

Langstone Infant School

Stride Avenue, Portsmouth, PO3 6HL

Inspection dates

5–6 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 headteacher, senior leaders, governors and staff have been very successful in building on and improving the practice seen at the previous inspection. They work with determination to give the pupils a good start to their education.
- Pupils' progress is good and has accelerated in recent years. Pupils now leave the school with above-average attainment in reading and mathematics. They make excellent progress in learning to read.
- The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are enjoyable and well matched to pupils' needs.
- Pupils have a wide range of stimulating learning opportunities and there is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and pupils say that they feel very safe in school. They work and play well together.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership and has made many improvements since her appointment. Checks of teaching made by senior leaders are rigorous and supportive and teachers are provided with good opportunities for their professional development.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding and a very small amount still requires improvement.
- The progress made by pupils in writing is not as good as that made in reading.
- In Reception, there are not enough stimulating writing activities when children learn through play.
- Middle leaders' roles are still developing and most have not yet observed lessons across the whole school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons; most were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. They listened to a sample of pupils read from Years 1 and 2.
- Inspectors held discussions with pupils, looked at a range of their work and examined the school's data on attainment and progress.
- Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders and teachers and a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered the 43 responses to the online Parent View survey. They also spoke informally to parents and carers and took parents' and carers' letters into account
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including plans for improvement, safeguarding arrangements, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and records of school leaders' observations of teaching.

Inspection team

Eileen Chadwick, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Simon Adams

Additional inspector

Mark Anderson

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Langstone Infant School is above average in size compared with most primary schools, and a little larger than when previously inspected.
- While most pupils are White British, a few are from minority ethnic backgrounds and a very small minority are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding (additional funding provided for looked-after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families) is average. In this school, almost all the eligible pupils are entitled to free school meals.
- The headteacher took up post two years ago. The deputy headteacher was appointed permanently in October 2013 after serving in a temporary capacity since January 2013.
- The pre-school and breakfast and after-school clubs on the school's site are separately managed and were not inspected at this time. Their inspection reports can be found on the Ofsted website.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and accelerate pupils' progress, especially in writing, by:
 - improving pupils' spelling by ensuring teachers consistently show pupils how to apply phonics when writing and helping them to write neatly
 - ensuring reading records show parents and carers their children's phonics targets
 - in Reception, providing more exciting writing activities when children learn independently
 - ensuring more-able pupils are consistently challenged in Reception and in Key Stage 1.
- Improving the impact of middle leadership on pupils' achievement by:
 - creating systems for middle leaders to develop teaching by observing colleagues teach across the school
 - providing training where needed
 - ensuring they take a full part in evaluating the impact of initiatives in their subject for improving pupils' learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the school in Reception with skill levels that are slightly below those typical of their age, particularly in speaking. They make good progress overall in Reception and Years 1 and 2 so that when they leave the school their attainment is above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Year 2 standards of attainment have risen rapidly over the past two years and inspection shows they are continuing to rise.
- The majority of pupils enter Year 1 with a good level of development in most areas, although standards of writing are not as well developed as in reading and mathematics. National phonics checks for Year 1 show that standards have been above average for the past two years. The systematic teaching of phonics provides pupils with a strong foundation for learning to read.
- Pupils' progress is now rapid in reading in Key Stage 1. The school's assessment data, lesson observations, and pupils' reading listened to by inspectors show that, in the current Year 2, over a half are attaining higher levels, and all pupils are attaining at least the expected standards.
- By Year 2, pupils of all abilities are keen readers and apply phonics extremely well when reading new words. More-able pupils read avidly and are equally adept when reading for information or enjoyment.
- Progress in writing and mathematics is a little uneven in Reception and Key Stage 1. Fewer pupils reach higher levels in writing than in reading and mathematics. By Year 2, most pupils write successfully for a range of purposes but a few have weaker spelling and untidy handwriting. In both Reception and Key Stage 1, staff occasionally do not help pupils to apply their phonics skills (knowledge of letters and their sounds) well enough when writing, which slows their progress.
- In Reception, children's progress also occasionally slows during learning through play when writing activities are not exciting or outdoor activities do not challenge the more able in mathematics. In Key Stage 1, very occasionally, progress in mathematics slows for more-able pupils when there is too much repetition of their earlier learning.
- Pupils of different ethnic groups, including those with English as an additional language, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress similar to their peers. Specialist teaching arrangements for those pupils with weaker literacy skills are ensuring they make excellent progress in literacy.
- Pupils supported by pupil premium achieve well. Their attainment was similar to that of their peers in the 2013 Year 2 national assessments. Currently, it is similar to their peers' in reading, writing and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

is good

- All lessons are characterised by good relationships between adults and pupils and between the pupils themselves. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and their lively teaching engages pupils.
- The curriculum is well designed for helping teachers to broaden pupils' experiences, to develop their language skills and for enabling pupils to apply their basic literacy and mathematical skills to other curriculum areas. It is generally well structured, enabling teachers to build pupils' basic skills securely in lessons and over time.
- Lessons are well planned and informed by robust marking and accurate assessments. Teachers make good use of lesson time and ensure pupils know their time deadlines when working independently.
- Teachers and teaching assistants plan well to meet the needs of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those who have limited English. In class and small groups, adults provide work that is often demanding and mostly well matched to pupils' needs.

