

Riverbridge Primary School

Park Avenue Base: Park Avenue, Staines, TW18 2EF
 Knowle Green Base: Knowle Green, Staines, TW18 1AJ
 Stanwell New Road Base: Stanwell New Road, Staines, TW18 4HZ

Inspection dates 23–24 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Good 2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement 3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The progress of pupils in mathematics requires improvement because pupils are not fully confident in their knowledge of number facts.
- Leaders and managers have been hampered by a lack of information about pupils' progress when the schools merged. They have not been able to use the information effectively to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- A few of the older pupils do not always behave well and make good choices about their actions and words.
- Pupils do not fully understand about different kinds of bullying and how words and actions affect others. They are not clear how they can help to make sure it does not happen in their school.
- While teaching is good, sometimes more-able pupils are not given hard enough work and pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to work independently.

The school has the following strengths

- Teaching is good and has improved since the school opened because of the high expectations and support of the headteacher and senior staff.
- Teachers all use the same approaches to managing behaviour and younger pupils understand what is expected of them. During lessons the behaviour of most pupils is almost always good.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Nursery and Reception classes because teachers provide them with lots of opportunities to develop new skills in reading and writing particularly.
- The headteacher, other leaders and governors have worked extremely hard to overcome the many difficulties the school has faced during the merger of the three schools and have successfully developed a strong sense of a single community.

Information about this inspection

- During the inspection, the inspectors spent time at each of the three bases and observed 36 lessons taught by 26 teachers, as well as support and sessions led by teaching assistants.
- Meetings were held with leaders at all levels, and with teachers, pupils, governors and representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the work pupils have done, listened to pupils read, and talked to them about the targets they have to help them know what the next steps in their learning should be.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during some of their free time, and to parents and carers informally at the start or end of the day. The 71 responses to Ofsted’s online survey, Parent View, were also considered.

Inspection team

Andrew Saunders, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Christine Bennett	Additional inspector
Jennifer Cutler	Additional inspector
Anthony Green	Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is much larger than the average primary school and is based on three sites. Following the merger of three schools, it has three forms of entry, and a nursery which can accommodate up to 78 children over two sessions.
- The school opened in September 2011, as the result of an amalgamation of two infant schools and a junior school. Two of the sites are close together, with the third site about one and a half miles away.
- The headteacher of one of the infant schools was appointed as the headteacher of the new school. From September 2012, an assistant headteacher was appointed as part of the senior leadership team.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for additional funding, the pupil premium, is above average.
- There are more pupils than average who come from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Some of these pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average, although it is above average in some year groups.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also broadly average.
- There have been substantial changes in the staffing at the schools since the merger.
- At one of the sites there is a privately run nursery; this was not part of this inspection.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations set for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rate of progress for pupils in mathematics, particularly during Key Stage 2, by:
 - helping pupils to develop their knowledge and confidence in using number facts
 - using information about how well groups of pupils are doing to plan work that is hard enough, particularly for the more able.
- Improve the behaviour of the older pupils in the school, by:
 - helping pupils to understand the consequences of their actions and words and the importance of making better choices for themselves
 - providing pupils with opportunities to understand different kinds of bullying that could occur, and what they can do to help make sure it does not happen at their school.
- Make sure that leaders and managers at all levels use the information they now have to analyse the impact of support provided for pupils, particularly in mathematics.
- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, particularly in mathematics, by providing pupils with more opportunities to work independently and to respond to their teachers' high-quality marking.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In Key Stage 2, progress in mathematics is hampered because pupils are not always confident using their knowledge of number facts. Progress in English has been good, and the results in national tests were slightly above average.
- More-able pupils are often given more complex tasks to do which require them to develop deeper thinking skills and apply their skills in different situations. However, this is not yet consistent across all lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, and some pupils are capable of reaching even higher standards in national tests than they have done.
- The few older pupils who find it more difficult to live up to the new, high expectations of the school in their behaviour are being helped to make better choices through the support they get. However, their attitudes mean that they do not always participate in lessons as well as they might, and their progress suffers. Other pupils say that these occasional interruptions are not allowed to interfere with the learning of others.
- Progress in lessons seen during the inspection was often good and pupils are now catching up in their attainment with similar pupils of their age. This is similar for all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language. However, there has not been enough time for pupils' improved progress to be reflected in sustained improvement in their achievement over time.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported in learning how to read and write, so that they make good progress in these areas. Support for developing their skills in mathematics is not as effective because the support has not been as well planned or carefully monitored.
- When they join the school in Nursery, children often have skills and knowledge which are below expected levels for their age. Those who move into the Reception classes, or who join the school in Reception, are similarly below the levels of development usually seen for their age. However, the well-thought-out routines, knowledgeable staff and high-quality resources which are available for children to use, mean that children love learning and make a good start, making up ground on other children of their age.
- Good progress now continues through Key Stage 1, particularly in reading, because of the good teaching and a consistent approach to learning how to link sounds and letters (phonics).
- The school has made good use of its pupil premium funding for pupils who are known to be eligible. This has allowed smaller classes in Year 5 and closer support from adults. It has also been used to help engage the boys, for example through a dynamic storyteller working with the pupils. As a result, the rate of their progress has improved and is now similar to that of the girls.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is much improved. Inadequate teaching has been eliminated and most of the teaching is now good as result of the high expectations set by senior leaders and the support which has been given to teachers. Evidence in books and records of external monitoring of teaching confirm that this is typical of teaching in the school.
- Occasionally, teaching is outstanding and teachers are developing their understanding of how to ensure pupils make rapid progress. For example, in a Year 6 lesson on control technology, the teacher emphasised what pupils already knew, encouraged them to use each other as a resource, and set high expectations of what they would achieve. Pupils worked intensely and made outstanding progress, not wanting the lesson to stop.
- There is an admirable sense of common purpose across the three sites, and a strong consistency in the strategies that are used to make sure teaching is good. For example, the key learning focus for each lesson is shared at the start of every lesson, and pupils are given a clear indication of how they will know if they have achieved this. In the very best lessons, pupils help

decide what these 'steps to success' are.

