

Ruskin Infant School

Ruskin Avenue, Wellingborough, NN8 3EG

Inspection dates 5–6 December 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.

- The headteacher's focus on improving teaching and pupils' achievement since the previous inspection has been very successful. She is ably supported by senior leaders and the governing body.
- From low starting points, pupils make good progress to reach average standards by the end of Year 2.
- Teaching is good, with some outstanding practice.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and feel safe. They behave well around the school. Attendance continues to improve.
- Children settle into school quickly and make particularly good progress in the Nursery class.
- All groups of pupils, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium, make good and at times outstanding progress. This is because of the good-quality support they receive.
- Support and nurturing for families and for pupils who are potentially vulnerable is highly effective and well managed by the parent support adviser.
- Pupils have many memorable experiences including a wide variety of exciting visits and visitors to school throughout the year.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils who are more able are not given enough chances to work at their own pace and the work they are given is not always hard enough.
- Progress in the Reception classes has not been as rapid as in the Nursery class.
- Pupils do not always have time to follow up on teachers' comments in marking to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons involving eight teachers. They also observed two assemblies.
- Inspectors held discussions with school leaders, staff, representatives of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and reviewed documentation, including improvement plans, the systems for tracking pupils’ progress, the arrangements for safeguarding pupils and samples of pupils’ work. They heard groups of pupils read and spoke with others about behaviour and safety arrangements at the school.
- Inspectors took account of the seven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the views expressed by parents who spoke with inspectors at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Michael Bartleman, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sherry Gladwin

Additional Inspector

Margaret Jones

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized infant school.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- An increasing proportion of pupils come from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils who start at the school speaking English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care) is above average.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is made up of one part-time Nursery class and three Reception classes.
- The governing body manages Ruskin Childcare, a day care and out-of-school care facility for children aged two years and over which is open 50 weeks a year. This is subject to separate inspection and reporting arrangements.
- A before-school breakfast club, managed by the governing body, runs daily.
- An in-school nurture group known as the Sunflower group runs daily for pupils from this school who need additional support.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is outstanding and so raise attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - sharing more widely the outstanding examples of teaching that exist in the school
 - ensuring that more-able pupils are always challenged
 - developing more opportunities for pupils to learn independently
 - giving pupils the opportunities to follow up teachers' comments in marking.
- Ensure that the pace of learning is always as rapid in the Reception classes as it is in the Nursery class.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils' achievement has improved since the previous inspection. From starting points that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, literacy and language, pupils make good progress.
- Until recently, progress has been more rapid in the Nursery class than in the Reception classes, where opportunities to develop children's speaking, language and writing skills, particularly in the outside area, have not always been promoted strongly enough.
- Rapid progress is made in the Nursery class because children are enabled to settle in quickly and staff meet their needs.
- All groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic groups and those in the Sunflower group make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because of good teaching and pupils' increasingly positive attitudes. Attainment in reading and writing has risen at the end of Year 2 because of many initiatives including 'Ruskin Reading Revolution', parental workshops and author visits.
- Booster sessions focusing on basic skills are well managed so that all pupils benefit from small group teaching led by teachers and teaching assistants, with most making good or better progress.
- Writing tasks often start with a considerable amount of discussion, which develops language and vocabulary well. However, presentation is not always of the highest standard and pupils do not always have sufficient support to become independent with their spelling and writing.
- Pupil premium funding is used to provide many clubs, a sports coach, increased nurturing provision and additional teaching assistants who give extra teaching support. As a result of this, the eligible pupils make at least good progress so that the gap between their achievement and that of their peers has narrowed quickly.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported by well-trained teaching assistants which results in good progress for most pupils. The additional support that these pupils receive, in school and in the Sunflower group, is managed very effectively by the special educational needs coordinator and is well matched to pupils' individual needs.
- Pupils achieve well in reading. They have a good grasp of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and most are competent readers. By the end of Year 2, their attainment in reading is broadly average. The large majority of pupils in Year 1 reached the required standard for the national screening in phonics, which is above the national average.
- All pupils, including those who are at an early stage of learning English, are immersed in a rich environment of language, vocabulary and books, which develops language skills well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. An increasing number of

lessons are outstanding, although not all teachers have had the opportunity to learn from the examples of very best teaching in the school.

