

# Riverside Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	107529
<b>Local authority</b>	Calderdale
<b>Inspection number</b>	377590
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Robert Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	178
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Saira Dunnakey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Val Eggleton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 January 2009
<b>School address</b>	Holme Street Hebden Bridge West Yorkshire HX7 8EE
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## Introduction

### Inspection team

Robert Jones  
Barbara Martin

Additional inspector  
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed learning in nine lessons, taught by six teachers. All teachers in the school were observed at least once. Meetings were held with members of staff, members of the governing body, parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation, including monitoring and evaluation records, minutes of governing body meetings, pupils' work and records relating to behaviour and attendance. The inspection team received and analysed 57 parental questionnaires and others completed by staff and pupils.

## Information about the school

This is a smaller than average primary school where the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language or come from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of disabled pupils and of those with special educational needs is average. In 2011, the school met the government's floor standard, the minimum requirements for pupils' attainment and progress. The school holds Healthy School status.

There has been considerable difficulty regarding headteacher recruitment. The current headteacher was acting headteacher for a period of 12 months before taking up the substantive headteacher role in September 2011. The deputy headteacher retired in July 2011 and was not replaced.

**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

<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>4</b>

## Key Findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- Achievement is inadequate because pupils make insufficient progress in their writing. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and reading. However, those pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs make inadequate progress during their time at school, particularly in reading.
- The quality of teaching is inadequate because it does not challenge pupils of all abilities fully. Some pupils find the work that is set for them too easy and teachers do not have the expertise to use assessment data effectively enough to match work to the pupils’ abilities. Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs do not have their needs met in lessons. Moreover, staff do not have sufficient knowledge or understanding of how to support these pupils effectively either within main classes or in small group intervention classes.
- Most pupils behave well. Behaviour in lessons is usually good but when pupils are not closely supervised, such as at lunchtime, behaviour is satisfactory.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers is inadequate. Self-evaluation is largely undertaken by the headteacher. It has recently improved in quality. Systems have been put in place to hold staff more to account for the progress of pupils in their classes. Staff training has taken place, acknowledging that the quality of teaching over time has not been good enough. However, these initiatives have not been in place long enough to have had a measurable impact on pupils’ outcomes. The curriculum is inadequate because it is not meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the achievement of pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs by:
  - developing a range of interventions to support pupils who have additional needs
  - training staff in how to support these pupils in small group intervention work and when working with them on a one-to-one basis
  - providing effective support for those pupils who arrive at the school with rudimentary reading skills
  - carefully tracking the progress of pupils and intervening promptly whenever any underachievement is detected
  - improving the quality of record keeping and target setting so that staff are clear what the pupils need to achieve and how best to support them in class.
- Improve achievement in writing by:
  - ensuring there is sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities
  - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write extended texts.
- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching across the school by:
  - improving the quality of feedback to pupils so they are clear about what they need to do to improve their work
  - reducing the amount of time teachers spend giving long explanations at the expense of pupils working independently
  - ensuring teachers use assessment data effectively to plan work that matches pupils' abilities.
  - sharing more widely the good practice that currently exists in the school.
- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels drive and sustain improvements by:
  - monitoring the progress of groups of pupils over time and taking prompt action to prevent any underachievement
  - empowering staff to use assessment data effectively to challenge pupils and ensure they receive the support they need
  - refining the current system of meetings with teachers so that there is a rigorous system of holding them to account for the progress of pupils in their classes.

## Main Report

### Achievement of pupils

In lessons, pupils' progress is variable. Where teaching challenges those of all abilities fully and tasks are interesting, pupils make good progress. At times, however, pupils make satisfactory or inadequate progress because they are left to choose work that they can manage easily. This leads to some pupils choosing more difficult work because they enjoy a challenge, but many choose work that they can complete comfortably, leaving them unchallenged. Furthermore, there are insufficient opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to engage in extended pieces of writing. While pupils' overall attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6, they make inadequate progress in their writing skills.

The school's tracking data show that there are pupils who make good progress in reading. This is because these pupils enjoy reading for recreation and engage well with literature on a daily basis. However, this masks the fact that some pupils arrive in Year 3 with rudimentary reading skills. These pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, are not receiving the necessary support to improve their reading skills and consequently make inadequate progress. Moreover, their underdeveloped reading skills are presenting barriers to their learning across the curriculum. The skills of some of the pupils who read to inspectors were three years behind those expected for their chronological age. Inspection evidence indicates that teachers' assessments of reading are overgenerous in some cases, which has given a distorted view of pupils' abilities.

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt their children made good progress. Inspectors found that recently there have been modest improvements in the progress pupils are making, although over time it is clear that progress in writing and for pupils with special educational needs is inadequate.

