

Market Harborough Ridgeway Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	119983
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379928
Inspection dates	23–24 May 2012
Lead inspector	Jane Melbourne HMI

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	312
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Johnson
Headteacher	David Fox
Date of previous school inspection	29 October 2008
School address	The Ridgeway Market Harborough LE16 7HQ
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Age group	4–11
Inspection date(s)	23–24 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

Jane Melbourne

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ruth Dollner

Additional Inspector

Simon Mosley

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team observed 12 teachers, and visited 14 lessons and 12 sessions of phonics (sounds that letters make). They also undertook shorter visits to several classrooms to assess the quality of guided reading sessions and the standards of writing around the school. A sample of children was heard reading. Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, the parent support adviser, staff and groups of pupils. The inspectors spoke to parents and carers as they collected their children from school. 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 the school's self-evaluation, assessment information, lesson plans, pupils' work, school safety procedures and information logs, and responses to questionnaires from 119 parents and carers, 88 pupils and 31 members of staff.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized primary school with one annual intake into two Reception classes. It mainly serves the north east side of the town, with some pupils coming from outlying rural areas. The majority of pupils are White British, with a small number from minority ethnic backgrounds and a few who are in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. There are currently 27 pupils supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs. Additionally, there are 15 pupils with specific medical needs and a small number of looked after children. There is a separate class for each of Years 1 and 2 and one mixed Year 1/2 class. All pupils in Key Stage 2 are taught in mixed age classes. There is a breakfast club on two mornings each week. The school meets the government's current floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress. A new Chair of the Governing Body was appointed in September 2011.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good school. It is not yet outstanding as teaching practices are not consistent across all classes and pupils have the capacity to do even better. However, school leaders and the governing body demonstrate a strong capacity for sustaining school improvement. The school has fully addressed all of the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection.
- Accurate assessment has identified that the gaps in the performance of different groups in the school are closing. The very large majority of pupils are making good progress. While pupils' attainment is consistently above that of most pupils nationally, school data indicate that some potentially more able pupils do not achieve the reading levels of which they are capable, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1.
- The teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 is mostly good. There is much outstanding practice worthy of sharing, for example improvements in the way that pupils' work is marked. Rigorous monitoring and ongoing staff development mean that any weaknesses are being tackled systematically. However, there remain some inconsistencies in pupils' handwriting and the quality of what they write in non literacy books across Key Stage 2. There are also some inconsistent practices in the teaching of phonics and reading, including in communicating effectively to parents and carers how the school teaches phonics and reading and how they can help.
- The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children are happy and highly motivated; consequently most make at least good, and some make outstanding, progress.
- Pupils are well behaved in lessons and around the school. They understand how to keep safe. There is a happy atmosphere and pupils are highly supportive of each other.
- The school is well led and managed. The headteacher is aware of his school's strengths and weaknesses and he understands pupils' individual needs very well indeed. The school's self evaluation is accurate and leaders have prioritised actions appropriately.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further secure the rate of pupils' progress, especially in Key Stage 1, by:
 - ensuring greater consistency in the teaching of reading across the school
 - making it clearer to parents how they can help their children learn to read and the approaches the school takes on this
 - ensuring that teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' handwriting and the quality of what they write in all subjects
 - extending good practice in marking beyond literacy and numeracy.
- Make sure that all teaching is of a consistently good or better standard by:
 - sharing the good or outstanding practice across the school
 - providing appropriately targeted continuing professional development.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupils' progress in lessons and over time is good. This is because work has been thoroughly planned and adapted for the full range of abilities and ages within each class. Inspectors' observations exactly matched the school's own monitoring outcomes in this respect.

There is a consistent trend of pupils attaining beyond what is nationally expected in all key stages, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. All children make at least good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They enter the Reception classes at around the levels expected for their age and leave beyond what is expected. The school has rightly identified the necessity to make sure this good progress is sustained across Key Stage 1 and that pupils achieve the levels of which they are capable. Almost all parents and carers believe their children are achieving well, and inspection findings support their views.

Pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is good overall. Attainment in 2011 was particularly strong in mathematics reflecting the whole school focus in this area. Attainment in writing has been less consistent in Key Stage 2. Although attainment in reading and writing at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2 is beyond what is nationally expected, a small number of potentially higher attaining pupils are still not achieving as well as they might in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and writing at the end of Key Stage 2.

There is little variation in the progress made by different groups of pupils. The school ensures that boys and girls achieve equally well, and continues to work on motivating boys to write at length. Girls' achievement in mathematics has improved. The school monitors the progress of different groups rigorously and it is quick to spot any differences and put in effective levels of additional support. This means that disabled pupils or those with special educational needs, and those in other minority or potentially vulnerable groups, learn well and mostly progress as well as other pupils. This is also true of any pupils who joined the school when they were in the

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early stages of learning English. The vast majority of parents and carers are very satisfied with the levels of support their children receive to help them to settle and to succeed.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good overall and improving. There is some outstanding practice worthy of sharing in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in upper Key Stage 2. Parents and carers responding to questionnaires believe the teaching to be good, a view also shared by the pupils. Teachers have worked hard to ensure that the pace of lessons is brisk and that pupils get down quickly to independent learning. This is possible because pupils enter school with positive attitudes and the desire to learn. The very large majority of pupils are well aware of how to improve their work and reach their targets in literacy and mathematics because of very thorough marking in these areas. This is not so in other curriculum areas because the minimum expectations for writing, presentation and handwriting in all year groups are not consistently followed through in all books. Pupils do, however, have many opportunities to practise their writing, numeracy and technology skills in their topic work. Topics have been well chosen to match pupils' interests; consequently, there are high levels of motivation.

Since the last inspection there has been a relentless focus on pupils developing a range of research and investigative skills, particularly in science and mathematics. These lessons are now better adapted to the full range of learners. There were a small number of parents and carers who did not believe that the teaching of mathematics had yet sufficiently improved, but these were in the very small minority. Most staff are developing the knowledge and skills to assess accurately pupils' learning and progress towards the lesson objectives and their personal targets. Pupils are also beginning to evaluate their progress because of the sharing of clear success criteria in most lessons. The school believes that it teaches reading well. While this is broadly true, inspectors agree with a small number of parents and carers who did not feel that this is consistent across all classes. The shared expectations for helping children read, and the teaching method for this adopted by the school, are not sufficiently well communicated to parents and carers. The reading diaries which go home are not used consistently across the school. The guided reading sessions are not as effective as they should be in all classes. The teaching of phonics is mainly good, but not consistently so. Professional development in this area continues to be prioritised.

Staff consider all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well through their teaching. They have increased pupils' awareness of other cultures through visits to places of worship in the nearby city of Leicester, and by driving forward a schools link with Zambia. Displays, and the school environment generally, stimulate learning. Teachers make effective and creative use of resources to promote learning, for example, the regular use of puppets in the Reception classes to reinforce learning in number, and the links established with a local upper school to increase children's understanding of scientific enquiry. Targeted support and a range

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of interventions ensure that individual needs are met, including for those pupils who speak English as an additional language and any who are identified as needing further help with their learning.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' behaviour is typically good and it makes a positive contribution to learning and pupils' feeling part of the school community. A small minority of pupils who responded to the questionnaire did not think that behaviour was good all of the time. However, more generally, lessons are interesting and pupils are engaged in their learning, so misbehaviour is relatively rare in most classes. This is recognised by the very large majority of parents and carers and can be attributed to the school's effective planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, staff's high expectations for behaviour and the common understanding of the school's clear behaviour policy. Pupils believe that any misbehaviour is dealt with fairly and that sanctions are applied consistently. They are keen not to lose their special Ridgeway Time which is rewarded for good behaviour.

The school has achieved the Beyond Bullying Award and enhanced Healthy Schools' status due to its commitment to tackling bullying. There are very few incidences of bullying, such as racist or homophobic name-calling; any very rare occurrences are handled swiftly and appropriately, encouraging the pupils to reflect on the impact of any unkind words or actions. Pupils who find behaving well more challenging are very well supported to learn how to share and play kindly with others.

