

Ridgeway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112546
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	367396
Inspection dates	5–6 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Kenneth Thomas

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	195
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Coppel
Headteacher	James Connolly
Date of previous school inspection	8 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed seven teachers and saw seventeen lessons. Inspectors held discussions with staff, groups of pupils, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including school policies, curriculum planning, self-evaluation information, improvement planning, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. They studied pupils' books. Questionnaires returned by 112 parents and carers, 93 pupils and 20 members of staff were analysed.

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

- What is the impact of the school's strategies to raise attainment in writing, particularly that of boys?
- How well do teachers use assessment information to challenge and extend pupils' learning and to track pupils' progress?
- How effectively does the school promote pupils' understanding of cultural diversity?

Information about the school

This is a smaller-than-average primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. None speaks English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. There are no pupils with a statement of special needs. The school has gained national recognition for its work in several areas including the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Eco-Schools Award, School Achievement Award, Artsmark silver award and, Healthy School Status.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ridgeway Primary School provides a good quality of education. The school is justly proud of its welcoming nature and its place at the heart of the local community. Pupils make excellent contributions to the life of the school and the community. They take responsibility readily, behave well and are respectful of their peers, adults and visitors. Because pupils are provided with excellent care and support they feel very safe and secure. As one pupil said, 'All teachers care about you, they will always help you'. Their enjoyment of school life is reflected in their excellent rates of attendance. Pupils participate in regular physical exercise and their good understanding of the importance of diet to health is evidenced in the school's achievement of Healthy School Status. They take full advantage of the additional activities, sports and clubs provided, many of which arise from the school's excellent links with partner schools and outside agencies. Because pupils of all ages get on very well, the learning atmosphere is both purposeful and harmonious. This is recognised by parents and carers. The very large majority of those who replied to the inspection questionnaire expressed total satisfaction with their children's experience at the school. One, capturing the views of many, said, 'The school has a lovely family atmosphere and I am happy with it'.

Pupils' attainment is above average and their achievement is good, given their original starting points, which are broadly in line with those nationally expected for children of their age. A number of strategies have been successfully introduced to improve pupils' writing skills, particularly those of boys. As a result, attainment in English is above average. Attainment is high in mathematics because staff have been very successful in developing pupils' problem solving skills. The good progress pupils make is due to much good and some outstanding teaching. However, teaching is not consistently good in all aspects and progress is stronger in some classes than in others, particularly in Key Stage 2 where the quality of teaching is more variable. This is because, some lessons lack pace due to introductory and other teacher-led activities being too long. The work set does not always match the abilities of different groups of pupils, particularly those capable of doing harder work. There is also inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work. While teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and there are examples of very effective marking in some classes, marking does not always provide pupils with enough guidance on what should be done in order to improve. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and any whose circumstances make them particularly vulnerable, make good progress because they are provided with effective support. The more effective use of assessment information to identify where additional teaching will be most beneficial for these pupils makes a significant contribution to their good achievement.

The improvement seen in the school since the last inspection owes much to the exceptionally clear vision and enthusiasm of the headteacher. His ambition to strive for high quality in all aspects of the school's provision is shared amongst all staff and

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governors. This is exemplified in the imaginative use that is made of the school's limited accommodation for teaching and learning, ensuring teaching remains good overall. Effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work provide senior staff with an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. As a result they are able to set the right priorities for improvement. This, together with the significant improvements seen since the last inspection, illustrates the school's good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further accelerate learning and progress in Key Stage 2 by building on the good and outstanding practice and ensuring that:
 - lesson introductions and other teacher-led activities are not too long
 - learning tasks are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils
 - the marking of pupils' work provides pupils with guidance on the standard they have achieved and how to improve.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy their lessons and their good behaviour makes a significant contribution to their good achievement. However, pupils' work in lessons and in their workbooks indicates that while progress overall is good, it is uneven across Key Stage 2. Pupils achieve well in lessons that are stimulating and engaging. This was exemplified in a Year 2 lesson where pupils made good progress in adding and subtracting two-digit numbers because they were actively engaged in well-planned learning activities. Pupils are very competent users of information and communication technology. They are given many opportunities to run their own enterprise projects and, consequently, they develop an excellent understanding of a range of business skills, including design, manufacture, marketing and budget management. Inspection evidence shows that the progress of the few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds or those known to be eligible for free school meals is also good. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they are sensitively supported with good challenge in class or receive specialist support.

Pupils have excellent knowledge about how to keep safe and demonstrate a high awareness of how to avoid risks, for example on the internet or during their journeys to and from school. Pupils are very keen to contribute to the community and take great pleasure in doing jobs around the school and taking care of younger pupils in the playground. The school council plays an active role, for example, in successfully campaigning for a pedestrian crossing outside the school and organising events to raise money for charities. Pupils speak enthusiastically of their ecological activities, such as working and learning in the school allotment. Strong social and moral development is a feature of pupils' good personal development. High attendance, above average basic skills and participation in a wide variety of entrepreneurial activities ensure that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for their future economic well-being.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

All lessons are characterised by excellent relationships between teachers and pupils. In the best lessons, pupils make good progress because assessment information is used well to guide the planning of learning tasks and pupils are expected to work independently, stretching themselves and others as they talk things through. Perceptive questioning is used to extend pupils' thinking. This was seen in a Year 6 numeracy lesson, for example, where pupils made excellent progress in selecting appropriate calculation skills to solve problems. However, in some lessons, introductions are too long, which gives pupils too little time to practise, extend and apply their learning and skills. Good use is made of assessment information to identify underperformance and to track pupils' progress towards their targets. This, together with the very effective use of a team of exceptionally well-qualified teaching assistants to lead 'raising achievement groups,' makes a significant contribution to the good progress of all pupils.

