

Jordans School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110241
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	356710
Inspection dates	9–10 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Paul Edwards

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	60
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Angela Van den Berghe
Headteacher	Pat Farmer
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed four teaching staff while visiting 10 lessons. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body, senior leaders, teaching staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's self-evaluation, assessment and tracking information, the governing body minutes, arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' work. Pupil and staff questionnaires were also scrutinised, along with 51 completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities
- the progress made by girls and whether they progress as well as boys
- the pupils' awareness of the cultures and traditions of people from different backgrounds.

Information about the school

Jordans is a much smaller-than-average infant school. Most pupils are of White British heritage and other pupils are from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well below average. The school has Healthy Schools and Active Sportsmark status and has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Jordans provides an outstanding education for its pupils. The school is held in high regard by parents and carers. The views of one are typical when commenting, 'Excellent school, feel very informed about how my child is taught and all teachers are very accessible. My child loves coming to school and is proud of his achievements. Topic weeks are an excellent way to engage the children.'

Pupils achieve exceptionally well, so that by the end of Year 2 their attainment is high in reading, writing and mathematics. There is no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are extremely well supported, enabling them to progress in line with their peers. Considerable attention is also given to other areas of the curriculum and pupils' musical and information and communication skills are much better than those seen nationally. The vibrant curriculum, enhanced by enrichment weeks and challenge days, contributes very effectively to the pupils' great enthusiasm for learning, illustrated in their excellent behaviour and above-average attendance.

Children are provided with a good start to their education in the Reception class. Improvements to the outside areas are now providing pupils with more opportunities to enhance their learning. Occasionally, activities do not build sufficiently well on prior learning and children do not progress as rapidly as they do in other year groups. Teaching is outstanding overall in Key Stage 1 and consistently engaging. Staff know the pupils exceptionally well and their careful assessments ensure pupils are provided with a very clear understanding of how to improve their work. Very occasionally, teachers miss the opportunity to allow pupils, particularly the more-able, to take responsibility for their own learning and to move on to more challenging activities sooner. ♦

The staff and governing body have a very clear understanding of how well the school is performing. Self-evaluation is rigorous and there has been a determination to make the curriculum more interesting, whilst maintaining high standards in the core subjects. Data are used very effectively to ensure that any underachievement is addressed quickly and monitoring is extremely robust. The governing body promotes community cohesion well and the school has made particularly good use of parents' and carers' diverse backgrounds to enhance pupils' understanding and awareness of other cultures. While maintaining the high standards, the leadership has been effective in improving the physical environment of the school. All these factors show the school is extremely well placed to sustain further improvement. ♦

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the progress of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by ensuring that planning identifies clearly what it is the children will be expected to learn and that assessment information is used effectively to pitch work consistently at the correct level.
- Accelerate progress in lessons, especially for the most-able pupils, by:
 - encouraging pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning
 - allowing pupils to move on to activities sooner.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Children enter the school with skills levels and abilities that are a little above those expected for their age. In common with other pupils, those learning English as an additional language achieve extremely well. Pupils are very confident speakers. For example, in an excellent Year 2 history lesson, pupils sat in the 'hot seats' and responded confidently to questions, providing their classmates with their views on the Great Fire of London. Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) for a range of activities and a space animation demonstrated their confidence and excellent skills. Pupils' mathematical skills progress rapidly. Their mental arithmetic skills are very secure as a result of regular practise. Systematic teaching of letter sounds and letters aids pupils' reading and writing skills a great deal, particularly for those who find learning more difficult.

Pupils enjoy school thoroughly and are keen to talk about the many exciting activities they do and the visits they make. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to eat healthily and to take plenty of exercise and a high proportion participate in the range of sporting activities on offer. Pupils are keen and willing to take responsibility, undertaking a range of jobs around the school. For example, school council members have presented their views on how the outside environment could be improved and their views have been taken into account. Pupils' strong ICT and basic skills and their ability to work very effectively with one another provide them with an excellent foundation for the next stage of education.

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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	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
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	2
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

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

How effective is the provision?

Teachers work hard to enthuse and inspire the pupils. In the best lessons, teachers have novel ways of stimulating pupils' enthusiasm. For example, in an outstanding Year 1 music lesson, the teacher blew soap bubbles and the pupils' understanding of long and short notes and rhythm was improved as they tapped out the beat as the bubbles 'popped' on the floor. Teachers are particularly good at planning work that crosses subject boundaries. For example, pupils developed their understanding of the circumstances of The Great Fire of London and improved their mathematics skills as they stood in for the baker on Pudding Lane, baking and selling bread and calculating the costs. Staff plan work so that all pupils are challenged and supported effectively. Very occasionally, where teaching is good rather than outstanding, pupils are provided with too much information, not giving them the chance to discover things for themselves and to move on to their activities quickly enough. Teaching assistants support pupils very well, particularly those who find concentrating and learning a little difficult.

