

# Ripley Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112612
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derbyshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	378521
<b>Inspection dates</b>	28–29 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Angela Kirk

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	135
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Clive Eley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Tracy Gannon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	25 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Kirk Close Ripley DE5 3RY
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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	28–29 November 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They visited eight lessons taught by five teachers, together with a number of shorter observations. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information, policies, safeguarding documents and teachers' planning. They also analysed questionnaires from staff and pupils, as well as 73 received from 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 achievement for different groups of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- How teachers ensure the accuracy of their assessments.
- How pupils are helped to know how to achieve well.
- The extent to which leaders and managers, including the governing body, play key roles in initiatives to improve pupils' outcomes.

## Information about the school

Ripley is smaller than the average infant school. Almost all of the pupils are White British. More pupils than average are known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught together in one unit. The school has achieved the national Healthy Schools status and Eco Schools Bronze Award.

**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

Ripley Infant School provides a good education. From starting points below those expected for their age, pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching and outstanding care, guidance and support to achieve average attainment overall. Current achievement in the school is better in English than in mathematics as a result of successful initiatives by the school to improve the teaching of writing and more recently of reading. School and national data show that the progress of Year 1 and 2 pupils has accelerated significantly. This improvement can be attributed to good teaching, positive relationships and an exciting curriculum. Pupils say that they feel safe, have good attitudes to learning and know how to behave well. They are polite and kind to one another, and pupils are confident that when they have a problem, staff are on hand to help them. Throughout the school, pupils are proud of the responsibilities they have, such as being mini leaders, who are playground friends and organise playground games.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, which has improved rapidly over the past 18 months and is now outstanding. Induction procedures are exceptional, with the older pupils, who act as buddies, first visiting their buddy in the local nursery, the term before they start school. Parents and carers are given an extremely useful 'welcome pack' and offered workshops to help them support their children's learning. Care, guidance and support at the school are outstanding. The school's work with families and children, particularly those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, has enabled many to make excellent progress in terms of their improving their confidence, personal development, academic achievement and attendance. However, despite significant initiatives to improve attendance throughout the school, it remains persistently average.

Teaching is good and much is outstanding, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers use prior assessment effectively to plan lessons which are fun and engaging. Occasionally, teachers do not use the full range of techniques, to engage pupils during the initial teaching session, especially when teaching mathematics. Opportunities are therefore missed to adapt questioning to challenge all pupils and to check learning by asking pupils to complete tasks prior to their group or independent work. Information and communication technology is fully integrated into the curriculum. Opportunities for pupils to practise their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills are also well embedded, with problem-solving and mathematics skills slightly less well developed. Consequently, together with pupils' average rates of attendance, pupils' development of workplace skills are only satisfactory.

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The good leadership and management, driven by the headteacher, are central to the improvements taking place in this school. This includes the improved outcomes in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the full range of additional support for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Self-evaluation is accurate and enables the governing body to hold the school to account on key issues. Strong leadership has ensured better progress and an improved quality of teaching since the last inspection, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage, demonstrating the school's good capacity for sustained improvement.

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

- Raise attainment in mathematics to above the national average by:
  - engaging pupils more actively in their learning during the initial teaching session
  - ensuring that this session is adapted so that each pupil is challenged to just the right level.
- Improve attendance by raising the profile of the importance of attendance still further to parents, carers and pupils and by taking steps to reduce the number of holidays taken in term time.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Attainment, although average overall, is improving strongly and is above average in writing. A significant new initiative in the teaching of reading started this term and accelerated progress is already evident over and above the good progress that pupils have already made in reading. Outcomes in speaking and listening and writing are strong because of initiatives since the last inspection to accelerate progress. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils used a class story map to tell the story of Little Red Riding Hood. Actions helped them to remember key details and speech from the story. Visual aids are used well to support pupils' learning, for example some pupils were encouraged to put the adjectives that described the appearance of the big bad wolf around the wolf picture and those that described his character inside him. This helped the pupils to categorise the different adjectives so they could structure their writing effectively.

