

Copnor Primary School

Copnor Road, Portsmouth, Hampshire PO3 5BZ

Inspection dates

21–22 June 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have successfully led the amalgamation of the infant and junior schools into one cohesive community.
- The headteacher has established a team of dedicated leaders and managers who are having a considerable impact on raising standards.
- Teachers plan thoughtful and interesting lessons. Teaching is good and pupils are motivated to do well.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. School leaders take every opportunity to widen pupils' perspectives. Pupils willingly take on additional responsibilities.
- Attendance is improving. Pupils enjoy coming to school to learn and play with their friends.
- Children make a really positive start to school life in the early years. Strong partnerships with parents contribute well to children's success.
- There are limited opportunities for children to choose their own learning or develop activities in their own way in the early years.
- Good teaching has ensured that pupils are making better progress than in the past. Disadvantaged pupils are making good progress and are catching up with other pupils.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff and parents are confident that pupils are safe at this school. Pupils say they feel very safe.
- The curriculum gives pupils opportunities to develop their skills well in a wide variety of subjects. Reading has a very high status in the curriculum and pupils develop a love of reading.
- Governors have individual skills that enable them to help and support the school and ask questions about specific issues. However, the governing body does not collectively challenge school leaders about the progress of different groups of pupils.
- The most able pupils are not making as much progress as they could because their work across the curriculum is not challenging enough.
- Some teaching lacks precision. Tasks are sometimes not adjusted in lessons to meet the emerging needs of pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so all groups of pupils, and especially the most able, make rapid progress, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have the highest expectations of their pupils
 - using assessment information precisely before lessons to plan challenging tasks
 - making effective use of informal assessment in lessons to provide further challenge or support to pupils when needed.
- Allow children in the early years to make more choices and deepen their learning by following their interests and sustaining the activities they choose.
- Governors should:
 - work together more collegiately to articulate their ambition for the school and its pupils
 - develop a greater understanding of the progress made by different groups of pupils and challenge leaders to make further improvements.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably supported by his leadership team, has successfully brought two schools together to make one. As one parent told an inspector, 'Since the school has amalgamated and become a primary the leadership and management has been amazing.' Another parent commented that, 'The ethos of the school is excellent. Parents and school work in harmony.'
- Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school's leadership. Leaders have confidence in their staff who, equally, have confidence in the leadership team. Among numerous positive comments about the school's leadership, one staff member wrote, 'It is rewarding to see how we have managed to create – genuinely – one united school from two.'
- Senior leaders are accurate in their judgements about the quality of education that the school provides. They challenge each other well to achieve the best for the pupils. They have a clear desire to make the school even better. The school plan focuses on the right priorities to achieve this ambition.
- Professional development and coaching are used very well throughout the school. This starts with teachers who are new to the profession being very well mentored by senior leaders. Teachers who take on new leadership responsibilities, for example leading a subject, have the opportunity to shadow and learn from an experienced leader. Senior leaders work together collaboratively but are not complacent. They look outside of the school and local authority to learn from the best practice nationally.
- Subject leaders are aware of the strengths and areas to develop in their areas of responsibility. Some can point to recent improvements they have made. For example, increasing the focus on investigative science in response to pupil feedback. Other subject leaders are new to their roles and have not yet had a demonstrable impact on raising standards.
- Leaders continue to reflect on how successfully the curriculum engages pupils. They make changes where necessary. Each new topic hooks pupils' interests and then helps them to develop skills and knowledge well in a range of subjects. Additionally, topics also allow teachers to help pupils deepen their understanding of British values.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development feature very strongly in the curriculum. Effective use is made of school trips and visitors to the school to broaden pupils' horizons. Pupils are taking an active role in the wider leadership of the school through the 'learning to lead' programme. This helps pupils to clearly demonstrate they have the values and attributes necessary to be successful in the next stage of their education and as young citizens in Britain.
- Additional funding is spent appropriately to help disadvantaged pupils to catch up with their peers. The school carefully identifies the barriers preventing disadvantaged pupils from achieving well, such as poor attendance or low prior attainment. Leaders plan and implement successful strategies to overcome these barriers.

- The leadership of provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is highly successful. Additional funding and carefully planned support ensures that these pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- The sport premium is used effectively. A specialist teacher works with both pupils and staff to improve the quality of provision in physical education. There have been many new sporting opportunities for pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, to try. Participation in a range of extra-curricular clubs and activities is rising.
- Parents are highly supportive of the school. The overwhelming majority feel that it is led and managed well and would recommend it to other parents. Parents are invited to come in to school regularly to find out how well their children are doing or to learn about how the school is teaching pupils to be successful learners.