The whole of the school environment is used extremely successfully to support learning. For example, the installation of a video camera in a nest box enabled pupils to observe the blue tits on a large screen during their lunchtimes. Pupils enjoy the challenge days thoroughly, held in conjunction with other local schools, solving mathematical and scientific problems. The school works closely with parents and carers and contributes a good deal to the local community. For example, the 'Little Green Fingers Allotment Club'

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and the 'The Green Walk' add much to the pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles. Transition arrangements, both into and out of the school, are effective. All pupils are very well known to the staff, they are provided with excellent support and are very well looked after. As a result of extremely high quality care, guidance and support, most aspects of pupils' personal development are outstanding. For example, the increasing proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided with excellent support, enabling them to make rapid gains in their acquisition of English and to participate in all aspects of the curriculum.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
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?

The headteacher, supported well by senior staff, embeds ambition highly successfully and ensures that the school continues to improve. Self-evaluation procedures are extremely robust and priorities for development arise effectively from rigorous analysis. The headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and learning systematically and is supported well in these activities by senior staff. Governance is excellent. Governors are regular visitors to the school and their precise monitoring and challenge contribute significantly to the direction of the school. The school has improved upon the good outcomes seen at the time of the last inspection. The monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress have sharpened further and been used to sustain excellent progress in the key subjects. The advent of the creative curriculum has added considerable interest to pupils' work. The leadership team works extremely hard to ensure all pupils are treated equally and that there is no discrimination.

Senior staff promote community cohesion well, for example enabling pupils to learn about other cultures during 'International Week'. The school is in the early stages of strengthening links with a school in London to enhance further pupils' awareness of people from other backgrounds. At the time of the inspection, safeguarding procedures were rigorous. There are careful checks on those adults who work in school and regular monitoring of health and safety. Links with parents are excellent and there are many opportunities for them to contribute to, and participate in, their children's learning. Links with local schools are developing well, providing, for example, activities for gifted and talented pupils.

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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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers are happy with the start their children make in the Reception class and they feel they are kept well informed about how their children are progressing. Overall, children make good progress in all areas of learning, ensuring that, on entry to Year 1, their attainment is above average. However, although staff assess children's progress regularly, they do not always make the best use of the information to plan activities that build effectively on the children's prior knowledge and understanding and match activities as closely as possible to children's needs.

Children are confident learners and are keen to take part in the good range of activities that are available. There is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and those children chose for themselves. The staff use a variety of learning strategies to stimulate the children's enthusiasm. For example, children enjoy becoming 'pirates' when searching for buried treasure. Teaching assistants provide effective support for the children, helping them to settle quickly and supporting those who need extra help and guidance. Good leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage help to ensure transition arrangements are strong.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

A much higher-than-average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires and their responses were overwhelmingly positive. All parents and carers who responded said their children were happy at school and almost all felt their children were looked after well. A very small minority had concerns over the progress their children were making. Inspection evidence found that pupils were making excellent progress overall, but that, on a very few occasions, some more-able pupils did not make the excellent progress they did at other times.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Jordans 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 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 51 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 60 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	82	8	16	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	51	23	45	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	32	63	15	29	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	67	14	27	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	32	63	16	31	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	73	12	24	1	2	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)	30	59	17	33	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	37	73	10	20	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	71	14	27	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	57	17	33	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	40	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	76	12	24	0	0	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



11 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Jordans School, Beaconsfield HP9 2TE

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and were most impressed with your singing during assemblies.

You go to an outstanding school, where you make excellent progress and attain highly in your reading, writing and mathematics. You are kept very safe and show a very good understanding of what it means to eat and stay healthy. You enjoy your jobs and responsibilities around school. Your excellent behaviour and your good attendance at school also help you to progress as well as you do.

We found that the school is extremely well led and managed by the headteacher and other staff and that they look after you extremely well, including those of you who find learning a little difficult. Teachers work hard all the time to make lessons interesting and exciting.

We have asked the school to do two things to make it even better. We have asked that you are always moved on to your activities in lessons as quickly as possible. We have also asked that better use is made of information about how well you are progressing in the Reception class to plan work that really encourages you to do better. You can all help by planning some of the activities in lessons for yourselves.

Thank you again for making us welcome.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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