

Ravensbury Community School

Tartan Street, Clayton, Manchester, M11 4EG

Inspection dates 24–25 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils in all classes are making rapidly improving progress in English and mathematics.
- Standards for pupils who left last year and for those currently on roll have improved dramatically compared to those in previous years.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make outstanding progress due to highly effective teaching and the special arrangements the school makes for them.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good throughout the school and are outstanding in some classes.
- Behaviour has improved significantly over the past eighteen months. Lessons are almost never disrupted by poor behaviour and pupils show considerable respect for each other and for adults around school. Pupils say they feel very safe and bullying is rare. Excellent relationships in lessons create a climate in which pupils' learning can flourish.
- Inspirational leadership from the recently appointed headteacher has had a huge impact in improving behaviour and standards in a short time, due to her very high expectations. The quality of teaching and pupils' work is rigorously checked. Teachers and other adults are held to account by senior leaders and governors but given exceptionally good guidance on how to improve their teaching. As a result, both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement are improving spectacularly.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress and standards in writing are not as high as in other subjects.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching.
- Not all pupils understand clearly enough what they must do to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.
- Inspectors observed 14 lessons taught by 14 teachers. Inspectors also made a number of short visits to classrooms and listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with one group of pupils, members of the governing body, one representative from the local authority. Insufficient responses were available from the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) for the lead inspector to access but a meeting was held with a group of thirty parents, and members of staff including senior and middle leaders.
- Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documents including data on pupils' progress, school development plans, performance management documentation and records relating to pupils' behaviour and safety.

Inspection team

John Dunne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Diane Buckle

Additional Inspector

Steven Goldsmith

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ravensbury is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups who attend the school is well above average as is the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- In 2011, the school did not meet government's floor standard, which is the minimum expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher was appointed in May 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that all teachers give pupils targets which they understand and tell them how to improve their work to a higher level
 - increase pupils' skills in assessing their work so they become independent in understanding how to improve
 - sharing the outstanding practice that already exists within the school more widely.
- Improve standards in writing by:
 - ensuring that all teachers expect pupils to transfer their good reading and speaking skills more fully into what they write
 - improving teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach writing more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children join the school with skills below those expected for their age. In some aspects of language development their skills are exceptionally low. The secure and friendly environment helps children settle in very quickly.
- From these low starting points, good teaching enables children to make good progress throughout Nursery and Reception. The skill levels of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have risen significantly over the past three years. By the time they join Year 1, most children's attainment is approaching average levels.
- This good progress is sustained as pupils proceed through Years 1 and 2 and so standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have been rising steadily and are now close to the national average. In the past this has not been the case in Key Stage 2, where standards declined sharply, reaching very low levels in 2011 as shown by test results. However, 2012 results, lessons, pupils' books and the school's rigorous and accurate checking of pupils' progress, provide compelling evidence that achievement has been transformed. At the end of last year, the percentage of pupils reaching expected levels in English more than doubled and for mathematics it nearly trebled, compared with the 2011 results, enabling pupils to reach standards above the national average in reading and mathematics. Standards in writing were significantly improved, but not as high due to weaknesses in how pupils construct sentences.
- These improvements represent a remarkable improvement in achievement. Lessons, work seen during the inspection and accurate school data confirms that these improvements are continuing.
- For pupils currently on roll, the proportion making greater than expected progress in reading and mathematics is significantly higher than seen nationally in every year group. It is also higher in writing, but the progress is not as strong as in the other two subjects
- The significant number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and disabled pupils make outstanding progress. This is due to skilfully planned teaching, well-deployed resources and carefully tailored programmes which are highly effective at boosting pupils' basic skills.
- As a result of the good teaching of letters and sounds, alongside a keen fostering of the enjoyment of books, pupils reach at least average standards in reading by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
- In the past, the attainment and progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium and for White British boys has lagged behind others. These gaps have now been eliminated due to good use of the funding to provide them with extra support.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching, as shown by pupils' good achievement and lessons observed during the inspection, is consistently good overall and some is outstanding. This represents a considerably stronger teaching profile than seen at the last inspection.
- In one mathematics lesson, outstanding teaching enabled pupils to make rapid gains in their understanding of measurement because:
 - the pace of the lesson was brisk and it built strongly upon what pupils had already learnt
 - really interesting tasks, the enthusiasm of the teacher, coupled with her exceptionally strong subject knowledge, inspired pupils so they were really enthusiastic about what they were learning
 - the work was skilfully adapted for pupils working at different levels and so pupils of all abilities were being 'stretched'
 - the teacher used sharply focused questioning which made pupils think deeply about the problems they were working on