Governance of the school

- The governing body includes individual members with relevant and helpful skills and expertise that have enabled the school to make improvements. These particular skills have helped school leaders to improve the school buildings, care for pupils with medical needs and analyse assessment information.
- Governors, including the chair and vice-chair, visit the school regularly to check things for themselves. They ask leaders appropriate questions to gauge how well projects and improvements are developing. They can accurately talk about the school's strengths and the areas that need further development.
- While governors have overseen the successful amalgamation of two schools they have not set a clear direction of what more they wish the school to achieve for its pupils. Governors are not collectively challenging leaders to improve the outcomes for all groups of pupils. This is because they do not receive clear information about the progress different groups of pupils are making.
- Governors fulfil all of their statutory duties, especially around safeguarding and the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The single central record of employment checks is kept meticulously. This approach to safeguarding paperwork extends to the comprehensive range of policies that are in place to keep pupils safe.
- Staff, including those who are relatively new to the school, are very well trained in safeguarding procedures. They understand their duties and the actions to follow in response to any safeguarding concerns.
- Designated safeguarding leads are also well trained and work very well with parents and other agencies to keep pupils safe from harm. Additional training around extremism and radicalisation has been completed to enable staff to recognise any emerging concerns should they occur.

- The curriculum provides many relevant opportunities for pupils to learn how to keep themselves and others safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers help pupils at Copnor to become successful learners. Pupils focus very well in lessons and are resilient, even on very hot days. This helps them to make good progress. Pupils are encouraged to continuously edit and improve their work. They are confident and keen to share and celebrate their learning.
- Pupils are not afraid to learn from their mistakes. Inspectors saw pupils demonstrate resilience and succeed after making a mistake in a dance routine. Elsewhere, pupils persevered to get their pronunciation correct in French after initially going wrong.
- Across the school, teachers have strong subject knowledge and ask questions skilfully to encourage pupils to think and work independently. Capable teaching assistants are effective at supporting the learning of individuals and groups of pupils.
- Leaders understand the difference that high-quality teaching can make to pupils' progress. Every leader teaches regularly and models highly effective teaching. They frequently work with groups of pupils who are at risk of falling behind and need to catch up, or who need some extra inspiration. For example, some leaders regularly read with groups of boys who may have been reluctant readers.
- Reading has a high priority in this school. Every pupil is heard read at least once a week by an adult. Pupils develop strong reading habits and are encouraged to read a wide range of books from different genres. Younger pupils get off to a great start with their reading through precise and effective phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) teaching. Teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge and use technical vocabulary accurately. They match tasks very carefully to pupils' abilities and make strong links between reading and writing from the very beginning.
- Mathematics teaching routinely gives pupils the opportunity to develop their fluency with calculations, problem-solving and reasoning skills. Leaders reviewed how well this approach was working and identified that the most able pupils in Year 5 needed more challenge and therefore regrouped the pupils. An increased focus on the most able, including the most able disadvantaged, has accelerated the progress for this group and allowed them to deepen their learning. For example, inspectors observed them learning how to use a protractor accurately to test mathematical rules about angles on a line and around a point.
- The most able are not challenged consistently well throughout the school. There are often missed opportunities to ask pupils to think more deeply about their learning or to plan wider experiences or tasks that fully challenge them.
- Some teaching lacks precision, which can restrict the progress pupils make. For example, in key stage 1 mathematics weaknesses had not been identified in pupils' basic calculation skills before moving on to more complex tasks. Furthermore, teaching does not regularly provide intellectually stretching activities for some very able pupils.

