

Unique Reference Number 113787
Local Authority Dorset
Inspection number 311374
Inspection date 27 February 2008
Reporting inspector Deborah Zachary

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll (school)	375
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2004
School address	High Street Wyke Regis Weymouth DT4 9NU
Telephone number	01305 786041
Fax number	01305 771421
Chair	Andy Smethurst
Headteacher	Carl Saunders

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, who investigated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following: •the progress pupils are currently making in lessons •the progress pupils currently in Year 4 have made since Year 3, and the progress of boys in the current Year 6 •the impact of the school's leadership and management systems on raising the attainment of more able pupils in writing. Evidence was gathered from discussions with pupils, members of staff and governors; observations of teaching and learning; the views of parents; scrutiny of pupils' work and assessment data; and other school documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form (SEF), were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Wyke Regis Junior is bigger than most junior schools, with three classes in each year. Almost all pupils are of White British ethnicity. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1 Outstanding

Grade 2 Good

Grade 3 Satisfactory

Grade 4 Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Wyke Regis Junior is a good school where pupils achieve well, making good progress from their starting points. The pupils are happy. One commented: 'Even when we are doing things like tidying the classroom, we can do it with a smile on our faces.' Most parents are very positive about all aspects of the school. There are some outstanding features. For example, pupils have an excellent awareness of how to keep themselves healthy, and they make a huge contribution to the community, both within the school and beyond. Year 6 pupils are passionate about the environment, explaining how ordinary plastic bottles give off gases as they decompose and how the school's 'eco-council' is encouraging the use of alternatives.

Support and care are also excellent. The pupils are kept safe. They are very clear that any adult in the school will help them if they have any concerns, and there is also a school counsellor. Some pupils are 'peer mediators' and they say this works really well as a means of supporting each other because 'we know what it feels like'. Pupils experiencing challenging times are particularly well cared for, and one parent wrote, 'I could not ask for any more support.' Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are closely monitored and plans for them are fine-tuned to meet their needs. As a result they make good progress, and it is exceptional in some individual cases. The school does plenty to encourage pupils to attend and, for the most part, is successful. Although attendance is below average, this is due to seasonal working patterns in this seaside town.

Teaching is good and pupils are making good progress in lessons. Teachers plan very well, choosing activities that really interest the pupils and which work very well as ways of getting ideas across. In one very effective Year 6 literacy lesson, for example, trying to help a mouse find its way through a maze to some cheese was a vehicle for getting pupils to understand the use of connective words such as 'then', 'after that' or 'finally'. Games and short practical activities are also used to good effect. Excellent guidance for pupils helps them to improve their writing, with individual targets set through individual discussion. However, the expertise teachers have gained in setting targets for writing is not being exploited in other subject areas. Pupils are aware of learning objectives for individual lessons in reading, mathematics and science and they find this very useful,

saying 'it tells us what we are going to learn'. However, they do not have longer-term personal or group targets to guide them through a topic or over a longer period. The school's own monitoring of teaching has identified that some other opportunities to encourage pupils' greater involvement in their own learning, such as lesson activities that are specifically planned to develop their independent learning skills, are not always taken.

The curriculum is wide-ranging. Arts and music feature prominently, and the school has the Artsmark Gold award. There are lots of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are given particularly good opportunities to learn about aspects of personal and social education. For example, pupils in Year 6 receive first aid lessons. Although the school itself has few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, pupils' experience is widened through correspondence with, and visits to, pen pals in Central London. Pupils are prepared well for their future lives, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

Leadership and management are good at all levels in the school, and this means that the school has a clear and accurate awareness of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body provides a good mix of support and challenge, and the experienced chair of governors has ensured that recently-appointed governors have been well supported. The headteacher delegates well and empowers staff to take decisions, whilst maintaining the necessary monitoring overview. Teaching is regularly observed and clear feedback given. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Results of Year 6 national tests are analysed well and effective action is taken to improve achievement. For example, the school identified that not enough pupils were reaching high standards in writing, particularly boys. A close focus on this resulted in year-on-year improvement for both girls and boys, and this year there is no difference in the progress being made by the two groups. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average, with pupils on course to meet most of the very challenging targets that are based on their Year 2 test results. Year 4 pupils are also on course to meet their very challenging targets.

The school keeps a close check on data and acts quickly where problems are identified. For example, analysis showed that incidents of bad behaviour and exclusions were comparatively high in 2005-7. Actions taken by the school have ensured that behaviour has improved and is now good. As a result, exclusions have dropped. However, although the analysis of pupils' standards and progress as they move up through the school is satisfactory, it is not yet sufficiently fine-tuned to ensure that any patterns of underachievement can be picked up and tackled quickly. The school has plenty of data on the standards pupils are reaching but, at the moment, progress is more often analysed from a baseline of Year 2 national assessment results rather than looking at how pupils make progress year on year from a baseline of internal school assessments of standards.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve pupils' learning by encouraging more independence and widening the good use of individual targets to other subjects

- refine the analysis of pupils' progress to ensure that any patterns of underachievement can be identified and tackled as quickly as possible.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
Overall effectiveness	
How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Achievement and standards	
How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2
¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.	
Personal development and well-being	
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
The quality of provision	
How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2
Leadership and management	
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Wyke Regis Junior School, Weymouth DT4 9NU

Thank you very much for making me so welcome when I visited the school on Wednesday. A particular thank you to those Year 6 pupils who came to talk to me. I hope you enjoy your trip to London when you will meet your penpals.

I think you have a good school where you make good progress. I was really impressed by how well you help each other and the whole community, and how well you understand how to keep yourselves healthy. You are very well looked after by the adults in the school. I was really pleased that you think lessons are fun and I agree with you.

Your headteacher and staff lead the school well, but they want to make it even better. To help the school improve even more, I have asked them to work on two things:

- to increase the amount you are involved in your learning; for example, you have really useful targets that help you think about how to improve your writing and you could also have targets in some other subjects.
- to make better use of the information they have about the standards you are reaching. You can help by trying to remember what your targets are and aiming to reach them as you work.

Best wishes

Deborah Zachary Lead Inspector

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