Pupils take on responsibilities around the school willingly. They understand how to keep themselves safe. Pupils say they feel safe in school and the vast majority of parents and carers agree. This is because of the well organised arrangements for the care of all pupils, including targeted support for potentially vulnerable pupils. The school has worked hard to improve further, and sustain, its track record for attendance, which is currently above average. It can cite striking examples of working closely with individual pupils and their families to improve their attendance and overcome significant barriers to their education. Consequently, this has had positive impact on their learning and progress.

Leadership and management

There have been some significant improvements in the quality of leadership and management since the last inspection, for example, in the strengthening of the work of some middle leaders and the governing body. The school evaluates its work very accurately and it sets correct priorities for its development. Staff and the governing body are monitoring the school even more closely and working together more effectively, which has increased the school's capacity to improve. There are rigorous systems in place for tracking pupils' achievement and progress, including regular work scrutinies, which are embedded and used well to inform regular pupil progress meetings. Performance management and continuing professional development are linked to pupils' progress and areas for school improvement, as well as improving the

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skills of all staff, not solely of the main teaching staff. This has supported the school's progress from being satisfactory to becoming good, and has reduced inconsistency across the school, including inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, assessing learning in lessons and the marking of pupils' work.

The governing body is becoming increasingly effective, through accurate reviews of its own work. It is now more focused on attainment and pupils' progress, as well as on whole school improvement. Further training and good quality support from the local governor services have ensured that new and existing members are sufficiently clear about their roles and responsibilities. Expertise provided by the new members has strengthened the governing body's collective knowledge. The governing body ensures that pupils' health and safety, including arrangements for safeguarding, are given priority and that there are equal opportunities for all pupils, including any whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable or who require more support to succeed. The school also tackles potential discrimination effectively by ensuring that all pupils are valued and that there is an ethos of respecting others and embracing difference.

The school has worked hard to engage with parents and carers, who mostly praise the way in which the school meets their children's individual learning and medical needs. A few did not believe the school responded sufficiently well to their concerns, but this was not a general feeling. The school has introduced a new skills based curriculum which is good because it engages pupils well, meets their needs adequately and is developing them spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. This is being monitored very carefully to ensure it covers all curriculum areas effectively. Additionally, there is a wide range of highly popular after-school clubs to suit all interests, including those who have musical and sporting talents.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	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 to 31 December 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).

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.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
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.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
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.

25 May 2012

Dear Pupils



Inspection of Market Harborough Ridgeway Primary School, Market Harborough, LE16 7HQ

Thank you for all the help that you gave to the inspection team during your school's recent inspection. I understand why almost all of you enjoy coming to school and why you feel so safe and well cared for. I support the view of the vast majority of parents and carers who also believe that you are safe and that the school meets your needs. We have judged Ridgeway Primary to be a good school. The staff and the governing body have worked really hard to develop areas which required improvement and to make sure that all of you get a consistently good deal. They understand which areas they still need to develop further.

Teachers have been committed to ensuring all lessons are as good as the best in the school. Some lessons we saw definitely had the 'wow' factor and I can see why you are all learning so well. Those of you who need extra help are receiving good levels of support. Children in the Reception classes are getting off to an outstanding start because of the wide range of interesting activities to choose from in the classroom and outside. The school has really focused well on developing your reading, writing and number skills. Those of you who are in Year 6 are on track to achieve above the levels expected nationally, which shows that you have made good progress over your time at the school. Your behaviour in lessons and around the school, including in the playground, is nearly always good. You work hard to make sure you get your full entitlement of special Ridgeway Time.

To make sure your school continues to improve, I have asked it now to:

- develop the teaching of reading across the school and tell your mums, dads and other carers more about this
- help you further to develop your writing skills, presentation and handwriting in topic books and ensure the expectations are the same for every area of the curriculum, not just in literacy
- make sure all of the teaching is as good as the best at the school.

I wish each and every one of you much success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne
Her Majesty's Inspector

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