- Although teachers apply the school's feedback policy consistently, they are not all adept at assessing how well pupils are doing in lessons. Therefore, the pace of learning is not speeded up or slowed down to match the success of pupils in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Every member of staff contributes towards promoting pupils' personal development. From the caretaker playing basketball with pupils at lunchtime to promote healthy lifestyles, to support staff who support the most vulnerable pupils and their families working with other agencies. Pupils are very confident that there is an adult they can talk to at school if they have a problem or worry.
- The school is a community where equality reigns. Year 6 pupils explained how and why everyone is treated fairly in this school, irrespective of their background. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. Displays around the school have real meaning to pupils, who can explain their relevance to their learning and how they have helped shape their positive attitudes. For example, a display about a Paralympic sports day reminded pupils how people who have disabilities can achieve as well as the able-bodied.
- Pupils have learned to be ambitious and confident. As one pupil told an inspector, 'Here we learn how we can expand our minds.'
- To prepare them for the next stage of their education and life in modern Britain, pupils are given many opportunities to take on additional responsibilities. Fair democratic elections are held to elect pupils to positions such as school councillors. Formal applications are invited for the roles of head boy and head girl, followed by an interview with the headteacher. A growing number of pupils are taking part in the 'learning to lead' programme which allows ambassadors to demonstrate the school's learning values of 'collaboration, tolerance, resilience, respect and initiative'.
- Pupils learn to stay safe online, and also when in the vicinity of railways and water. Older pupils have produced their own video to help their younger peers understand how to stay safe on the new 'trim trail' equipment.
- Records show that bullying is very rare in this school; however, if it happens pupils are very confident that it is dealt with firmly by leaders. Year 6 pupils confirmed that there are severe consequences for this type of behaviour that are well understood. Measures to prevent bullying are so successful that many pupils who spoke to inspectors were adamant there is no bullying in the school because they have not witnessed any.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are confident, self-assured and positive in their lessons. They listen carefully and respect each other's ideas.

- Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner. The whole school's behaviour observed in an assembly was exemplary. Parents, pupils and staff are rightly very positive about behaviour in the school.
- Attendance is improving overall and for groups of pupils where attendance has been low in the past. Overall attendance is above the national average. The innovative use of a 'walking bus' is removing some barriers to pupils being absent. School leaders' close monitoring of attendance has had a positive impact, but they are not complacent. Staff continue to redouble their efforts to work with families to ensure that all pupils attend regularly.
- Pupils fully understand the clear system of rewards and sanctions. They confirm that teachers use this well and the right pupils are rewarded regularly. Instances of inappropriate behaviour are carefully tracked. Those pupils who find it more challenging to manage their behaviour have improved over time.
- Inspectors observed some over-exuberant behaviour on the playground at breaktimes and lunchtimes. Very low-level off-task behaviour was witnessed in a few classrooms where learning was not as engaging as it could be.
- The very small number of pupils who attend alternative provision settings attend regularly and behave well.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders check the progress that pupils are making regularly and review any additional provision that is needed to keep them on track or help them to catch up if they have fallen behind.
- Current pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, as well as most-able disadvantaged pupils, are making strong progress over time in all year groups in English and mathematics.
- Pupils achieve well in the Year 1 phonics screening check. Those pupils in Year 2 who had fallen behind in phonics have caught up quickly and are now applying their phonic knowledge and skills well.
- The whole-school approach to raising the status of reading has been successful. Pupils are reading widely, including for pleasure. They are developing their skills as readers effectively and are then applying these skills in their own writing. Older pupils are confidently and skilfully using mature sentence structures accurately in their writing. Pupils have many purposeful opportunities to apply their writing skills in other subjects.
- Pupils are developing their knowledge, understanding and skills well in a range of subjects including history and geography. Skills are applied well in other subjects such as design technology. Outcomes in the food and nutrition elements of design technology are particularly strong in some year groups.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders are using successful strategies to diminish differences in attainment. Extra, targeted teaching is used effectively to help pupils who have fallen behind to make faster progress to catch up, while additional pre-teaching before school prevents targeted pupils from falling behind in the first place.

- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are making at least good progress because of the highly effective personal development and support they receive.
- The most able pupils are not always making as much progress as they could. This is because teaching does not always challenge them to deepen their thinking and extend their learning.
- Published assessment information from previous years, including for disadvantaged pupils, does not match the improved progress seen by the inspection team. This is because pupils are now making faster progress due to improved teaching. Some of the starting-point information that progress is judged against was from before the school amalgamated and may be inaccurate.
- School leaders have detailed information about pupils' attainment. Their additional analysis of progress made by pupils and groups, such as the most able, is not yet embedded or shared with governors.

