

Romsey Primary School

Mercer Way, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 7PH

Inspection dates

27–28 November 2012

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

This is a school that requires improvement.

- Pupils, particularly in Years 6, have not made good enough progress over time in writing and mathematics.
- The more able pupils are provided with activities that are too easy for them and so they do not reach the higher levels in English and mathematics.
- Too much teaching requires improvement in both Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers often talk for too long at the start of lessons, and their expectations of the quality and quantity of work that pupils produce are sometimes too low.
- There has been too much inconsistency in the quality of leadership. In the last six years there have been five headteachers. This has had an adverse effect on the rate of school improvement.
- The responsibilities of leaders are not evenly shared across the team.

The school has the following strengths

- The acting headteacher, who has been in post since September, has made considerable improvements.
- Parents are very positive about the care and support their children receive.
- Progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children enjoy a rich and stimulating environment in both the Nursery and Reception.
- Pupils feel happy and secure. They are interested in learning, enjoy school and respond well to their teachers. They show concern and respect for adults at all times.
- The governing body is led by a knowledgeable Chair, and governors have demonstrated their commitment to the school through the changes in leadership. They support the school through rigorous monitoring and checking of teaching and achievement.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, of which three were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made a number of short visits to sessions on phonics (sounds and letters) and listened to pupils reading.
- Meetings were held with staff and two groups of pupils.
- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body were interviewed, together with a parent governor.
- A representative from the local authority was interviewed.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the on-line Parent View survey.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including improvement planning and records of pupils' progress and attainment.
- The views of 25 staff were also analysed.

Inspection team

Liz Bowes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Alistair McMeckan

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Romsey Primary is an average-sized school.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- Most of the pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs supported through school action is higher than the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is lower than the national average. Pupils' needs relate mainly to specific learning difficulties and behaviour, emotional and social difficulties.
- There is a breakfast club and an after-school club which are run by the governing body.
- There is a Nursery which has places for 60 part-time children.
- The school has had a new acting headteacher since September 2012.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There is no alternative provision for pupils.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers do not talk for too long at the beginning of each lesson and move more quickly into independent and group work
 - ensuring that teachers have higher expectations of the quality and quantity of the work produced.
- Improve achievement, particularly for the oldest and most able pupils, and particularly in writing and mathematics, so that more pupils reach the higher levels by:
 - setting tasks that more effectively challenge pupils
 - ensuring all pupils know their targets and how to improve.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the responsibilities of leaders are distributed more evenly
 - ensuring a smooth transition between the acting headteacher and the new headteacher to enable improvement to continue.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils in the current Year 6 have not made enough progress in mathematics and writing over time. This is due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching over the last few years. This is now an improving picture.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- Children enter the Nursery class with skills and knowledge that are below typical expectations for their age. Through well-focused teaching children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. For example, in a lesson in Reception based around a nursery rhyme, children made good progress in developing their skills of holding a pencil and writing their own name.
- By the time pupils enter Year 1, attainment is in line with national averages. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are also in line with national expectations.
- The gap between the achievement of pupils eligible for extra support through the pupil premium funding and other pupils is narrowing. This is due to carefully targeted help aimed at improving pupils' confidence as well as their academic skills. For example, the additional teaching assistant in Year 5/6 targets those who are not making sufficient progress and provides effective small group support sessions.
- Attainment in Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. However, for the current Year 6 progress is less than expected in writing and mathematics. This issue has been addressed well this term by closer monitoring and tracking of pupil data and more extra support sessions.
- The 'exciting writing' project has had a positive effect of improving progress and raising interest in writing as it allows pupils to showcase their best written work. Pupils explore a range of different topics linked to themes in the curriculum, for example work on the Tudors in Year 6.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress when receiving extra support; however, their progress varies too sharply between year groups because the quality of teaching is not consistently good enough in all classes.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There is currently not enough good teaching to ensure that all pupils in all classes make good or better progress.
- Teachers often spend too much time explaining tasks at the beginning of a lesson. Pupils have to sit and listen to these lengthy explanations before they can begin their work. This hinders the progress of all pupils as they want to be actively learning rather than passively listening.
- There are occasions when teachers' expectations are not high enough with regard to the quantity and quality of work done in the lesson.
- The more able are too often given work that is too easy and this slows their progress. This accounts for why the school does not have a high enough number of pupils achieving at the higher levels.
- The new headteacher has ensured effective practice in assessment, which is now good. The school is now fully aware of the progress that each pupil is making every half term. Marking is now much improved and is consistent throughout the school. However, not all pupils know their targets and how to improve.
- Where teaching is good, teachers question pupils to extend and check their understanding. For example, in a Year 3 mathematics lesson on number patterns, the teacher noticed that there was some confusion about a task and quickly drew the class back together to address the issue.
- Teaching assistants are generally used appropriately. They provide good academic help and

develop pupils' understanding. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson on evaluating a set of instructions, the teaching assistant was very effective in getting pupils to give their views.