Pupils achieve well because their teachers ensure that they know exactly what is required of them through the use of individual targets, clear expectations and the criteria for success. This was exemplified in another Year 2 class where pupils made outstanding progress in their task to write questions to ask the Gruffalo. This was because they had discussed effective words used to start questions, had already explored good ideas about what they might ask him, and had their individual target cards on their desks to support accurate grammar, spelling and punctuation. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively in each class to provide additional adult-led group sessions and extra one-to-one teaching for pupils with special educational

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needs and/or disabilities. This support, in addition to targeted interventions, enables these pupils to achieve well.

Work is set at just the right level for group and independent sessions securing good progress. In Year 1, pupils were learning to divide by two. All pupils who completed their original work successfully were challenged to complete some sums using much higher numbers. The school has identified its groups of pupils and tracks their achievements carefully. For example, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve better than those nationally but not yet quite as well as their peers in the school.

Pupils enjoy their learning, reflected in their positive attitudes and clear enjoyment of all that the school has to offer. Their good understanding of how to stay healthy is evident in their ability to discuss a balanced diet and the importance of taking regular exercise. There are varied opportunities for pupils to contribute to the community, for example taking part in the local Remembrance Day service. Much work has been completed jointly with members of the community, such as in developing the new vegetable beds reflected in the school’s Eco Award. Pupils have a good knowledge of different cultures through their curricular topics and recently pupils have shown a good understanding about the celebration of Diwali. They are clear about what is right and wrong and have taken part in a baptism service to help them to understand about spiritual rituals.

*These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes*

<b>Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils’ behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

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

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Teaching is securing good learning and progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Teaching assistants are used to support individuals and group effectively nearly all of the time. Opportunities are sometimes missed to challenge pupils even more and to engage them better through effective interactive activities in the initial teaching session. To ensure the accuracy of assessments, teachers undertake moderation with each other and with teachers from other schools. The school has also benefited from moderation undertaken by the local authority.

The curriculum is well organised across the full range of learning experiences and includes trips and visitors to school to enhance provision and support pupils' enjoyment and engagement with the themes. A good and varied range of extra-curricular opportunities have a high take-up across the school. One limitation of the curriculum is that it does not yet ensure pupils' achievement in mathematics matches that in English.

The school works hard to remove barriers to learning. It has established an environment in which all pupils feel confident that they can succeed. Strong links with and support for parents and carers, and effective partnerships with a range of agencies, help to achieve this. The school ensures that potentially vulnerable pupils are identified quickly and a range of successful interventions put in place. The school's nurture programme is targeted appropriately, with pupils having the opportunity to undertake additional learning tasks in a small group to support their personal development and academic achievement. For pupils with specific needs, much work and support is undertaken prior to the child starting school.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders and managers at all levels are ambitious to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to achieve as well as they can and promotion of equality of opportunity is embedded within the school's ethos. Individual pupils' progress and that of groups is tracked effectively to identify any underperformance, and action is taken as necessary. Leaders and managers make good use of monitoring activities to help evaluate the performance of the school. Consequently, teaching has improved, although occasionally best practice is not fully consistent. The focus on improving English has been successful and the school has already joined with local schools on a

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project to improve mathematics.

The governing body is influential in determining the strategic direction of the school. It receives accurate and informative reports from teachers across a full range of curricular areas. It also undertakes its own extensive monitoring through visits to school, focused well on the school’s priorities, to question and challenge performance. Members are tenacious in monitoring safeguarding arrangements. The school regularly seeks the views of parents and carers and acts on feedback received, for example by reducing the number of sessions required to complete a recent workshop course.

To support community cohesion, pupils have had opportunities to communicate with pupils from other schools which have different cultural, religious and socio-economic contexts to their own. Pupils discuss the different customs of people with beliefs that are different to their own with interest and enthusiasm and have enjoyed taking part in varied activities, for example, in an enactment of a Hindu marriage ceremony.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are exceptionally well cared for and thrive in this exciting environment. The many purposeful and challenging activities ensure that children achieve exceptionally well. On entry, children’s knowledge and skills are below those expected for their age. Their needs are carefully assessed and their progress tracked very closely. By the time they leave Reception, children are achieving above the national average in all areas, having made outstanding progress.