### **Quality of teaching**

There are pockets of good teaching in the school, but insufficient opportunities for this good practice to be shared. In lessons where pupils make good progress, work is carefully matched to pupils' abilities. Tasks are thought provoking and stimulate curiosity, such as in one lesson where pupils buzzed with excitement as they worked in groups discussing the properties of solids, liquids and gases. The teacher skilfully channelled their discussions to ensure they were involved in high quality debate, which in turn improved their speaking, listening and social skills. Where teaching is less effective, questioning is narrow and limited in scope which leaves pupils unchallenged. Teachers give overlong, drawn out explanations and tasks are sometimes repetitive or mundane. This results in pupils being passive rather than active in lessons. Correspondingly, in these lessons there are fewer opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

Pupils with disabilities and those who have special educational needs are often not effectively integrated into classroom activities. Inspectors observed some pupils who were unable to take part in lessons for long periods of time and were not being supported sufficiently. This is because work is not well enough matched to pupils' abilities and staff lack the knowledge and understanding of how best to support them. Teaching assistants are enthusiastic, although some lack the skills and training to support pupils adequately either in lessons or when withdrawing pupils for small group or one-to-one work. The recording of targets and record keeping for pupils who have a disability and for those who have special educational needs lack rigour. Often targets are not followed up or lack sufficient challenge. On entry to the school, pupils are not assessed with sufficient rigour, and this results in support that is not customised to pupils' needs, particularly with regard to developing their reading skills.

The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is inconsistent. Some marking is incisive and gives pupils good information about how to improve: in some classes pupils have the opportunity to improve their learning by marking their own and each others' work. Too often, however, marking fails to pinpoint precisely what is needed for pupils to improve their work. Sometimes, pupils find teachers' writing illegible or there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to review and act upon teachers' comments.

A very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt their children were taught well. Inspectors found that while this was the case for some, there are serious shortcomings in the quality of teaching for those pupils with a disability and those who have special educational needs, and in the teaching of writing, which is resulting in pupils making inadequate progress over time.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

In lessons, and when closely supervised, pupils generally behave well. They behave best when they are engaged fully in their own learning and are challenged. Where lessons lack challenge, pupils become passive and occasionally behaviour suffers as a result. School records and parental questionnaires indicate that behaviour has improved in recent months, with fewer reported cases of bullying or incidents of poor behaviour. This is because the school has introduced more robust procedures to address instances of poor behaviour. Pupils also say that behaviour has improved recently. They show a good understanding of what constitutes physical and verbal bullying but their knowledge of cyber-bullying is not so thorough. Attendance is above average, although too many pupils arrive late at school in the mornings.

Pupils' behaviour during lunchtimes and breaktimes is satisfactory. They say that there is not much to do during these times and there is a lack of play equipment to keep them occupied. This sometimes leads to behaviour which is a little boisterous during these unstructured times. The site is safe and secure and pupils say they feel safe in and around school.

### **Leadership and management**

Since the previous inspection in 2009, there has been a lack of urgency in addressing the areas for improvement. Gaps in pupils' achievement have widened and the school is not providing equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils. Most of the improvements have taken place in the last three months and notable among these improvements is the good relationship with the community and with parents and carers. However, recent improvements in teaching and leadership are fragile. Therefore, the school is not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

The headteacher has identified correctly key weaknesses in the quality of teaching, monitoring and evaluation, and the pupils' progress. She has begun to introduce strategies to remedy these issues but they are in the very early stages of development so have not had sufficient time to bring about significant and measureable improvements. The turbulence in senior staffing has prevented initiatives from being implemented, monitored and evaluated rigorously. School leaders undertake some monitoring of teaching, planning and assessment, although few lessons are learned from these monitoring activities.

Staff do not have the necessary expertise to use assessment data effectively to challenge pupils and ensure they receive the support they need. Staff have been trained in the use of assessment to support learning. While some staff have improved their practice as a result of this training, some are slow to use these techniques in class. Therefore, the effect of this training on raising pupils' achievement has been negligible.

Until relatively recently, there was no effective system to track the progress of pupils over time. Similarly, the school has not tracked the progress of different groups of pupils so

school leaders were unaware of any differences between the achievement of various groups and between subjects. Consequently, the governing body has not had sufficient up-to-date information on the progress of groups of pupils so has not been able to challenge the school effectively on the issue. The headteacher has introduced a system of meetings with teachers to hold them to account for the progress their pupils make, but the system lacks rigour in its present form and so has had limited effect.

The curriculum is inadequate. While the curriculum offers broad and balanced opportunities which are enhanced by visits and visitors to the school, it is not meeting the needs of pupils with disabilities or for those with special educational needs. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory, but opportunities to enhance their skills and understanding are missed in some lessons.

Leaders and managers at all levels, including the governing body, ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements.



## 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



18 January 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Riverside Junior School, Hebden Bridge, HX7 8EE**

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we came to inspect your school and thank you too for filling in our questionnaire. This letter is intended to tell you what we found out.

The questionnaire you completed told us that most of you are happy in school, and you say that it has improved recently. We saw some of these improvements, but found that the school is not helping you to learn as well as you could. So, we have decided to place it in special measures. This means that the school will receive extra help to improve and inspectors will visit again to check that things are getting better. We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to do a number of things to improve your school. These are:

- to make sure those of you who need the most help receive additional support and that all the staff receive training in order to ensure you make the best possible progress
- to help all of you to make better progress in writing by giving you more chances to write at length and making sure that the work challenges all of you
- to improve the quality of teaching so it is at least good in every class
- to keep a close eye on your progress and ensure that the school improves quickly.

We found that some of you are late for school and this is not helping you learn as well as you could. You can all help by making a special effort to arrive at school on time. I wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Jones  
Lead inspector

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