

Talbot Primary School

Talbot Drive, Wallisdown, Poole, Dorset, BH12 5ED

Inspection dates 17–18 June 2014

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.

- Pupils develop positive attitudes to learning and enjoy school. They are proud to be 'Talbot children'. They feel safe and are keen to learn.
- All groups of pupils achieve well because teaching is good and support is effective. Pupils are currently working at levels similar to most pupils in other schools. Some reach much higher levels in writing and mathematics. English and mathematics are given priority.
- There is effective teaching across the full range of subjects.
- Pupils regularly swim in the school pool and enjoy a wide range of art and music.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Phonics teaching (the sounds which letters make) is particularly strong and children show good levels of skill in reading and writing.
- Almost all pupils behave well. They get on well together, are polite and quick to do as they are asked.
- Leaders, including governors, have successfully driven improvements in achievement and maintained a good quality of teaching since the previous inspection.
- The vast majority of parents and carers are happy with the school and the way their children are developing. Opportunities for them to be involved in their children's learning are effective.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking is occasionally slightly inaccurate, which slows pupils' learning. Pupils are not given enough time to respond to teachers' comments or to learn from their own mistakes.
- Pupils' progress slows when activities are sometimes a bit too difficult for some or too easy for others.
- Pupils eligible for additional funding do not achieve quite as well as other pupils, especially in Years 4 and 6. Leaders have yet to fully formulate and implement plans to address this issue.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors visited 20 lessons taught by all 14 teachers. All classes were seen at least once. Five of these observations were joint visits with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Discussions were held with parents, carers, pupils, governors, an officer from the local authority, the school's improvement partner, senior leaders and staff.
- Inspectors received the views of parents and carers through 49 responses to the online Parent View questionnaire and informal discussion.
- The inspectors gathered the views of staff through 30 responses to the Ofsted inspection questionnaire Parent View and discussions. They gathered the views of pupils through prearranged and informal discussions, in and out of lessons.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents, including the school's information on pupils' current and recent progress, pupils' work, planning and monitoring documents, as well as documents relating to safeguarding and records relating to behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Jo Curd, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Rushforth	Additional Inspector
Margaret Faull	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This primary school is bigger than most. It has two classes per year group from Reception to Year 6. The number of parents and carers choosing to send their children here is now rising rapidly and a third Reception class is due to open in September 2014.
- At over 40%, the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is much higher than the national average. This is additional funding for specific groups of pupils, in this case those who are looked after or who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils who start at, or leave, the school in years other than the Early Years Foundation Stage or Year 6 is higher than in most other schools. Most of those coming in mid-year have additional emotional, social or learning needs.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs at the level of school action is higher than in most other schools. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also higher than the national average. This was particularly true for proportions in Year 6 in 2013.
- Until July 2013, when schools in the local authority were reorganised, the school also had pupils in Year 7.
- The school was placed into the category of special measures in 2010. Achievement, teaching, as well as leadership and management, were all evaluated as inadequate. A monitoring visit in 2011 evaluated that progress since the report was inadequate. In a full inspection, in 2012, the quality of teaching, leadership and management were considered good, but achievement and behaviour required improvement.
- The current headteacher started at the school in September 2011. Prior to that there had been many and frequent changes in headship for several years.
- The school did not meet the government's current floor standards in 2013, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and rates of pupils' progress by:
 - making better use of information from assessments to plan activities at the right level to provide suitable challenge for all pupils
 - making sure that marking is accurate
 - providing opportunities for pupils to reflect on, and learn from, any errors they have made as well as to respond to teachers' comments in their marking.
- Develop and implement plans to increase the achievement of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding, especially in the current Years 4 and 6, so they can catch up with other pupils in their year group.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- All groups of pupils achieve well across a range of subjects. The proportion making and exceeding expected rates of progress in English and mathematics is better than in most other schools. Pupils are taught well, are positive about school and keen to learn. This is a huge improvement on past performance which has been sustained over time.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage start with knowledge, skills and understanding much lower than is typically expected for this age. Very few are at or above expected levels in any area of learning. Most enter with skills that are just below expectations, but some children's abilities are much lower than this. The children achieve well because routines are consistent and staff have high expectations, but the proportion reaching a good level of development remains below the national average.
- Attainment is rising and being sustained. The proportion of children reaching a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage and who are doing well at Key Stages 1 and 2 has risen. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been in line with national averages for the past three years. Attainment is rising in all year groups except Year 5 where there are a number of pupils with exceptionally low starting points and a high proportion with additional needs.
- Attainment at the end of Year 6 has also improved. Until now national test results have been much lower than the national average because some pupils had very low starting points and there was a legacy of weaker teaching in earlier years at the school. School assessments indicate that attainment is on track to be broadly in line with national averages in 2014.
- The number of pupils doing well in the phonics test for six-year olds has increased greatly. In the past, pupils born in the autumn term have done much better than those born in the spring or summer. Increased training has improved teaching and a much higher proportion now does well.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs achieve well. Effective partnerships with other professionals such as speech therapists are effective in achieving this outcome.
- Pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding now make faster progress than most pupils nationally. The gap between their attainment and the national average is closing, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. At the end of Year 6, in 2013, the gap between their attainment and others was two terms in English and just over one and a half in mathematics. Currently, the difference between their progress and that of others in the school is negligible in all year groups apart from Years 4 and 6. Equality of opportunity is good.
- More able pupils are challenged to do as well as they can. Some attained the higher Level 6 in mathematics in 2013. In 2014 some pupils took tests at Level 6 in writing and mathematics. Their success in writing is confirmed and although results in mathematics are not yet verified these pupils are working at these levels in class.
- Given their starting points, pupils who start part way through the school achieve well because staff assess their needs fully and quickly. A parent of one of the pupils said, 'The school really meets my child's needs.'
- Primary sports funding has been used well to improve the quality of teaching, increase the engagement of all pupils, especially girls and to buy resources. Pupils use the equipment well in lessons and clubs, helping their fitness, well-being and health.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Good teaching helps all groups to achieve well. Learning is well planned, calm and purposeful. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute towards the positive ethos around the school and the time for learning.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is effective. Teamwork is strong and teaching assistants are well trained to play a full part in children's learning and development. Planning is clear and effective. Opportunities, for example for children to learn by themselves, with each