- Teachers know their pupils well so their lesson planning generally matches pupils' different abilities. However, in a small minority of lessons, teachers do not always ensure that more-able pupils are fully challenged, which slows their learning.
- Teachers have high expectations and plan lessons that motivate pupils to learn. Pupils in Year 2 spoke enthusiastically about their study of 'The Great Fire of London' and the recently introduced 'Forest Schools'.
- The quality of teaching for those pupils attending the Sunflower nurture group is good. Imaginative and stimulating approaches, for example, to the use of money, enable pupils to interact with staff while developing their counting skills effectively.
- Initiatives such as 'Massage for Schools Programme' and 'Relax Kids' develop pupils' emotional and social skills exceptionally well so that they are ready to learn and make good progress in their lessons.
- Questioning is used well to deepen pupils' understanding. Pupils are often asked to develop their learning through talk, sharing ideas with a partner. Sometimes pupils are not given enough support to enable them to share ideas successfully.
- Reading is well taught with the result that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are now slightly above the national average. The school library is attractive, well stocked and used regularly by pupils to develop their enjoyment of reading.
- Pupils who find reading difficult are well supported by one-to-one reading sessions led by the deputy-headteacher and two trained teaching assistants as well as additional opportunities to read to adults in the homework club.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, along with those who are eligible for the pupil premium, and those who are new to learning English are all well supported in their learning. Teachers and teaching assistants plan and work closely together to help these pupils make good progress in lessons.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and some feedback explains clearly what pupils need to do in order to improve their work further. However, pupils do not always have the opportunities to follow up on the suggestions given. In a few classes teachers' marking does not help pupils improve their work.
- Homework is set regularly to support learning. A homework club, run by teaching assistants after school and funded by the pupil premium initiative, ensures that vulnerable pupils are well supported to succeed in this aspect of their study.
- Pupils and their parents greatly appreciate the early morning breakfast club which provides a calm and sociable start to the school day.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They have positive attitudes to learning.

- Behaviour and safety are not yet outstanding because attendance, although now improved, is just broadly average. This increase reflects the effective work of the parent support adviser.
- Support for pupils and their families is well organised and highly effective. Parents said that staff are very supportive and know their children extremely well.
- The nurture group's 'stay and play' sessions, good links with Ruskin Childcare and effective settling-in procedures, which include home visits, develop links with parents very effectively. The school is seen, very much, as a centre for the community. Relationships across the school and with parents and the local community are strong.
- Pupils' respect for adults and each other, and their clear understanding of how they are expected to behave, are strong features of lessons that enable them generally to proceed without disruption. Pupils say they like the rewards they get for good work and behaviour. School records confirm that pupils' behaviour is good on a daily basis and has improved over time.
- The school has close working relationships with a number of outside agencies to support pupils and their families whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable. Parents said their children are safe and well cared for. Many, who spoke to inspectors, praised the good effect of the Sunflower group on pupils' good behaviour, positive attitudes and standards reached. This view is reflected in the confidence expressed by pupils that they are safe at school and that any bullying is dealt with effectively.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of all forms of bullying and have great trust in the headteacher and deputy-headteacher to solve any difficulties that may arise.
- Pupils are helped to develop a range of strategies so they are able to manage everyday risks for themselves, such as those associated with technology, fire and road safety.

The leadership and management are good

- The good leadership of the headteacher provides a strong and clear direction for the school. She is supported effectively by other senior leaders and governors. High expectations are shared by all staff and there is a strong sense of teamwork.
- Leadership and management are not yet outstanding because there is still more to be done by school leaders to ensure that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make more even progress.
- All leaders have helped to create a caring environment in which pupils are nurtured exceptionally well. They ensure that pupils in need of additional support are identified quickly and given effective support to help boost their performance.
- Rigorous checks are made to find out how well pupils achieve. Senior leaders routinely check that all pupils are on track to make good progress from their starting points.
- The headteacher manages the performance of teachers effectively, with clear links between the salary that teachers receive and pupils' good progress. Specific training and coaching support is provided appropriately to improve weaker aspects of teaching.

- Leaders and managers know the school well. There are clear plans to make it even better. The school's consistent, marked improvement over time demonstrates good capacity to improve.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage co-ordinator maintains good links with Ruskin Childcare so that the move is seamless. She is successfully improving the consistency of practice across the Reception classes which is beginning to have a positive impact on children's progress.
- The presence of the headteacher and deputy headteacher around the school is effective in cementing strong relationships with parents. It was evident during the inspection that both leaders know the pupils and their families extremely well.
- Staff strive to involve parents and carers fully in their children's learning. This reflects the determination of staff to ensure all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed, and their refusal to accept discrimination of any kind.
- Teaching programmes are broad and balanced. Learning is enriched well through a wide range of after-school and holiday activities. These activities, and the opportunity for reflection in assemblies, support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- The school works effectively with a range of schools in the local area, which provides additional opportunities for moderation of work, support for pupils and for professional development.
- The local authority appropriately provides light-touch support to this successful school. On-going monitoring and access to effective professional development for all staff have contributed to improvements in teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body supports and monitors the work of the school effectively. Governors have been appropriately trained; they understand the school's performance information well and how the school has improved in relation to other schools. They ask appropriate questions about how decisions will affect pupils' learning. The governing body is regularly kept informed about how teaching is improving. This has led to good decisions being made on the rewards that teachers receive, and effective allocation of the school's finances and the pupil premium, which it monitors through regular visits. Governors are aware of the effectiveness of pupil premium spending and that it is closing the gap in attainment between eligible and other pupils. The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively, ensuring, for example, that procedures for safeguarding pupils are well managed, regularly reviewed and fully meet the regulatory requirements.

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	121889
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	402059

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	255
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Rice
Headteacher	Heather Eley
Date of previous school inspection	17 September 2009
Telephone number	01933 675430
Fax number	01933 675678
Email address	bursar@ruskin-inf.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2012