The key to the unit’s success is in the structure of its planning of learning



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opportunities. Each day, children have to complete an independent literacy and numeracy challenge as part of their learning. Children are so keen to achieve well that they ensure that these key skills tasks, which are challenging and fun, are completed regularly. This has overcome such barriers as some boys’ reluctance to write and has guided children away from favouring some areas of learning too much. Furthermore, short but highly-structured adult-led sessions that take place throughout the day are targeted to teach key skills, which are followed up with the next steps for learning either later that day or later in the week. All adults evaluate group and individual achievements, and this feedback is collated ready to be used in subsequent planning.

Children become confident and develop skills that equip them extremely well for the future. They develop tenacity because they are encouraged to complete tasks. They quickly become independent and can prepare themselves ready to go outside with their coat, scarf and hat. They take turns and handle equipment with care. They are taught to keep themselves safe and healthy, for example by regularly washing their hands, carefully tidying equipment away and eating the healthy snacks on offer. The outdoor learning area has similar opportunities for children to explore and discover as they enjoy indoors, with additional physical play activities. Exciting topic themes give lots of opportunities for children to revisit their learning in different ways. For example, a large group the children explored ideas for describing the bear in a story that they had read together. A small adult-led group then were helped to read and write the descriptive words such as ‘wet nose’ and ‘sharp claws’. Another group used paint mixed with wood shavings to try to recreate texture of the fur on their bear pictures. Leadership and management have made a strong contribution to driving improvements since the last inspection. The environment is extremely well organised, vibrant and safe. Leaders model high expectations and have ensured that teaching is outstanding. An action plan is written annually following an evaluation of previous outcomes to ensure that the high standards are maintained and new opportunities explored.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

An above-average number of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. All said that their children enjoyed school, were kept safe, helped to have a healthy lifestyle and that the school was well led and managed. One summed up the views of many: ‘My child enjoys school very much. All of the teachers do an excellent job.’

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Inspection findings firmly endorse parents and carers' positive views about the school. The very few negative written concerns were individual matters. The inspectors judge the school to be diligent in dealing with parental concerns.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ripley Infant 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 73 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 135 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	77	17	23	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	59	81	14	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	42	58	29	40	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	59	29	40	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	59	29	40	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	45	62	26	36	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	63	27	37	0	0	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)	42	58	26	36	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	45	62	26	36	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	32	44	34	47	1	1	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	53	30	41	2	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	48	66	25	34	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	57	78	15	21	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and 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.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



30 November 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Ripley Infant School, Ripley DE5 3RY**

Thank you for making us very welcome and answering our questions when we visited you recently. You told us that the staff take excellent care of you and that you feel safe in school. We were pleased with your good behaviour and by how kind and friendly you are to each other. We saw those of you in Year 2 who are mini leaders organising enjoyable games for the younger children and the playground friends helping everyone to stay safe. You have a good understanding of what is right and wrong, and you were able to tell us all about special festivals such as Diwali. The youngest children in the school get off to an excellent start in Reception where they make outstanding progress. This is because the teachers are very good at planning challenging activities for them. We know that some of you helped to make them feel happy coming to school for the first time because you were their buddy.

We judge that Ripley Infants is a good school. You are making more and more progress each year and your attainment is average in mathematics and even better in English. The teaching is good. Your teachers are particularly good making lessons interesting and enjoyable, for example, by planning activities when you make things or do experiments.

To improve your school further, we have asked your teachers to help you to do better in mathematics by doing more practical activities using mathematics apparatus and whiteboards at the start of lessons. We know that some of you already attend school regularly but we have also asked your headteacher to improve attendance by making sure that you all come to school every day unless you are ill or have special permission.

You can all help too by trying especially hard in mathematics, particularly with your individual targets and by coming to school every day.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk  
Lead inspector

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