- Teachers plan interesting work which excites the pupils about learning. Across the school, teachers frequently relate what pupils are learning about to real situations in the world around them. This makes learning meaningful to the pupils. However, pupils do not always have opportunities to identify these links independently.
- Marking is regular and often of a high quality. However, pupils do not always respond to teachers' comments or act upon the advice they have been given, especially in mathematics.
- Teachers also ensure that skills in reading, writing, and to a lesser degree mathematics, are practised in a wide range of different contexts. While this helps pupils to know why the skills are important, their number skills in mathematics are not always up to the task.
- During lessons, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are usually well supported by teaching assistants, while being encouraged to be as independent as possible. However, this is variable, and the impact of some of the support is not as effective, particularly in mathematics.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

- A few of the older pupils do not find it easy to keep within the expectations of the school. Their behaviour can be difficult when they make poor choices about their actions and words. However, the number of recorded incidents where senior leaders have to get involved has decreased considerably and behaviour is improving. Other pupils say that such incidents do not usually interrupt their learning because they are dealt with firmly and because teaching is now good.
- While the behaviour of younger pupils is usually good, at times it is too closely managed by the adults around them and this means they do not develop enough independence in choosing what would be the best thing to do. They know how to keep themselves safe, for example when travelling to and from school, and how to be careful when using the internet.
- Pupils say that bullying does occur occasionally, although they are not always clear what different forms bullying can take. They feel that they can approach some of the adults about it, and that it usually gets sorted out.
- The school has worked hard to help all the pupils understand how others may feel in the light of unkind or unpleasant things that may be said or done. Pupils who may have upset others are given the chance to reflect on this and to help put things right again. This helps the social and moral development of pupils.
- Expectations of what is acceptable behaviour are consistent across the school, and teachers follow the same methods to make sure that all pupils know this. Other adults are being trained and supported to be more aware of how to get pupils to cooperate through the use of positive approaches in line with the school's behaviour policy.
- During lessons, pupils are usually well behaved because they are interested in the work they are given to do and they frequently get the chance to work together.

The leadership and management

require improvement

- When the schools were merged the local authority did not ensure that the data from the previous schools were carefully brought together to be available when the new school opened. This has taken too long to sort out and has added considerable difficulty to the task facing the leaders of the school.
- This has meant that leaders have not been as well informed as they might have been, particularly about the progress of some groups of pupils. A new tracking system is now in place and is being used more widely across the school, but this is a very recent development. Leaders are not fully adept at understanding what data show about the impact of support on how well groups of pupils are doing, particularly in mathematics.

- The agreed strategies for managing behaviour are used consistently by teachers and this has improved the behaviour of younger pupils. However the impact on some older pupils has not been as effective because their past experiences have not prepared them for making good choices.
 - The key improvement that leaders have brought about has been in raising the quality of teaching across the school to good. The headteacher and senior leaders have worked well to develop a strong vision for the school, to develop leadership more widely, and to give teachers the resources and training they need to be able to teach well. They have succeeded in eliminating inadequate teaching, but there is not yet enough outstanding teaching.
 - Senior leaders have tackled immense difficulties in bringing together three sites, three groups of staff and parents and carers, alongside different approaches, to form a unified community with a strong sense of identity. Parents and carers are very positive about the way the merger has been handled by the leaders and feel that the new school is improving well.
 - The local authority has helped the school by providing an objective view about the quality of teaching and leadership and has supported the school in challenging inadequate practice and leadership.
 - Senior leaders have used the merger of the schools to ensure that teachers know exactly what is expected of them, and that teachers have to earn any pay rises through improved performance. Performance management rates are closely linked to the progress of pupils.
 - The introduction of a new curriculum means that there is a consistent approach to the development of skills and clear guidelines about what each lesson should include. The topics that teachers use are interesting and pupils like this approach. However, the most able pupils do not yet have enough opportunities to explore some of their own questions or determine what they want to learn.
 - Leaders use the additional funding available to support pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium to provide an additional teacher in Year 5, so that class sizes are smaller and pupils get closer attention. The money is also used to provide the 'Fun Time Club', which helps to develop social skills, and to help fund trips and visits for eligible pupils. As a result, these pupils develop greater confidence and a wider view of the world. Also their progress is improving and gaps with all pupils are narrowing.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are well informed and bring considerable skills to their work with the school leadership. They have helped the leadership to challenge weakness robustly, to ensure that all requirements for keeping pupils safe are met and to ensure that staff have appropriate training to be aware of their role in this. Their support has been very practical and they have worked to make sure that senior leaders have also kept a view on the well-being of the staff and themselves during the intense work that has been required over the past 18 months. Governors have identified that they need to develop a more independent view of the effectiveness of the school, particularly through their understanding of the data about pupils' performance, and are undertaking training to support them in asking searching questions as they hold leaders to account. Governors keep close track of how the school's finances are used, particularly the pupil premium funding, so that it benefits pupils as much as possible.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	125092
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	400251

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	592
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Nicholas
Headteacher	Maggie Roberton
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01784 227960
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