

Richard Lee Primary School

The Drive, Wyken, Coventry, CV2 5FU

Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

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		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

- Standards are below average because pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- There is not enough good teaching to ensure that pupils achieve well. In too many lessons teaching does not build on what pupils can already do.
- In some lessons, the work for the more-able pupils does not effectively extend their learning because it is not demanding enough.
- Some of the school's leaders do not make an effective contribution to raising achievement because they are still developing their leadership skills.
- Some governors do not understand the school's achievement information. As a result, they cannot effectively hold the school's leaders to account.
- Attendance remains below average.

The school has the following strengths

- In the short time since her appointment, the headteacher has brought about rapid and significant improvement. As a result, the achievement of all groups of pupils is improving.
- The recently appointed leaders for the Reception classes and for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are beginning to have a positive impact on improving provision and raising achievement.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has been rising year-on-year because of better teaching, especially in reading.
- Pupils of all backgrounds get on well together. Most pupils are polite, courteous and well-mannered.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 26 lessons, many of which were observed jointly with the headteacher.
- Inspectors heard pupils reading and looked closely at their workbooks.
- Inspectors held meetings with the staff, groups of pupils, a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- Inspectors looked at plans for improvement, information on pupils' progress, lesson plans, the school's monitoring information and school policies.
- There were 17 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View at the time of the inspection. Inspectors held informal discussions with some parents and carers. Two other written comments were received from parents and carers. Inspectors took all these views into account.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.

Inspection team

Roy Bowers, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Sharon Jackson

Additional Inspector

Patrick Walsh

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. This additional government funding is given to schools to help certain groups, including pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who are learning English as an additional language are average.
- The proportions of pupils who are supported at school action and school action plus, and those who have a statement of special educational needs are similar to the average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative provision away from the school site.
- The school is included in the government's 'Priority School Building' programme and is scheduled to be rebuilt in 2014.
- The school has a children's centre on site and this is inspected separately.
- Following one term as part-time acting headteacher at this school, the headteacher started as full-time substantive headteacher at the beginning of this term.

What does the school need to do to improve further

- Raise achievement and improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that, in all lessons, teachers build upon what pupils can already do and give work to the more-able pupils which is appropriately demanding.
- Raise achievement in writing by ensuring that:
 - all teachers have the subject knowledge to break down pupils' learning in writing into stages and use this knowledge to guide pupils' learning
 - pupils are given more opportunities to practise their writing skills in lessons other than literacy
 - in lessons, teachers demonstrate to pupils how to write well.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - all leaders fully develop their leadership skills, especially those of checking pupils' achievement and advising teachers how to improve their teaching skills
 - governors develop their knowledge and understanding of the school's achievement information so that they can effectively hold school leaders to account
 - the governing body undertakes an external review of its strengths and areas for improvement.
- Working with parents and external support services, improve attendance so that it is at least in line with the national average.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils, especially the more able, make good progress. As a result, attainment in English and mathematics is consistently below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, pupils do not achieve as well in writing as they do in reading and mathematics.
- Attainment, in English and mathematics, of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is nearly two terms behind the attainment of most other pupils because the pupil premium funding has not been used effectively to support these pupils. Recently, more accurate assessment of pupils' needs and better use of the pupil premium funding has meant that the progress of this group of pupils is starting to get faster; the attainment gap with other pupils is beginning to close.
- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to other pupils. Those who are learning English as an additional language also make similar progress because they often receive good quality support to promote their language development.
- Children enter the Nursery classes with skills that are lower than typical for their age. Recent improvements to teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 mean that many children are now making good progress, especially in phonics (sounds that letters make). Attainment is rising year-on-year, but improvements have not been in place long enough to have completely closed the attainment gap with other schools. As a result, pupils still enter Year 3 with below average skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In some Key Stage 2 classes pupils achieve well. However, in many classes, pupils do not make good progress because teaching is not good enough. This is stopping the school raising pupils' attainment more rapidly.
- The progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, including those who are supported through school action and school action-plus, requires improvement. However, recent improvements to teaching, better and earlier identification of individual pupil's needs and more closely tailored support, are helping disabled pupils and those with special educational needs to make better progress.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because in some lessons the work given to pupils is too easy or too hard, and, as a result, does not build upon what they can already do. The work given to the more-able pupils is often the same as for most other pupils and does not provide them with sufficient challenge.
- Staff training and support from local authority consultants are improving the quality of teaching throughout the school.
- In writing lessons, the quality of teaching is not as good as in reading and mathematics lessons. This is mainly because teachers do not have the subject knowledge to break learning down into small manageable steps so that they can guide the pupils' learning. In many lessons, teachers do not take opportunities to demonstrate to pupils how to write well by using examples of their own writing or that of pupils.

