

# Locks Heath Junior School

Warsash Road, Locks Heath, Southampton, SO31 9NZ

## Inspection dates

4–5 June 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The school is emerging well from a period of turbulence through substantial change in the staffing and leadership of the school.
- Standards are rising in all year groups and pupils' continuing above-average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6 show their good achievement.
- Many pupils excel in speaking and listening and demonstrate significant skills in music, art and sport.
- Senior leaders have focused on improving the quality of teaching. As a result, teaching is good, and getting better, and pupils are making faster progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The high levels of attendance year on year reflect the pupils' love of school. It is also directly related to the very positive relationship with parents in promoting the importance of attendance.
- The school's calm and supportive atmosphere promotes good behaviour in lessons and around the school.
- Warm and encouraging relationships between pupils and staff strongly promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The governing body is well organised and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are committed to ensuring that the school continues to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always make full use of checks of pupils' developing skills, especially of the most able, to set work at the right level and promote their best progress.
- The quality of pupils' handwriting in subjects other than English is not always as good as it should be.
- Subject leaders are not yet playing a full part in checking and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 lessons. They were accompanied by the headteacher and deputy headteacher for some of these observations.
- Inspectors observed morning and lunch breaks and also observed the school assembly.
- Two meetings were held with representative groups of pupils, and many other pupils were spoken to during lessons and breaktimes.
- Inspectors also met with governors, and the lead inspector met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team took account of 72 parents' responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning and undertaking the inspection. They also considered one letter from a parent. An inspector also spoke informally with a number of parents as they brought and collected their children from school.
- Meetings were held with school staff, including senior leaders, and 14 staff questionnaires were received and considered.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information on pupils' progress and planning and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors also examined records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding policy, procedures and practice. They also considered the school's sports premium action plan.

## Inspection team

Alex Baxter, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Margaret Faull

Additional Inspector

Brian Hooper

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is a well-above-average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils attending the school are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported by school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well below average.
- There is a below average proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to children who are looked after.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Move the quality of teaching and learning from good to outstanding and increase the number of pupils across the school making better than expected progress by:
  - making better use of information about how well pupils are doing, especially those with most ability, to set work at the right level and quicken their progress
  - ensuring that pupils write to the best of their ability when working in different subjects
  - providing more opportunities for middle leaders to share their skills with colleagues and to participate in checking and improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Since the previous inspection, standards at the end of Year 6 have been mostly well-above average, particularly in reading and mathematics.
- Attainment dipped in 2013 when pupils' performance slipped to average in mathematics; although it was above average in reading and writing. This reflected weakened teaching which stemmed from instability in staffing. Slower progress was made by some pupils, including those supported by additional funding.
- The school has responded with determination over the past year. From pupils' above-average starting points, improvements in the quality of teaching have accelerated pupils' learning. By tackling pupils' needs at an earlier stage, the school has restored good achievement for all groups of pupils.
- As a result, the gap in attainment at the end of Year 6, between pupils supported by additional funding and other pupils, has been narrowed significantly this academic year. In 2013 the gap represented about three terms' progress. This year the gap has been narrowed, to one term in English and just under one term in mathematics. Checks of pupils' progress in other year groups also show diminishing gaps in attainment.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are also making better progress this year because of effective additional adult support.
- Pupils are encouraged to enjoy reading. They show interest in books and become avid readers. When questioned, pupils readily described their favourite characters and boldly predicted what they thought was going to happen next. Pupils understand phonics (sounds that letters make), demonstrate a wide breadth of vocabulary, and are developing good reading skills.
- Attainment in writing is also above average. Pupils write with good expression. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils enthusiastically described the process of mummification in great detail. However, not enough attention is given to improving pupils' handwriting, especially when pupils are writing in subjects other than English. Poor spelling and weaknesses in handwriting mask the often good quality of their work.
- The standards reached by the most able pupils are also improving, as seen in the increasing number in Year 6 on course to attain higher standards this year. However, this is not always the case and, across the school, some of the most able pupils are not yet progressing quickly enough.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Across the school, pupils show a positive interest and engagement in learning because of the sensitive way that adults manage their behaviour and value their efforts. For example, during mathematics in Year 5, pupils' enthusiasm led to a lively buzz of learning that deepened their understanding of the topic.
- Typically, across the school, pupils respond enthusiastically when given the opportunity to discuss their ideas with each other. The pupils' good learning and understanding are seen in the way pupils confidently provide more detailed explanations in their responses to the teachers' questioning. This was clearly evident in a Year 6 lesson where pupils confidently challenged each other as they advanced their understanding about how to use connective words to enrich their writing.
- Over time, pupils' good achievement reflects good teaching. Focused actions by the headteacher and senior leaders, and new appointments this academic year, are strengthening the quality of teaching after a period of staff change.
- The quality of pupils' learning has been improved because teachers are more specifically checking the impact of their teaching on pupils' progress. This has led to teachers improving the way they plan learning activities and the amount and type of support given to the pupils. As a

result, disabled pupils, those with special educational needs and pupils supported by additional funding also build more effectively on previous learning and are making good progress.

