

Baden-Powell and St Peter's Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113792
Local Authority	Poole
Inspection number	338240
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Pye

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

Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	8–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	608
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bob Flint
Headteacher	Geoff Pike
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2006
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Age group	8–12
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 16 lessons, conducted a number of other visits to lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school plans and policies, assessments and the tracking of children's progress, and the provision for pupils who are vulnerable or have special educational needs. In addition 298 parental questionnaires, 123 pupil questionnaires and 33 staff questionnaires were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the standards and progress of pupils across the school, particularly for girls in mathematics and information and communication technology
- the effectiveness of the provision for pupils who have special educational needs
- how well the teaching in lessons, and the school generally, provides for the needs of the gifted and talented
- how effective leaders and managers are, at all levels, at monitoring the work of the school and identifying appropriate plans for development.

Information about the school

This much larger than average middle deemed primary school receives pupils from one of three first schools at the start of Year 4. Pupils transfer to secondary school at the end of Year 7. There are well below the expected number of pupils entitled to free school meals, but the numbers are increasing. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average, with the main group being mixed, White and Asian. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, although the number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average. These are mainly pupils with moderate or specific learning difficulties.

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The school provides an outstanding education for its pupils. A walk around the school reveals pupils working effectively in a building with sparkling displays, three-dimensional art, the sound of young voices singing, and all within a welcoming and highly caring ethos. The headteacher gives an exemplary lead and, together with the deputy headteacher, has established and shared a very clear and strong vision for improvement. Parents recognise the backing he has from a hardworking and committed staff and governing body.

There is excellent care, guidance and support for pupils. Teaching is good and often outstanding. A number of excellent partnerships are used to benefit pupils, particularly in music. Consequently, pupils' achievement is outstanding and they attain standards that are well above those expected for their age. These very high standards have been maintained over a number of years yet there is no complacency. A dip in mathematics in the 2008 Year 6 tests has been analysed thoroughly. This revealed an apparent underperformance of girls, but many had special educational needs and tracking data shows that they progressed well from their respective starting points. Nevertheless, as a way forward, the school has rightly identified the need to further develop problem solving in mathematics.

Lessons are characterised by pupils' eagerness to learn. Their very positive attitudes shine through as they attempt to answer questions and quickly settle to hard work. A particularly strong feature in lessons is the way teachers use information and communication technology. Pupils are motivated by working with the interactive boards during lessons. Their behaviour is excellent and relationships within classes are very secure. Consequently, pupils progress well, including those who have specific gifts and talents. Teachers generally plan work that challenges the pupils well and promotes their progress. Examples of good practice were observed in literacy and music lessons where there was a clear understanding, for example, of the higher learning expected of pupils who found the work easier than others. However, some lesson planning does not always show the specific learning teachers expect from different groups of pupils.

Leadership, including that of the year group and subject leaders is outstanding. It is a measure of the effectiveness of senior leadership in sharing their ambition that the shared commitment to improvement extends to teaching assistants whose professional development has been well attended to. They provide some very good support and use a variety of strategies for those pupils requiring additional support. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This positive approach to professional development extends to staff throughout the school and benefits pupils well. The new information and communication technology equipment

has been matched by staff training. This has had a positive influence in the classroom and on the standard of the work of pupils, including girls, for example when they use technology to support their creative writing. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection and reflects an outstanding capacity to sustain improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Eradicate the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring:
 - all are sufficiently confident to teach problem-solving approaches in mathematics, and
 - that lesson planning more clearly defines the expected learning for different pupil groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

In the lessons observed, inspectors clearly saw that positive relationships, the capture of the pupils' interest and their eagerness to learn help underpin their good progress and very high standards. In a geography lesson, pupil enjoyment was obvious as they rehearsed the formation of meanders and oxbow lakes in the playground, prior to watching an animated video once back in the classroom. Mutual respect is evident. In an English lesson that explored myths, pupils knew their views were valued and were prepared to engage with the learning. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils concentrate and remain on task for prolonged periods.

In the past five years, standards at the end of Year 6 have been well above average. School tracking data shows that when the pupils leave at the end of Year 7, the majority exceed the expected levels for their age. This includes those few pupils from minority ethnic groups. Given their starting points, this reflects good progress, and for many pupils in Year 7 particularly, better achievement levels. In the current data, there is evidence of the school tracking the performance of girls in mathematics. In the 2009 Year 6 year group, girls outperformed boys. However, results in mathematics are comparatively weaker than those in English and science and the school is looking to develop more consistent use by teachers of problem-solving approaches.

Pupils are polite, welcoming and demonstrate excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The latter is often due to the excellent range of art and music within the school. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy school. Attendance is good but sometimes affected by parents taking pupils out during term time for holidays. Pupils like exercise and have numerous opportunities to take part. At lunchtime, ball games, a climbing wall and table tennis are available to them and are used well. The many sports clubs are very well attended. Pupils' knowledge of how to stay healthy is excellent and reflects the impact of the school's work in gaining national awards, such as the Sportsmark Gold Award. Pupils make an excellent contribution to the community. There is widespread membership of the school council, they are eager to act as house captains, and Year 7 pupils willingly participate in mini-enterprise

activities. They enjoy the challenge of using their thinking skills, for example in a mathematics lesson on division. Pupils enthusiastically contribute to class discussions and speak in detail of their debates on issues, such as cyber-bullying. Through sport, art, and music, pupils are extremely active in their local community. Their teamworking skills are developed successfully. For example, in a science lesson, they worked effectively in groups developing ideas about genetically modified crops. Such skills, linked to their high levels of personal development and academic standards help prepare them exceptionally well for future life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