other and from teachers, both inside and outside, are good.

- The school building, grounds and resources are attractive, of high quality and well kept.
- Effective questioning by teachers and teaching assistants helps encourage pupils' use of their imagination and to achieve well. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on using personification in poetry, a teaching assistant successfully encouraged pupils' skills. This resulted in some high-quality imagery, for example 'mechanical monsters build a dam of dirt'.
- A range of support is provided to help pupils make progress. For example, the nurture room where pupils can go for advice or counselling has been helpful to many, including some disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.
- Work in books is plentiful and well presented. Pupils take pride in their work.
- Marking is thorough and generally up to date. It is usually, but not always, accurate and typically shows pupils how to improve. However, not enough time is provided for pupils to learn from their mistakes or to respond to teachers' comments.
- Assessments of pupils' achievements are thorough and frequent. However, teachers do not always use the information gathered well enough to make sure that activities are suitably challenging for pupils. These are occasionally a bit too easy for some or too difficult for others.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in the dining hall. Consequently, lunch times are calm, settled, pleasant and social occasions. Pupils' enjoyment of school and their motivation help pupils to achieve well. Attendance has improved and is now slightly above the national average. Pupils are courteous, polite and friendly. They welcome visitors and hold doors open for them.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage work hard, are keen to learn and quick to settle. They concentrate well which helps their learning. This was clearly evident when a group of boys spent considerable time writing about the texture and shape of shells.
- Any inappropriate behaviour is managed well. There are marked improvements in those with the most challenging behaviour. There have been no exclusions for the past three years. Staff help remove barriers to learning and help all to participate fully. For example, pupils who need help to concentrate sit close to staff in assemblies, which enables the event to run smoothly to the benefit of all.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Pupils develop a strong sense of right and wrong, learn about a wide range of people and raise money for charity. They showed respect and appreciation as they watched and reflected upon an inspiring video about a man without limbs in an assembly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Systems to check on behaviour and ensure safeguarding are detailed and robust. Administrative staff have played a key part in this process, researching the fine details of requirements and making sure everything is up to date.
- Pupils have a good understanding of different forms of bullying. They know that unacceptable behaviour, including, bullying and the use of derogatory language, sometimes occur, but are confident that it is addressed quickly if it does.
- The vast majority of parents and carers and all the staff who responded to questionnaires and who spoke to inspectors are positive about behaviour and safety. Pupils say they feel safe because they know that teachers and friends will help them.

