance and support of pupils are satisfactory. The pastoral care of pupils is good and many examples exist of the school being proactive in adopting strategies which help lower the barriers to learning for pupils who find school life difficult. The learning mentor provides good opportunities for pupils to explore such areas as anger management and social development. Good strategies help encourage attendance and this has had a particular impact with pupils who face difficulties in their lives. However, there is insufficient small-group support for low attainers and consequently progress dips. Individual education plans exist and are couched in useful pupil-friendly language.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The highly focused headteacher drives improvement well. The vision of a relentless quest to improve pupil outcomes has been effectively shared. Every term the headteacher writes a detailed and prioritised 'raising attainment plan' which sets challenging targets. Subject leaders have been empowered. Not all have the skills and knowledge to carry out the required depth of analysis, and there are shortcomings in linking action planning to the school improvement plan. Governors have formalised a programme of visits, although the role of the link governor is not always maximised. Reports from the headteacher, staff and pupils are helping to ensure that governors are better able to monitor and raise questions

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of the school. They use their skills and experience to benefit pupils, particularly regarding safeguarding and equal opportunity monitoring. They have a sound oversight of safeguarding, paying specific attention to ensuring that adult training and policies are regularly monitored. The school has a good range of assessment data which, at the whole-school level, is used to track the progress of different pupil groups. Governors receive reports and are aware that gaps in progress between groups are minimal. However, the differing attainment of a minority of pupils is reflected in equal opportunity being satisfactory. There is no evidence of discrimination.

A good example of the impact of leadership is demonstrated by the actions taken over a 2009 school-parent questionnaire. This revealed that 39% of parents did not agree that behaviour was good. All were sent a back-up letter seeking further views and the result was changes to policy and procedures. In the inspection questionnaire 83% of parents now believe that behaviour is well managed. Other partnerships are satisfactory and reflect the level of impact on pupils' attainment and progress levels. However, pupils' personal development has benefited well. Business links have aided pupils' knowledge of money handling and sports partnerships enable the training of 'junior leaders'. Community cohesion is satisfactory. The school has analysed its work in this area and knows its local population well. A link with a contrasting school in Bristol has been established but is at an early stage of development. The school has yet to establish global links.

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	3
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

The number of questionnaires completed is below the average for a school of this size. The overwhelming majority of those parents and carers who returned questionnaires believed their children enjoy school. A few had concerns about how well the school helps them support their children's learning. Inspectors judged the school has strategies found

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in most other schools. The vast majority are happy with their children's experience at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Langstone 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 69 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 311 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	48	35	51	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	59	28	41	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	32	45	65	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	24	35	39	57	5	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	35	41	59	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	19	28	39	57	8	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	23	50	72	3	4	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)	23	33	39	57	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	21	30	40	58	4	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	26	41	58	7	10	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	15	22	48	70	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	31	45	34	49	3	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	31	45	34	49	2	3	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



30 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Langstone Junior School, Portsmouth PO3 6EZ

You may remember our recent visit to your school. You were eager to tell us about your school and we listened carefully to what you told us. We judge that your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that it does some things very well and that there are other things it could do better.

You told us you feel safe in school and that if you have concerns then you know who to approach. You believe that adults do listen to your views. We can see that you have a good knowledge of how to stay healthy. Your junior leaders certainly make sure you have physical activities at lunchtime! Other posts of responsibility, including school councillors and the school associate members, also make a good contribution to your community. We liked the way you react well to talk partner activities, and your good attitudes to work are seen in lessons. You behave well.

You make satisfactory progress as a result of improving teaching. We have asked that the teachers challenge you more when you are writing so that you always produce the best work you can. We have also asked your teachers to ensure that they plan imaginative lessons that clearly show what you are expected to learn and that challenge all of you. You can help your teachers by telling them when you find the work too easy or too hard. Not all of you know how to improve your work or know your target grade and we have asked that teachers make these very clear to you.

Your headteacher leads the school well. All the adults in the school want things to improve even more and the school plans well for the future. We believe that subject leaders can make it really clear in their planning how they are going to contribute to school development. We have also asked that they all gain a good understanding of your progress across the school.

Thank you again and I wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Pye

Lead inspector

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