- The teaching of reading skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is improving because teachers are now clearer about how to guide pupils through small learning steps.
- Relationships between all adults and pupils are warm and caring. Pupils are eager to learn and, when the work set for them is suitably demanding, they respond with enthusiasm and interest. In one Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils sighed when they were told that they were to stop their writing because it was time for their break.
- Pupils have access to a wide range of books, which broaden their reading experiences and help them enjoy their reading. They are encouraged to read at home and their home-reading diaries are checked regularly by teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupil premium funding is helping targeted pupils improve their literacy and numeracy skills through additional support in school and by enriching their experience by visits to, for example, the Macbeth project at Warwick Arts Centre.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Most pupils behave well around school and play happily together. The parents, carers and governors spoken to during the inspection agree.
- When teaching is good and pupils are given work that stimulates them and challenges their thinking, they are eager to learn. However, behaviour and safety requires improvement because in lessons where pupils find the work too easy or too hard, a few become restless and do not focus on their work until reminded by the teacher or teaching assistant.
- The school's records show that punctuality has improved significantly. Nearly all pupils now arrive on time and do not miss out on the important learning at the start of the day.
- Attendance has steadily improved over recent years, but remains below average because too many pupils still take unnecessary time off school.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They know why internet rules are important and are aware of potential dangers to their safety in the local community. They have a good understanding of different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying and racial bullying, and know that the use of derogatory language of any kind is offensive. Pupils say that the rare incidents of bullying are instances of name-calling, and violence of any kind is not tolerated. When any pupil does give offence, the school acts swiftly and decisively.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Staff, governors and parents say that there have been many improvements to the school since the appointment of the new headteacher. Teachers comment that there is a clear vision for the future based firmly on raising achievement through improving teaching.
- The headteacher communicates high expectations which are shared by all staff. There is a strong sense of teamwork and mutual support. One member of staff commented, 'It's like the ship has been turned around. We know where we are going and we are determined to get there'.

- Other leaders are involved in leadership duties such as checking the quality of pupils' work in books, analysing assessment information, writing policies and training staff. However, they are not making an effective contribution to pupils' learning in their areas of responsibility because their leadership skills, especially those of checking pupils' achievement and advising teachers how to improve their teaching skills, are not fully developed. This is one reason why leadership and management requires improvement.
 - Effective procedures to manage teachers' performance are now established, with regular meetings between the headteacher and individual staff to discuss pupils' achievement, additional support for individual pupils and how teaching can be improved.
 - The school's records show that, over recent years, very few teachers have had additional pay increases. The headteacher is aware that performance management outcomes need to be linked with staff training, promotion and increases in pay.
 - The curriculum offers a wide range of learning experiences including visits to places of interest and many after-school clubs. Pupils are proud of their many sporting achievements and their recent victory in the local debating competition. The curriculum correctly focuses on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. However, there are few opportunities planned by the teachers for pupils to practise these key skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
 - Assemblies provide time for pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and attitudes, and understand and be tolerant of each other's beliefs. Pupils are enthusiastic charity fund-raisers and are proud of their work with the local heritage group to improve the local environment. The school effectively promotes equality of opportunity as evidenced by the similar progress made by groups of pupils.
 - The school continues to strengthen its links with parents and carers through, for example, information evenings about different subjects, surveys of parents' and carers' views, and times when they can meet the teachers to discuss their children's progress.
 - Governors report that the support for the school from the local authority has improved significantly over the past year, and has moved from ineffective to good. The headteacher agrees that the local authority now provides effective support, which is beginning to have a positive impact on raising achievement. Following the resignation of the previous headteacher, the local authority acted quickly. A local successful headteacher was seconded to lead and manage the school until she was appointed as the substantive headteacher. Since that time, the local authority has given good support to the school through the education improvement adviser and a range of consultants. Additional funding has been allocated to the school to support many aspects, including new resources for information and communication technology and the secondment of a teacher from another school to support the leadership and management. The local authority knows the school well. Through the 'school improvement board' process, which includes representatives of the local authority, school staff and the Chair of the Governing Body, all the school issues, especially pupil's achievement are discussed. The Chair of the Governing Body comments that this process enables her to have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and provides opportunities for her and the local authority to challenge and support the school's leaders.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are highly committed to the school and have received local authority training in aspects such as safeguarding, equalities and performance management. They are aware that the performance management of all staff needs to be linked with any increase in pay. The
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governing body has recently undertaken a review of the skills of all the governors, but would benefit from an external review and further training tailored closely to governors' needs. Although governors have a sound general knowledge and understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school, they lack the knowledge and skills to understand the school's achievement information and, therefore, cannot effectively hold the school's leaders to account to ensure that pupils are making the necessary rapid progress if their attainment is to rise quickly.

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	103693
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	404894

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	512
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Deborah Johnson
Headteacher	Carol Brammer
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2011
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