

Padnell Junior School

Padnell Road, Cowplain, Waterloo, PO8 8EA

Inspection dates 9–10 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Although pupils' achievement is improving in mathematics and reading, it is not improving quickly enough in writing. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to write creatively at length or to expand their vocabulary so that their writing is more interesting.
- Even though many pupils now make expected progress from their individual starting points, some groups of pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, do not always make progress as fast as they should, particularly in writing.
- Pupils do not always reach their potential and achieve well, as the quality of teaching is inconsistent across the school.
- There is more to be done to make sure that teachers plan lessons that meet the needs of all their pupils, engage their interest and challenge them to achieve their best.
- Not all pupils know all the targets for their work or benefit from clear guidance on how they can reach them.
- Senior leaders and governors are keen to improve further, but their plans do not always focus on the most urgent areas or have clear pointers in helping judge success.

The school has the following strengths

- By the time they leave at the end of Year 6, pupils develop into confident young people with good social skills. Pupils behave well and are keen to attend school.
- Pupils, parents and carers, and staff describe the school as being friendly and welcoming where their views are welcomed.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and their attainment has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Staff are starting to use information on pupils' progress more effectively to identify those who may underachieve.
- School leaders and governors are ambitious for the school and are determined that the school will move to be judged 'good' as soon as possible.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 10 Lessons taught by 10 teachers including four lessons that were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- The inspectors heard pupils reading and looked at their workbooks.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle leaders, the Chair and three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors held discussions with pupils and spoke informally to parents and carers at the beginning of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at a range of documents including those related to the monitoring of pupils' progress, the school's records of checks on the quality of teaching, improvement planning and checks made on staff about their suitability to work with children.
- There were too few responses to the online Parent View survey to be analysed.

Inspection team

Christine Jones, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Amanda Gard

Her Majesty's Inspector

Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Information about this school

- Padnell Junior School is an average sized school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage and there are few pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- An average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported at school action with a below average number supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs; the largest groups being those with specific learning difficulties.
- The school was placed in special measures at its previous inspection in February 2012. This was because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school were not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement. The school was subsequently subject to three monitoring inspections by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.
- The school population is very stable and the proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than normal times is below average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and children from service families) is below that found nationally.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There have been changes in staff, leadership and within the governing body since the school's previous full inspection. The Chair of the Governing Body was elected in March 2012 and the deputy headteacher appointed in January 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of all pupils in English, especially writing, so that their progress is at least good by:
 - swiftly identifying any groups of pupils or individuals at risk of underachieving and putting effective help in place so that any emerging gaps are quickly closed
 - developing pupils' skills, especially in writing, through introducing tasks that are creative, relevant and interesting so that they are able to write more effectively in both English and other subjects.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by:
 - refining planning so that it reflects high expectations for all pupils and builds on what they can already do
 - reducing the length of teachers' explanations to the whole class so pupils can get on with their tasks quickly and make more progress
 - making sure pupils know all the targets for their work and giving them clearer guidance on how they can reach them
 - encouraging all adults to ask probing questions during lessons that challenge pupils to think carefully about their learning.

- Put in place a plan for moving the school's effectiveness to 'good' that:
 - is sharply focused on raising pupils' achievement
 - has clear milestones which allow progress in implementing changes to be monitored carefully.
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Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils usually start school in Year 3 with attainment that is near to the national average.
- Pupils' achievement, including that of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, has improved this year and is now more in line with national expectations, but it is not yet good enough for all pupils across the school.
- The progress pupils make is accelerating. As a result, most pupils have made at least the progress they should this year in reading and mathematics, although they have made less progress in writing.
- Writing, especially for boys, is a particular problem. Standards in writing have improved but do not yet match national average. While writing skills have improved for all pupils, the rate of improvement is too slow, especially for boys and does not keep up with the improvement in skills in reading and mathematics. Pupils learn to write for different purposes and audiences, although some of the tasks are not engaging and relevant enough to keep all pupils interested. Teachers are working to improve this by introducing more tasks that are relevant, especially to boys.
- Standards in reading have improved this year and are now at least in line with those reached nationally. Pupils told inspectors they like reading but sometimes felt they did not always get enough feedback about how to improve from the adults who were listening to them read. Some younger pupils were not secure in their knowledge of letters and the sounds they make, and in blending different sounds.
- Outcomes for current Year 6 pupils in mathematics have improved significantly as the quality of mathematics teaching is much better with more pupils reaching the highest Level 6. Pupils acknowledge they are now 'much better at maths' and enjoy the challenge of investigations in particular.
- Overall, pupils for whom the school receives additional pupil premium funding are progressing as well as their peers in reading and better than their peers in mathematics. However, by the end of Year 6 they are still two terms behind other pupils in writing. This is due to weaker teaching in writing in the past where, as for other pupils, tasks did not engage boys' interest.
- Pupils know some of their targets and understand how well they are doing but they are not always clear about exactly what they need to do to improve their work and reach higher standards.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching has generally improved since the previous inspection. There are pockets of good practice throughout the school including some outstanding teaching, particularly in the upper school. However, the school's observations of teaching and inspection evidence show that too much teaching requires improvement to ensure that all groups of pupils in all years make at least good progress.
- Teachers have improved their planning to take better account of pupils' interests and different abilities. However, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough as they do not routinely build on what pupils can already do. The exception is in Year 6 where teachers' high expectations are pushing pupils to make faster progress to make up for previous underachievement.
- Teachers' improved analysis of results and outcomes now gives them much better information about pupils' performance. Not all teachers use this information effectively to gauge pupils' achievement and put interventions in place quickly enough for pupils not making enough progress.
- Teaching in mathematics has improved significantly through an intense focus on supporting and developing teachers' skills in this area of the curriculum. This is reflected in the better progress