Early years provision

Good

- Leaders have successfully improved the early years provision so that it is now good. The early years manager has worked together well with senior leaders to ensure that children now have a good start to their education at Copnor. One parent wrote that: 'My son has flourished since entering Reception. He has been very well taught and supported in his first year of education. It has been a very positive experience.'
- Children are safe and happy in the early years. Staff are well trained, including in paediatric first aid. Safeguarding procedures are effective and all precautions are taken to make both the indoor and outdoor learning areas safe and secure.
- Teaching is good. For example, phonics teaching is precise and targeted at groups of children based on their ability. Children are quickly encouraged to make the links between early reading and writing. They record the words they sound out, giving them opportunities to develop their pencil control and letter formation at the same time.
- Children enjoy the themed topics. For example, during the inspection children smartly marched behind their teachers as they followed a treasure map to find some hidden coins. Children were pleased to earn a class reward for finding the hidden treasure.
- Children beamed with delight and pride as they used their learning journey books to show an inspector some of the wonderful learning from earlier in the year. Themes covered included: my family, Diwali, fireworks, Christmas, life-cycles, people who help us, and pirates.
- Meticulous organisation goes into ensuring that children try activities in all areas of learning over a two-week period. Children have 10 keys which are linked to tasks they must participate in. This ensures they make good progress developing their skills in all areas of learning and are well prepared for Year 1.

- Assessment is used effectively to plan activities to help children who have fallen behind, including those who are disadvantaged, to catch up. For example, a teacher planned an activity for a small group of boys to knock over tin cans with a bean bag, so they could practise their number recognition and simple addition by calculating their scores.
- Adults work very well with groups of children on assigned activities. They effectively model appropriate language and vocabulary, ask helpful questions to make children think, and give prompts and reminders to support learning. Some adults are less effective at visiting children who are playing independently to extend their learning.
- The high levels of respect between adults and children lead to children behaving very well. The very rare poor behaviour is sometimes linked to children not wanting to complete planned activities. Sensitive reminders about boundaries and expectations soon lead to children making the right choices again.
- Parents play a full and valuable role in their children's learning. Many parents come in to school to read with their children on a weekly basis. They also contribute to their child's learning journal book by adding comments, for example when they are proud of some learning or when their child has achieved something special at home.
- The structured organisation of the school day does not enable children to choose when they learn indoors or outdoors. The structure also requires activities to start and end at certain times. This sometimes prevents some children, who have developed a particular interest or fascination, from deepening their play and learning and seeing an activity through to completion.
- Very few children exceed the early learning goals. Some activities restrict the most able children from deepening their learning. For example, some most-able children quickly completed the activity to use a metal detector to find and sort metal objects hidden in the sandpit. They did not have the opportunity to explore the wider environment themselves with this exciting piece of equipment.

School details

Unique reference number	141096
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10032491

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	684
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Stokes
Headteacher	Douglas Brawley
Telephone number	02392 661191
Website	copnorprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin@copnorprimary.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Copnor Primary School opened in September 2014 following the amalgamation of Copnor Infant School and Copnor Junior School.
- The infant school was last inspected in July 2013 and judged to require improvement. The junior school was last inspected in January 2014 and judged to be good.
- The current headteacher was previously the headteacher of the junior school
- The school is much larger than primary schools nationally. There are currently three classes in each year group.
- Approximately one quarter of pupils are disadvantaged. This is similar to the figure found nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- Less than a tenth of the pupils have a first language that is not English.

- The school operates a breakfast club each morning and after-school club each afternoon.
- The school currently uses alternative provision at Flying Bull Academy and Harbour School for a very small number of pupils.
- The school meets the current floor standards which set out the government's minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in primary schools.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes at least once. They looked at pupils' workbooks and talked to pupils about their learning. Many of these observations were carried out with senior leaders.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteachers throughout the inspection. Her Majesty's Inspector met with the chair and vice-chair of the governing body. He also held a telephone conversation with two representatives of Portsmouth local authority.
- Inspectors held further meetings with other staff who hold leadership responsibilities or are newly qualified. Inspectors took account of 76 responses to Ofsted's confidential online staff survey.
- An inspector telephoned the two providers of alternative provision.
- Inspectors spoke informally to pupils in lessons and at play and lunchtime. They looked at 127 responses to the online pupil questionnaire. Inspectors heard some pupils from Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6 read. They also met with the school council and a group of key stage 2 pupils.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the inspection and took account of 171 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online parent survey. They also considered a letter from a parent.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including documents related to safeguarding, governance, the curriculum, school improvement, behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Brian Macdonald	Ofsted Inspector
Krista Dawkins	Ofsted Inspector
Rosie Beattie	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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