- Knowledgeable support staff often assist teachers in providing good learning opportunities for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, there is a good balance between adult- and child-led activities and pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted.
- Interactive whiteboards are used well to explain activities, demonstrate strategies and support learning.
- Teachers often make good use of opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, pupils were encouraged to develop a range of evocative adjectives in order to give real flavour to their creative writing.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well and treat each other and adults with respect. Pupils move around the school sensibly and are polite and courteous to staff and visitors.
- Adults encourage good behaviour through a consistent use of the behaviour policy; for example, those who have behaved well during the week enjoy Big Fun Time on Fridays.
- In the Nursery and Reception class children settle in quickly and relate well to each other. They follow instructions willingly and are learning about the importance of taking turns and sharing toys.
- There is a positive school ethos that promotes the well-being of the staff and pupils alike.
- All pupils feel well supported. Those in Year 5 and Year 6 are complimentary about how behaviour for learning has improved in recent years. As one pupil said, 'We all work hard in lessons and really enjoy practical activities.'
- When the pace of learning slows, pupils remain well behaved but can lose concentration and this leads to fidgeting or them simply not doing enough work.
- Pupils have clear moral views and understand what is right from wrong. They understand what bullying is and report that bullying of any kind is rare. They are confident that adults deal with problems quickly and effectively. Pupils know about the dangers associated with internet use.
- Almost all of the questionnaires from parents and carers show that they are confident that their children are kept safe when at the school.
- Attendance is average but improving well. The school ensures that any latecomers have to report to the reception staff and, as a result, punctuality is improving.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to provide emotional and social support to the more vulnerable pupils. The inclusion manager supports a number of these pupils, such as those who are young carers. The funding is also spent on working more closely with parents, with the aim of creating positive home-school links and further improving attendance.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- School improvement and the strategic direction of the school have been hampered by a period of considerable staff instability. There have been five headteachers in the last six years. A new headteacher is to start in January. The present acting headteacher has been effective at raising staff morale and is working closely with the new headteacher to ensure that there is a smooth transition; the school recognises the importance of this work being sustained so that recent improvements are built upon.
- Due to instability in the leadership team roles and responsibilities are not evenly distributed. The impact of this is that some staff are overburdened and responsibilities are not shared evenly.
- The school improvement plan is focused, correctly, on raising achievement. However, although

improvements have been made, teaching is not always good and this means that pupils make uneven progress and the more able pupils, in particular, do not consistently reach the attainment levels they are capable of.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported through the new topic-based curriculum. Pupils enjoy the range of extra-curricular clubs such as football and the orchestra. Pupils learn to value cultural differences through events such as Language Day, where each class learns about a different country and dresses up in national costume.
 - The school does not tolerate discrimination of any kind and demonstrates a commitment to equal opportunities.
 - The acting headteacher has introduced new systems and procedures and, as a result of this, the school is now in a stronger position to move forward. For example, the marking scheme is now consistent across the school and each child has the opportunity to review their own work.
 - The review of writing across the school led to the introduction of the 'exciting writing' scheme, which pupils really enjoy. This is clearly having a positive impact on progress in writing.
 - The school now sets challenging targets for progress. Effective performance management ensures that the national Teachers' Standards are met, and links the impact of teaching and the progress of pupils. Careful tracking and regular reviews now ensure that senior and middle leaders have an accurate view on the progress of all pupils. Any pupils who are not making sufficient progress are quickly identified for catch up sessions, run by teaching assistants, teachers and also the headteacher.
 - The school uses its allocation of funds for the pupil premium appropriately by investing in an inclusion manager and an additional teaching assistant to accelerate the progress of pupils at risk of underachievement.
 - Almost all parents and carers who responded to the Parent View questionnaire would recommend this school to others. They are pleased with many aspects of the school's work, including the information that they receive about their child's progress and the induction arrangements into the Nursery and Reception.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is a strength. Governors have risen well to the challenges associated with the changes in headteacher. They are a well-qualified group who have approached this period of turbulence in a professional way. Governors are regularly in school and each visit is linked to an aspect of the school improvement plan. Minutes of governing body meetings reveal that they frequently ask questions and understand all issues related to salary progression and promotion. Governors know the teachers well and have a detailed awareness of performance management targets. For example, the acting headteacher was set clear performance management targets to achieve in the one term she is at the school. Governors are well trained and have a good understanding of the school's finances. They closely monitor the impact of pupil premium funding. They have an accurate knowledge of the school's academic data and many have undergone extensive training from the local authority. As a result, they know how well the school is performing compared to similar schools nationally. The governing body ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet all the statutory requirements.
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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	134945
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	406578

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	250
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Hodgson
Headteacher	Lindsay McCarthy (acting)
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 November 2010
Telephone number	01794 512362
Fax number	01794 513048
Email address	adminoffice@romseyprimary.hants.sch.uk

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