pupils have made in mathematics this year.

- Teachers' planning for developing writing skills both in literacy sessions and in other subjects is not fully effective. Writing tasks are too often seen by pupils as 'boring' and they lose interest as their work is not relevant to their interests and fails to stimulate their imagination.
- In better-taught lessons, teachers make good use of open questions to check pupils' understanding and progress and to identify those in need of additional support or more challenge. However, this does not always happen and too often teachers ask questions that do not allow pupils to give longer answers that can show what they know and understand.
- Some pupils sit passively and for too long at the start of lessons, which slows the pace of learning and reduces the time available for pupils to get on with their work because teachers still spend too much time introducing the lesson.
- The marking of pupils' work is much more informative and is starting to give better feedback by identifying what pupils have done well and how to improve their work. However, pupils are not clear enough about what standards they should be aiming for. They know they have targets to improve their work but do not always understand what they have to do to reach those targets.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are keen to do their best and to learn, and their behaviour in lessons is typically good. Where teachers talk too much and learning moves at a slow pace, pupils wait patiently for more interesting activities.
- Pupils behave very well around the school and mix well with each other. They enjoy taking part in the activities made available at playtimes but say they would like more equipment for them to use at these times. They work well together in class and treat each other with respect and courtesy.
- Pupils are very positive about being members of this school community. They appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities available to them ranging from cheerleading to karate. They were keen to speak to inspectors and 'show-off' their school, especially the new murals currently being painted on the walls.
- All pupils feel safe at school. They have a clear awareness of different forms of bullying such as racist harassment and cyber-bullying and say they are proud that this does not happen at their school. Where minor concerns or playground disputes occasionally arise, pupils say they trust staff would help them resolve issues quickly.
- Parents and carers who were interviewed also felt that pupils' behaviour has improved since the previous inspection and their children are happy to come to school. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to school and this is reflected in regular attendance and good punctuality to lessons.

The leadership and management require improvement

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher, and Chair of the Governing Body work well together and are determined that the school will improve. This has helped the school to make progress in improving the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils, especially in the last few months.
- The senior leadership team has carried nearly all the major responsibilities in the school and is rightly introducing a wider and more efficient organisation and structure to underpin future improvements.
- School development planning has identified appropriate priorities for improvement and staff and governors have worked hard to deliver those improvements. As a result, the school has improved since the last inspection and is now giving its pupils a better standard of education. However, development planning is not specific enough about addressing the most urgent issues and about timescales to make sure the progress being made can be checked regularly.

- The systems for monitoring pupils' performance are now effective in identifying what they already know. Not all teachers use this information effectively in everyday classroom practice.
 - Lessons are observed regularly by leaders to assess the quality of teaching and identify areas for improvement. Outcomes from these observations are part of the systems for checking and evaluating the school's performance and are suitably linked to the targets set for teachers and to advances in pay. The suggestions made for improvement are not always followed up closely in subsequent observations to judge their impact.
 - The curriculum is constantly reviewed and re-evaluated to make sure it is lively and interesting for all pupils but currently with a focus on helping boys with their writing with lots of external activities linked into the topics. The school is aware of the need to strengthen links with literacy and numeracy in other subjects and is also focusing on this.
 - The school is rigorous in promoting day-to-day equal opportunities and creating an environment where no form of discrimination is tolerated.
 - The support provided by the local authority has diminished, reflecting an increased level of confidence in the leadership and management of the school.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - School governance has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Governors have developed a closer working partnership with staff. They have a higher profile in the school through improved monitoring and evaluation practices. Governors recognise that, although the achievement of pupils is improving, it is not yet as good as it should be, and that teaching is not consistently good across the whole school. They fully understand the need to link teachers' pay with their performance. Governors are starting to challenge leaders and managers more effectively to improve the pace of improvement to make the school at least 'good' as soon as possible. Training for governors has improved and they are now better at interpreting school-based information on pupils' progress and more skilled in asking questions that keep the school focused on improvement. For example, they ask how effectively additional funding is used to meet the needs of those pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	115964
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	420406

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Roger Osborne
Headteacher	Sandra Lawlor
Date of previous school inspection	7 – 8 February 2012
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