- Leaders have worked hard with staff to promote good teaching of reading, writing and mathematics so that pupils build up their skills as they progress within the lesson and the year.
- In an excellent phonics lesson in Key Stage 1 for a lower-attaining set, all pupils made rapid progress because of the expert way in which the teacher used assessment to build pupils' skills from previous lessons, introduced new sounds and their letters, and ensured pupils applied their understanding when reading and writing.
- Robust systems for teaching guided reading also help to raise standards very well. For example, during the inspection, teachers' careful planning ensured groups working both with and without direct adult supervision spent maximum time on developing reading skills.
- Pupils are heard to read on a very regular basis but pupils' home–school reading records do not include sufficient information about the key sounds and letters they should know, which limits parents' ability to help their children.
- Most teachers implement the new handwriting policy well but, in a few instances, do not ensure pupils write as neatly as they should or ensure they apply their knowledge of phonics when writing new words.
- In mathematics, teachers focus sharply on developing pupils' number skills through practical tasks. However, in Reception and Key Stage 1, teachers occasionally do not sufficiently challenge more-able pupils.
- In Reception, a good balance is struck between activities led by adults and those children choose themselves. However, at times, free-choice writing areas are not as stimulating and, sometimes, staff do not demonstrate clearly how children might apply phonics before they write independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' positive attitudes to learning reflect the strong emphasis placed by the school on raising standards in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils respect their teachers, behave well and say they enjoy school. There is a strong sense of community and pupils work very well together in small groups. Pupils' behaviour is good beyond lessons and when not directly supervised by adults.
- The very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that behaviour is good, and all parents felt that their children were kept safe.
- Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong and feel they are extremely safe. There is virtually no bullying and the pupils have total confidence that it will be dealt with should it occur. They learn about various forms of bullying and what to do to stay safe.
- Pupils from diverse backgrounds get on well together because the school provides good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to develop a sense of wonder at the world around them, and the recently improved curriculum contributes strongly to this
- Those who find it hard to regulate their own behaviour are well supported and show good improvement over time. Occasionally, pupils lose concentration when they repeat too much of their early learning.
- Attendance is average but improving. The school has stringent attendance procedures and works closely with the few families who do not send their children to school as regularly as they should.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has made significant improvement to rates of pupils' achievement. The changes introduced have been based on a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The very large majority of parents and staff feel the school is well managed.

- The headteacher is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and governors and they have high expectations of what the school and its community can achieve. Aspirational targets are at the heart of everything that they do and are designed to continue to accelerate progress and raise attainment.
- Robust procedures for managing the performance of individual teachers have ensured that teaching has strongly improved. Leaders check classroom practice very regularly, highlight areas for development and ensure high-quality support is available so that teachers are able to meet the demanding targets set for them. They take decisive action when improvements are not fast enough, such as when teaching does not improve quickly enough.
- Senior staff are very clear about priorities for improvement. Checks on pupils' progress are precise and well understood by leaders and staff. No pupil is allowed to fall behind for very long and improvements to provision are quickly put in place to enable them to catch up.
- Middle leaders' roles are still developing. They provide good help to other teachers and check pupils' progress and work. However, they have not yet observed colleagues' lessons across the whole school, for example by checking the impact of new initiatives for improving writing. Currently they are not playing a full part in raising pupils' achievement and this is a reason why achievement, teaching, leadership and management are not outstanding.
- The local authority provides good support, and this has been valued by the school.
- The school has recently received primary school sports funding and is using this to employ more sports coaches and to increase professional training in physical education for staff. There are clear plans to evaluate the impact of this work on improving pupils' skills, health and well-being.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed and bring a good range of skills to school leadership. They are well trained and take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to improve. Governors understand assessment data and monitor the performance of different groups and know how well different groups are doing, including those eligible for pupil premium. They manage finances well and help to make decisions about spending. They systematically evaluate the impact of spending on pupils' achievement and well-being, including those eligible for pupil premium funding. They understand that teacher's pay and promotion must be justified by the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Governors have fully supported the headteacher in improving the quality of teaching and linking pay to performance. The school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding.

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	116207
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	116207

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	299
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs F Fraser
Headteacher	Victoria Page
Date of previous school inspection	8 February 2012
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