- Pupils are also learning better this year because they are also receiving more specific help, and at an earlier stage. They value the clear guidance given about how to improve when teachers mark their work, and respond well. Their written comments and corrected work demonstrate good learning, for example in successfully extending their ability to write more descriptively.
- An increasing number of the most able pupils are making faster progress, for example in mathematics, because of the increased challenges presented to them. However, some of these raised expectations are not yet embedded across the school. At times, the most able pupils do not receive tasks that are sufficiently challenging. This means that they are not always enabled to make the progress of which they are capable.

## **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils come to lessons eager to learn, and participate well in the wide range of out-of-class activities.
- Most pupils apply themselves wholeheartedly to their work and are especially enthusiastic when sharing ideas with each other. These qualities contribute to their good learning and progress. Occasionally, a few pupils become distracted and need reminders from staff to pay closer attention to their learning.
- School records show that there have been few exclusions since the previous inspection, and that steps taken by staff have led to pupils improving their behaviour.
- Around the school, pupils and adults share warm, supportive relationships. Pupils welcome the way staff value their ideas and efforts and, in turn, pupils try to please their teachers and show respect back to them.
- Pupils say that learning is fun, that 'teachers make it exciting', and that the displays, known as learning walls, 'help us to reflect'.
- The consistently high level of attendance, which applies to all groups of pupils, is a strength of the school. This also reflects the diligent work of senior staff, well supported by parents, in providing stimulating learning experiences and promoting the importance of school.
- Pupils talk with pride about the various responsibilities they undertake. They plan and lead class assemblies, for example where they reflect about how some great characters have achieved their dreams. Pupils perform confidently to parents as part of the school's programme of community events.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is well maintained. All staff implement carefully-considered safety procedures and risk assessments, at school and during school trips.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. They know, for example, how to keep themselves safe when using the internet. Parents interviewed during the inspection, and over 90% of those who responded to the questionnaire, expressed their agreement with this view.
- Pupils know about the different forms that bullying can take, for example verbal, physical and cyber bullying. They say that there is hardly any bullying and respect the fair way that staff deal with any misbehaviour. They know how to react, and when to seek assistance, in dealing with difficult situations.

## **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher provides determined and passionate leadership. He is well supported by an experienced deputy headteacher and a strongly focused governing body.
- By sharing and developing leadership roles more widely, the headteacher is driving the school forward despite much change in the staffing of the school.
- Leadership and management are improving as changed management structures are created and

new staff settled. This area is not yet outstanding because not all middle leaders are fully involved in checking information about pupils' progress. As a result, they are not able to contribute fully to improving teaching and learning.

- Even so, senior leaders, including governors, have responded effectively to address the dip in standards at the end of Year 6 last year. They have introduced a comprehensive system for checking pupils' attainment and progress, which is helping teachers to identify pupils' needs at an earlier stage. This is enabling staff to provide additional adult assistance to pupils' learning in time to quicken progress and prevent underachievement.
- Staff are embracing this process, showing their strong commitment to eliminating discrimination and providing equality of opportunity and success for all pupils. Pupils with most ability are also benefiting, but the school recognises some of these pupils can quicken their progress further.
- The headteacher has also strengthened the link between performance and salaries of teachers with how well pupils achieve. Improved teaching and the rising levels of pupils' attainment, increasingly this year in mathematics, demonstrate the capacity to improve further.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding fully meet statutory requirements.
- Staff present a well-considered and broad range of subjects and activities to the pupils. The school's renowned orchestra reflects continuing strengths in providing a wider curriculum. The staff all pay careful attention to pupils' personal development. This is reflected in the very supportive relationships they share with them, which also strongly promote their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school uses the new sport funding very effectively to extend its already comprehensive range of activities. For example, specialist coaching is raising staff and pupils' skills in rugby and football, as well as in dance and tennis. The school also employs a lifeguard so that swimming can continue across all four year groups. Leaders check the impact of this work and have already identified improved provision to enable more pupils to participate in sport and increase their levels of skill and fitness.
- The local authority provides light touch support for this improving school.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body possess considerable experience and bring significant skills to their duties. Governors have high aspirations for the school and since the previous inspection have taken carefully-considered actions to strengthen the way they check the work of the school's leaders. For example, governors have specific responsibilities, such as regular meetings with staff to check data relating to pupils' progress. Governors also make specific visits to the school to follow up issues and areas for development identified and shared with them by the headteacher in his detailed reports. They take an interest in how teaching is improving. Governors visit classes regularly. They question staff in order to become better aware of how they can help promote improvement, for example in pupils' writing and in the progress of pupils receiving additional support. Governors undertake regular training, including how to compare the performance of pupils in this school with that of pupils in other schools nationally. As a result, governors know about the quality of teaching and are able to support the headteacher in tackling any underperformance and bringing improvement. They understand fully that the teachers' progression through pay scales is closely linked to improving pupils' achievement. Governors efficiently oversee secure financial management, and are diligent in ensuring pupils' safety.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	115926
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	444196

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	501
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Wendy Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Parfoot
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25–26 June 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01489 572226
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