- the teacher had very high expectations.
- The quality of teaching for disabled pupils is best summed up by the words of one parent who said, 'I can't believe how much his learning has improved recently, it's unbelievable'.
- In almost all lessons, planning is meticulous and well adapted, taking into account teachers' knowledge of what pupils have securely learnt and any misunderstandings or gaps in their learning.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage there is a strong focus on making sure that children quickly settle into well understood routines. Consequently they are able to make the most of their enjoyment of learning through practical tasks without silly behaviour getting in the way.
- Most work is effectively marked and some marking is exemplary, clearly indicating where pupils have demonstrated successful learning and what they have to do to improve. However, in Key Stage 2 most pupils do not know what level they are working at and are unclear what they need to do to reach the higher levels. This means that pupils have to rely too much on teachers' marking and are not developing the skills to assess their own work and to decide for themselves what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers have become skilful in teaching pupils how to improve their reading. They are less effective in showing pupils how they can use their good reading skills, to improve their writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The words of one pupil summed up the views of all teachers and almost every parent of the many spoken to, 'in the past nobody could learn because behaviour was chaotic, now it's like a different school'.
- Thirty parents came to the school to talk to inspectors and almost all expressed considerable praise for the way the new headteacher, well supported by all staff, had transformed behaviour and learning and how the school provides a very safe environment. All of the evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that there have been significant improvements in behaviour over the past two years and it is now securely good and continuing to improve.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations of behaviour and have excellent classroom management skills. Most learning activities are interesting so consequently, unsettled behaviour in lessons almost never interferes with learning.
- Pupils are enthusiastic learners and show good ability to work by themselves, a skill which the school has worked incredibly hard to develop.
- The way in which pupils with emotional needs, disabled pupils and those from many social and cultural backgrounds interact harmoniously is a strength of the school and provides a secure climate for learning.
- Pupils also work well together. For example, if they struggle with a problem in class, their first approach is often to talk to another because they are encouraged to support one another in learning.
- Pupils are well informed about the different types of bullying that they may come across. They say that bullying almost never occurs. They have good understanding of how to stay safe, including how to keep safe when using new technologies.
- The school has worked exceptionally hard to improve attendance and these measures have been successful as attendance has risen to around the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- Upon taking up post at Easter 2011, the newly appointed headteacher, in conjunction with the local authority, identified that standards were rapidly declining to unacceptably low levels. A series of measures were rapidly put in place to bring about improvements:
 - sort out poor behaviour
 - with the help of the local authority, bring in outside experts to show teachers how to improve

- their skills in teaching reading, writing and mathematics
- the governing body was re-structured, with many new skilful members, who rigorously checked on how effectively the school was raising standards
- every Key Stage 1 and 2 pupil was tested to identify their gaps in learning and teachers had to completely change their planning to make sure these gaps were dealt with
- any teacher whose performance was not up to scratch was given intensive training. If this did not work further rigorous steps were taken to ensure any inadequate teaching was eliminated.
- These measures have been highly effective and standards of reading, writing and mathematics, which were in serious decline in Key Stage 2, are rising amazingly.
- Everyone is working really well together, with a shared vision of driving up standards, and many teachers who have worked at the school for many years now said they feel re-vitalised. This was summed up by the words of one teacher which represents opinions expressed by many, 'The school is a credit to all staff, especially the leadership team. Behaviour is now well managed and training on how to improve teaching and learning have really helped me improve my planning. I now really love coming to work'.
- To make up for gaps in learning, pupils in every year are expected to make progress equivalent to an extra half a year's progress, compared with the national average and these aspirations are being achieved by almost all groups of pupils in almost every year.
- Pupils falling behind, those needing extra help and those with special educational needs are quickly identified and highly effective plans are in place to give extra support where needed. This is particularly effective for disabled pupils and those who speak English as an additional language and as a result these pupils make exceptional progress.
- Performance management of staff is linked to improvements in standards for the pupils they teach. All adults have clearly understood targets for improvement supported by relevant plans for their professional development.
- Although the school has good teaching and has reversed the decline in standards, senior leaders and governors are totally clear that there is much still to do. They have identified all of the areas for improvement mentioned in this report in their development plans, with clear measures of how they are going to deal with them.
- The parent support worker does a fantastic job helping pupils and families deal with problems which could otherwise get in the way of learning.
- The effectiveness of the school's systems for promoting equality and tackling discrimination is evident in the excellent relationships and the way all groups of pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for improving pupils' basic skills across a range of subjects. It also includes a wide range of activities to effectively promote pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
- All statutory responsibilities for safeguarding are met.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body includes members with the necessary skills needed to check data about pupils' progress. Key members have an excellent understanding of the effectiveness of every teacher and how spending can be used to improve standards, for example, by employing an extra teacher to create two Year 6 classes, where particular learning issues were identified. They have supported the headteacher to use pupil premium funding wisely to provide highly effective training for the teaching assistants. The expertise of the governors is developed well through specially commissioned training sessions relating to supporting school improvement.

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	105449
Local authority	Manchester
Inspection number	404992

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	379
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Tideswell
Headteacher	Samantha Foord
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2011
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