

Ripon Cathedral Church of England School

Priest Lane, Ripon, North Yorkshire, HG4 1LT

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement is inadequate. Teaching has been weak over time and pupils do not make the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, attainment in these subjects is low.
- Wide gaps exist between the performance of different groups of pupils; for example boys, those with special educational needs, and those known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding. This is because school leaders have not done enough to check on how well pupils are doing or to support those who are falling behind.
- The curriculum is inadequate. It does not meet pupils' needs.
- Leaders, including governors, have not tackled the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. They have had little impact on the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. As a result, the school is not improving.
- Governance is inadequate. Governors do not have a good enough understanding of the school's weaknesses. They do not provide sufficient challenge to leaders or hold them to account for pupils' underachievement.

The school has the following strengths

- Progress of pupils in the Nursery class is good.
- Pupils are courteous and polite towards each other and adults and this is because of the good example set by staff. This helps to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Recent improvements to the way letter sounds are taught in Year 1 have boosted progress in this year group.
- Attendance levels are high. Pupils enjoy coming to school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 13 lessons and looked at pupils' work in books.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, a representative from the diocesan education authority and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and 17 responses to the staff questionnaire in planning the inspection.
- They observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, planning and monitoring files and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Kevin Dodd, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sonya Williamson

Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Information about this school

- This school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional government funding, is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.
- The school has achieved the Gold Artsmark award (2009), the Leading Aspect (2009) and Jewel of Ripon awards. The latter of these two awards are for curriculum and creativity.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching to be consistently good or better by:
 - dealing with inadequate teaching robustly
 - setting work at the right level for all groups of pupils
 - developing effective methods for teaching basic skills in different subjects in Key Stage and 2
 - improving the quality of marking so that pupils know how to improve their work and are given time to do so
 - planning lessons that capture pupils' interest and allow them to make choices about their learning
- Accelerate pupils' progress and raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring targets are based on an accurate understanding of pupils' needs and are regularly reviewed with pupils and parents so that pupils make at least comparable progress to pupils nationally
 - checking individual pupils' progress, and that of groups, regularly to ensure those who are not doing as well as they should are identified quickly and swift action is taken to boost their progress.
- Improve the ability of leaders at all levels to make lasting improvements by:
 - implementing a rigorous programme to check and improve the quality of teaching
 - clarifying leadership roles and responsibilities so all staff contribute to school improvement
 - ensuring that actions and ways of measuring success in the school's improvement plans are focused on improving pupils' achievement.
- Improve the governing body's knowledge of the school's work and how well pupils are doing, so that they can hold school leaders to account for improving pupils' achievement.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, progress in English and mathematics has slowed and attainment is low at the end of Years 2 and 6. Attainment is lower in English, especially in writing, than it is in mathematics.
- While pupils' progress is inadequate overall, some groups of pupils, such as boys, pupils with special educational needs, and those supported through use of pupil premium funding, make slower progress than others in both key stages.
- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with a weaker skill set than is typical for their age, especially in communication and language and personal and social skills. Good teaching in the Nursery class, and effective partnerships with parents, mean that they make quick progress in developing skills, particularly listening and social skills, and enter Year 1 with attainment that is still below, but closer to, average.
- In the academic year 2011/2012, specialist teaching in developing skills and knowledge of letters and sounds resulted in children in Year 1 making faster progress in reading than seen in the past. However, this has not been continued into Year 2.
- Pupils in Year 6 have generally positive attitudes to reading and say that they enjoy books. However, across the school, too many pupils, often boys, do not develop an adequate grasp of the skills needed to tackle unfamiliar words. Consequently, they make slow progress and do not do as well as pupils in most other schools.
- The pace of learning quickens in Key Stage 2 classes, especially Year 5 and 6. However, this is not sufficient to ensure that the proportion of pupils who reach the expected standards in English and mathematics tests at the end of Year 6 matches that found nationally. The school provides extra support for some pupils who need help with their learning. However, this is not successful because tasks do not build on current understanding, so pupils lose interest.
- The school does not check on pupils' progress carefully enough. This means that teachers do not have the information they need in order to help pupils to catch up or to do as well as they can. Consequently, time is not used well in lessons.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- The quality of teaching has declined since the last inspection. This is because there has been a lack of rigorous monitoring of teaching and not enough support for teachers to improve.
- As a result of weak teaching over time, and disruptions caused by staffing changes, pupils are making inadequate progress. Recent attempts to bring about improvements have not resulted in better literacy and numeracy skills.
- Teaching is stronger in Years 5 and 6, and better in reading than in mathematics and writing. In the Nursery class, teaching is good because adults use information from observations and discussions with parents to plan activities that meet children's needs and interests.
- In the weakest lessons, teachers do not set work at the right level. In addition, pupils are often unclear about what they are learning.
- Lessons do not always encourage pupils to take an active part in activities. This means they are not able to share ideas or make choices that would help them to work without adult support. Teachers do not use information about pupils' earlier learning to plan and adapt lessons.
- Teachers do not check on progress in lessons or do enough to make sure that younger pupils are actually learning and that time and resources are used well.
- Pupils' targets do not help them to understand what they have to do to achieve the next level in their work. Targets do not always relate to pupils' current learning and are not readily available for pupils to refer to themselves.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly but teachers do not always provide specific guidance about how