The curriculum provides pupils with a good range of learning experiences. Pupils' good progress in English and mathematics is underpinned by many opportunities to apply and develop their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. An audit is presently being carried out to ensure continuity and progression in the science curriculum. The school's good provision for creative subjects, such as art and music, is reflected in the Artsmark award. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. These contribute much to pupils' enjoyment, as do trips out of school, including residential visits.

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The vast majority of parents and carers say that the school is very caring. This is borne out by inspection findings. Every pupil is known and treated as an individual. Strong support to promote their well-being is given to children whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The outstanding leadership of the headteacher, with strong support from other senior leaders and staff, has ensured that significant improvement has been made since the last inspection. At the heart of all initiatives is a determination to further improve teaching and learning through monitoring and support. Targets are constantly reviewed to ensure that they are both achievable and challenging. Consequently staff have a clear benchmark from which to ensure pupils make good progress. Excellent links with external agencies support the individual needs of pupils from a range of backgrounds. The school's careful monitoring of pupils' academic and personal progress also demonstrates its commitment to promoting equal opportunities and tackling discrimination should it ever arise.

Governance has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Members of the governing body have worked well with staff to ensure that safeguarding procedures are of good quality. All staff are well trained in these matters and the implementation of school policies is carefully monitored. As a result, the school has the confidence of virtually all parents and carers. The governing body takes its statutory responsibilities seriously and provides the school with considerable support. They are, for example, working tirelessly to seek ways to improve the barely adequate school office space. Parents and carers are provided with a good range of information. This is enhanced through an informative school website. The contribution the school makes to community cohesion is good. A plan and clear actions guide the development in this area well. Pupils' community awareness from a local perspective is excellent. The school is well advanced in the process of developing links with schools abroad to increase pupils' understanding of the range and diversity of culture in the wider world.

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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	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage settle happily and adapt quickly to the daily routines and enjoy the range of activities on offer. Their confidence grows and they make particularly good progress in their personal social and emotional development. As one parent wrote, 'Our child has only been at this school for a year but has thoroughly enjoyed every minute and has made fantastic progress'. Children very quickly become happy and confident learners, and share many tasks together willingly. For example, a small group of children were busily engaged sharing ideas as they built a 'pirate ship', complete with plank. Adults are vigilant in meeting the needs of children, and welfare requirements are met fully. Teaching is good because staff have a good understanding of how children learn and they work well as an enthusiastic team. Occasionally, not enough use is made of the available adult support during carpet-time for ongoing assessment. Staff provide a broad range of adult-led and child-initiated activities that promote good outcomes in all areas of learning. Effective leadership and management have ensured that there has been significant improvement in provision since the last inspection. This is most clearly seen in the excellent use that has been made of the very small outside area. This area now provides a stimulating learning environment in which children have good opportunities to explore and be creative, extending their indoor learning.

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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

There was an above average return from parents and carers to the inspection questionnaire. The responses to the questionnaire reflect a positive relationship with the very large majority of parents and carers. Parents and carers also expressed considerable satisfaction with all areas covered by the questionnaire. A few felt that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour or take account of their suggestions or concerns. Inspectors looked carefully at these two areas, considering a range of inspection evidence, and found that these elements of the school's provision are good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ridgeway Primary 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 112 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 195 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	75	67	35	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	73	65	38	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	37	33	67	60	7	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	48	57	51	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	66	59	42	38	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	42	58	52	7	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	40	63	56	2	2	1	1
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)	41	37	65	58	5	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	45	54	48	8	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	24	69	62	13	12	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	26	23	72	64	11	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	46	41	57	51	8	7	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	66	59	42	38	4	4	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



7 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ridgeway Primary School, Sheffield, S12 3XR

Thank you for the help you gave us with the recent inspection of your school and for the friendly way you received us. We spoke with many of you and you were really helpful and friendly.

Yours is a good school. Children in Reception are given a good start to their school lives and make good progress. You told us you enjoy school. You listen carefully to what your teachers say and are willing to work hard in your lessons. Your good behaviour is a considerable help to your teachers because it enables them to concentrate on making your work interesting and helping you to learn. This is one of the reasons why you are doing well. You make more progress in some lessons than others and we have asked your teachers to make sure that in all of your lessons you are really challenged so that you make the best possible progress. Your teachers spend a lot of time marking your work and we have asked that when they do this, they make clear what you have to do to improve. You can help yourselves to make even more progress by making sure that you try hard to follow the advice you are given.

You have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy. You eat sensibly and take part in physical activities regularly. You learn to work and play well together and to help each other. We were impressed with how you all do so much to help the school, especially those of you involved in making decisions through the school council and who help at playtimes and in the classrooms. Adults at school look after you really well so you are safe and happy. Your headteacher, all the other staff and the governing body are determined to make things even better. We think that everyone can work together to do this and that you will want to play your part by continuing to work hard and attending regularly.

Yours sincerely

Kenneth Thomas

Lead inspector

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