The leadership and management are good

- Leaders at all levels have successfully driven improvements in achievement and behaviour since the previous inspection. They are well organised and plan well. They give a high priority to making sure that improvements, including those in achievement, will be sustained, even if staff or situations change.

- The vast majority of parents and carers are very happy with the school and appreciate how well their children are developing. Most are particularly pleased with the work of the headteacher. One even said, 'We need to bottle her energy.'
- Leaders' understanding of how well the school is doing is detailed and accurate. Leaders know the school, its pupils and families well. They address barriers to learning imaginatively and successfully. They have implemented a strong and positive charter for 'The Talbot Child', emphasising, for example, good behaviour, resilience and a strong corporate identity for the school. These have helped improve behaviour, pupils' attitudes and public perception of the school.
- Assessments of pupils' achievements are frequent, detailed and mostly well used. Any pockets of slower achievement are identified and addressed quickly. The pastoral worker and nurture group, offering support, counselling and information about other services, are helpful to pupils, parents and carers.
- Leaders make checks on pupils' achievement frequently and carefully. They are aware that although pupil premium pupils are achieving well, it is not quite as well as other pupils in the school. They have some ideas about more ways to address this issue but have not yet fully implemented these plans.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led. Staff work particularly effectively with parents and carers. An example of this provision is in weekly phonics sessions, where parents and carers learn about the approach to literacy and how they can support their children's learning at home.
- Opportunities for learning are broad and balanced. Interesting work in lessons is supplemented with a range of popular clubs and trips. These provide well for pupils' academic learning and personal development as well as helping to prepare them for the future, for example with a very popular after-school cooking club. This helps pupils to not only learn about healthy cooking, but also to prepare food to take home.
- Middle leaders, including subject leaders, play a significant part in developing their subjects, as well as contributing to the school more widely.
- Staff are positive about the school and what it provides. They enjoy their work. One, expressing the opinions of others, said, 'This school has been totally transformed over the last three years. It is a great place to work and learn.'
- Officers from the local authority have helped the school on its journey of improvement and are very proud of all it has accomplished. They have checked its development carefully. They have provided little recent support as they recognise that the school's own leaders are successfully taking it forward.
- The school contributes well to other schools and to the community. For example, several teachers are external moderators and assess pupils' work elsewhere. The school swimming pool is used by other schools and the local community.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Governors have had considerable training since the previous inspection. They receive information about the school through reports, frequent discussions, considerable amounts of external validation and visits to the school. They have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and rates of achievement compared to other schools. They are supportive, yet challenging, and have helped other school leaders tackle significant underperformance.
 - They manage finances well and are involved in systems to reward teachers, including the headteacher, for their work when appropriate to do so. Effective systems to appraise the contribution of teaching assistants are also fully in place. They know how pupil premium and primary sports funding are spent and the positive impact these are having on eligible pupils.
 - They meet all their statutory duties. Systems to safeguard pupils are securely in place.

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	113700
Local authority	Poole
Inspection number	430614

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	356
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jayes Rana
Headteacher	Kate Curtis
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 March 2012
Telephone number	01202 513981
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