pupils can improve their work, or give them time to respond to comments or suggestions.

- In lessons where teaching is more effective, teachers encourage pupils to get involved in their work. They intervene effectively, using questioning and resources to ensure that pupils' learning is on track and that it moves at a brisk pace.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement because attitudes to learning are mixed. Pupils are attentive in lessons when tasks are challenging and well matched to their needs and interests. However, where teaching is weaker, the pace slows so pupils lose interest and engage in low-level misbehaviour that sometimes goes unchallenged. Their attitudes to learning are better when teachers provide enjoyable experiences and when pupils work together.
- Attendance is currently above average and rates of persistent absence are low, which reflect the positive attitudes pupils have towards school and the effective measures that encourage them to attend.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and are confident that an adult will sort out any problems they may have. Staff and pupils comment that behaviour has improved recently because of closer monitoring but not all staff challenge inappropriate behaviour in a consistent way.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about certain types of bullying, such as name-calling, and say there are few instances. Pupils are confident that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with swiftly.
- Although they are willing, there are few opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities such as tending areas of the school grounds or helping younger children. Pupils have positive attitudes to staff and each other.

The leadership and management are inadequate

- Since the previous inspection, the school's leaders have failed to make the necessary improvements. Pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching have declined.
- The headteacher has a clear view of what needs to be done to reverse the school's decline but has not acted quickly enough to secure improvement. He has made several changes designed to improve the school's performance but recognises that most have had limited impact on pupils' learning. This is mainly because checks have been too reliant on the teachers' assessments of pupils' progress at the expense of reviewing progress in lessons and work in their books.
- Many leaders are new to their roles and are not clear about their responsibilities. This is because they have not been trained effectively and do not know how to plan for school improvement.
- Leaders have not done enough to check on teachers' work and how well they are meeting the requirements of the Teachers' Standards. Systems to link teachers' effectiveness with pay progression are underdeveloped. The systems to check the quality of teaching have not been rigorous enough to result in consistent improvements in teachers' practice.
- Improvement plans generally identify important priorities but plans are not clearly linked to improving pupils' achievement. In addition, the school's procedures for reviewing its performance are not based on a rigorous analysis of teaching and learning and judgements are inaccurate.
- The curriculum is not meeting the needs of many pupils because it does not promote high levels of achievement or develop basic skills well enough. It does not involve and challenge pupils sufficiently and does not help pupils to develop their skills in a progressive way. It does provide opportunities for pupils to enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through well established links with other church schools.
- Leaders at all levels, including the governing body, ensure that safeguarding procedures meet statutory requirements; they encourage good relations and tackle discrimination. The school's promotion of equality of opportunity, however, is inadequate, because too many pupils,

including those with special educational needs, do not make enough progress in English and mathematics. In addition, pupils' cultural development is weak as there is insufficient teaching about different beliefs and cultures in geography and religious education lessons, for example.

■ The local authority and diocese have provided recent support but it has not been effective in improving achievement or the quality of teaching overall within the school.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is not effective in challenging the school's leaders as its members do not know enough about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement. Most governors have too little understanding of data about pupils' and progress. The governing body has not been sufficiently involved in checking the impact of the pupil premium spending on the quality of teaching and the achievement of the pupils it is intended to support.

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	121581
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	402039

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Noake
Headteacher	Darren Dudman
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2010
Telephone number	01765 602355
Fax number	01765 605465
Email address	headteacher@riponcathedral.n-yorks.sch.uk

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