Effective monitoring has played a significant role in sustaining high standards, and in developing the skills of new teachers. Most teaching is good and many lessons are outstanding. Pupils' progress is fastest when lessons involve the pupils in imaginative, practical activities. In a literacy lesson, their vocabulary for creative writing was enhanced successfully by the use of the school's Anderson shelter to replicate the environment and experience of a literary hero they are studying. The pupils develop their vocabulary well, writing of the shelter being 'musty', and seeing 'dust particles in the air lit up by the sun's rays coming through a crack in the shelter's door'. Other outstanding features, such as highly focused and challenging questioning, very good briefing and deployment of teaching assistants help ensures all pupils are included in lessons. High expectations help to challenge pupils. While most lessons are well planned and the learning expected of different pupil groups is clearly identified, this is not always the case and, consequently, pupils' progress dips. Marking, as for the 'Sustained Writing Assessment Test' is detailed and gives very good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. On occasions, in other

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

marking, guidance to pupils about how to improve is not sufficiently clear.

The outstanding curriculum contributes successfully to the school's aim of developing pupils' social and personal skills, as well as their academic skills. Numerous examples of subjects being linked to make learning more real for pupils were observed. Theme weeks are an effective strategy and include a global week where pupils' knowledge of, for example, other cultures, food, and geography are very well extended. The art and music contribution to the curriculum is outstanding. The community choir, the rugby boys' dance project, Harvest Festival singing, aboriginal art and African masks are among numerous activities that add colour and enjoyment to the pupils' lives. The extent of the extra-curricular activities is excellent, with almost half the school having the chance of a residential trip every year. More regularly, acapella, jazz band, hand bells, art, sport and sport leaders clubs, among others, attract high numbers of pupils.

The efficient leadership and management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs has very positive outcomes for those pupils. This high level of professionalism coupled with a warm, caring approach contributes significantly to the outstanding care, support and guidance of pupils. Pupils say they are treated as individuals, and the work of the teaching assistants helps ensure that pupils who have special educational needs are fully included in lessons and consequently make similar progress to their peers. These pupils have detailed individual education plans that are regularly monitored and reviewed. The school is proactive on behalf of vulnerable pupils, and links with a wide range of external agencies to access any necessary support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Parents are extremely supportive of the leadership of the school. The diligent and highly effective leadership of the headteacher has enabled the school to maintain its high standards. He has done this through building a successful and very supportive team who share his passionate commitment to providing pupils with a high-quality education. Staff questionnaires show morale is high, and they particularly comment on the encouragement and helpful support they receive from the senior management team. The school is very well supported by a governing body that, through regular visits and briefings from staff, are able and willing to challenge the school and help drive improvement. Safeguarding issues are very well addressed and school leaders at all levels help ensure that pupils enjoy equal opportunity. Subject and year group leaders fulfil their roles well, and promote improvement effectively. However, there is

at times insufficient rigour in their interrogation of assessment data and use of pupils' work, to inform their awareness of any variations in the progress of pupil groups. There are examples of good and effective provision for enhancing community cohesion. This is particularly strong within the school and local community. Pupils host a dinner for over twenty Second World War veterans, for example, and hear about their experiences first-hand. While links with international organisations have developed well, the school acknowledges there is room to extend national links.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents are very happy with the work of the school. They were particularly supportive of the leadership and management of the school, and were in agreement that the school keeps their child safe and that the teaching is good. The overwhelming majority of parents agreed that their child enjoys school and that behavioural concerns are well dealt with. A very few had concerns about the progress of their child being as good as it might be.

Only a very small minority of parents expressed the view that the school was insufficiently meeting their child's needs, that it didn't enable them to give support for their child's learning, or take sufficient notice of their suggestions. The great majority of parents disagreed with this viewpoint. Inspectors kept these views in mind, but did not find evidence to sustain these few criticisms.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Baden-Powell and St Peter's Middle School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 298 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 608 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	206	69	88	30	3	1	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	219	74	77	26	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	142	47	135	45	5	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	151	51	119	40	12	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	213	71	75	25	1	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	152	51	132	44	8	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	172	58	114	38	4	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	160	54	108	36	3	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	155	52	123	41	8	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	180	60	92	31	6	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	138	46	125	42	8	3	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	249	84	44	15	1	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	233	78	60	20	3	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.



9 October 2009

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Baden-Powell and St Peter's Middle School, Poole,
BH14 8UL**

Thank you for your warm welcome to the inspectors who visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and listening to your interesting comments. Like you, we judge that yours is an outstanding school.

There are many very good things that your school does. It helps you develop as young people exceptionally well. We liked that you told us how much you enjoy school, that the teaching is good, and the place is welcoming and friendly. The way you get along together and help each other is very encouraging. We liked the way you know how to remain safe and healthy. Those of you in the playground at dinner time certainly were active, playing ball games, table tennis and using the climbing frames. Well done!

The teaching you receive is good and often better. This helps you to make good progress with your work. The standard of your work is well above that expected from pupils at the end of Year 7. We particularly liked the way the teachers gave you so many different and interesting things to do in lessons and in your clubs and trips. Your headteacher and his staff are very determined to make sure you get the very best education. They are very skilled at running the school.

Even outstanding schools can get better. We have asked the school to look at improving the few lessons that do not match the very best. We have suggested making sure you all have really good opportunities to practise problem solving in mathematics. Also, that teacher's plan work that challenges all of you. You can help by telling your teachers when you find the work too easy or too hard.

Thank you again for your welcome and on behalf of the other inspectors, I wish you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Pye
Lead Inspector

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