

# Istead Rise Primary School

Downs Road, Kent, DA13 9HG

**Inspection dates** 13–14 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
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.

- Pupils' achievement is inadequate because too much teaching is weak. Teachers do not set work which is well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Attainment is too low and is well below average. Pupils do not make adequate progress from their starting points. Progress is inconsistent in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, not enough pupils make sufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Teachers frequently underestimate what the more-able pupils can achieve. As a result they make poor progress and lose interest in their lessons.
- The effectiveness of the school has declined since the previous inspection. Senior leaders have not taken effective steps to improve teaching. There have been insufficient checks on the quality of learning to ensure that all pupils make good progress.
- The governing body does not have an understanding of the school's weaknesses. Procedures to hold school leaders to account are not effective.
- The school's leaders do not communicate effectively with all groups of parents and carers. A significant number of parents and carers expressed dissatisfaction about the information which they receive and the way in which the school responds to their concerns.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They are courteous and show respect to adults and to each other. Low-level disruption in lessons is rare.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points. They are well supported by a skilled team of support staff.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good or better. Children settle quickly and make good progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were joint observations with the headteacher.
- Pupils' work in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 was scrutinised, and the school's records of progress were analysed.
- Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and the vice chair, members of staff, including senior and middle leaders, and a representative of the local authority. They also spoke to pupils about their experiences at the school.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documents and policies, including the school improvement plan, information relating to safeguarding and attendance, minutes of governors' meetings and the school's evaluation of its own performance.
- There were 31 staff questionnaires and the responses were analysed.
- Inspectors took account of the 57 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and letters and phone calls received from parents and carers. They also spoke to parents and carers informally at the start of each school day.

## Inspection team

Claire Baldry, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Elaine Hamilton	Additional inspector
Linda Chesworth	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.*

The school should not appoint newly qualified teachers.

## Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The remainder come from a range of other backgrounds including a small group of pupils of Irish Traveller heritage.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium is below average. This additional funding is provided for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- There are two nurseries on the school site. These are each run by an independent provider and are subject to a separate inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- There have been three new appointments to the senior leadership team since September 2012, including an assistant headteacher who took up post in January 2013.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching in Years 1 to 6 by:
  - ensuring that teachers set work for pupils that matches the whole range of abilities in each class and maintains their interest, especially for more-able pupils
  - ensuring that teachers' assessments of pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics are accurate
  - making sure teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in reading, writing and mathematics in different subjects
  - ensuring that teachers check that pupils in Key Stage 2 know their targets in English and mathematics and how these targets can be achieved.
- Increase rates of progress in Years 1 to 6 by:
  - planning more effective support for those pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding
  - raising teachers' expectations for what more-able pupils can achieve
  - making sure that teachers' marking clearly identifies how work can be improved and providing opportunities for pupils to act on the teachers' comments.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - increasing the capacity of senior and subject leaders to make accurate checks on teaching and provide clear feedback to teachers to help them improve the quality of their teaching
  - ensuring that information from checks on pupils' progress is used to identify any dips in

progress and is quickly followed up with effective action

- ensuring that school leaders at all levels take urgent and effective steps to improve communication with parents and carers, especially with regard to behaviour
- providing training for governors to improve their skills in checking on the school's performance and to ensure that the governing body consistently implements agreed procedures.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate. Too few pupils make sufficient progress between Years 1 and 6. As a result, attainment over time has been well below national averages at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in the current academic year has begun to increase, but improvements are not rapid enough to overcome previous underachievement.
- Progress throughout Key Stage 2 is particularly slow. Teachers do not plan a sufficiently wide range of activities to support good learning for pupils of different abilities in the mixed-aged classes. Their expectations of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics are not high enough for the more-able pupils.
- Teachers do not always assess pupils' work accurately in relation to national guidance, so they sometimes overestimate the progress pupils make in their lessons. As a result, the proportion of pupils who make good progress in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 is far lower than the national figure.
- Children's attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year, but they generally start the Reception class with a wide range of skills, some of which are slightly below the levels typical for their age. Good teaching ensures that they progress well and enter Year 1 at with broadly average attainment.
- Progress in Key Stage 1 is uneven because there are weaknesses in the quality of teaching in the three mixed-age classes. Teaching has recently improved, but not enough pupils make sufficient progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Given their starting points, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress both in their learning and their ability to work by themselves. The small group of pupils of Irish Traveller heritage also makes good progress. The progress of pupils who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding is too slow compared with similar pupils nationally. Their attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is typically lower than other pupils in the school and the gap is not narrowing.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate. Although some effective teaching was observed during the inspection, this is not enough to ensure that most pupils progress well enough to overcome their previous underachievement.
- Teachers plan lessons together but they do not share their subject knowledge or make sure there is a sufficiently wide range of learning activities for all of the different abilities in a mixed-age class. As a result, more-able pupils often find their lessons too easy. This slows the pace of learning for these pupils, especially in Key Stage 2.
- In the strongest lessons, teachers pose extra questions and provide additional more challenging activities to ensure that progress is good, even for the most able pupils. For example, one teacher encouraged a group of pupils in a Year 5/6 class to challenge themselves by relating complex fractions to probability problems. Similarly in a Year 1/2 class, a group of Year 1 pupils were able to describe in detail their use of singular and plural nouns. In most other classes, more-able pupils waste substantial amounts of learning time waiting for the rest of the class to catch up and finish.
- Most pupils in Key Stage 1 can point to their targets on display and explain how they will achieve them. Pupils in Key Stage 2 do not know their targets. They are unclear about their current levels of achievement and the steps they need to take next. The quality of marking in books from Years 1 to 6 is variable, and pupils are not given the opportunity to respond to teachers' comments so they can improve their work.
- Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to practise and improve key skills learned in reading, writing and mathematics in other subjects. Work in pupils' topic books is

poorly marked with very few links to the pupils' targets in literacy or numeracy.

- Children learn well in their Reception Year because teaching is at least good. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating activities, for example, in the well-designed 'forest school'. Adults use questioning and discussion to ensure that children make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are ably supported by the leader for special educational needs and give skilled support to groups in reading, writing and mathematics both in and out of lessons. This has resulted in good progress for pupils who have special educational needs. Support for pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is not planned so well, leading to slower progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Pupils are polite and respect the school rules. They play well together and care about each other's needs. They understand the key messages of the 'Values' programme which has been central to creating a calm and orderly learning environment.
- Lessons are rarely disrupted by poor behaviour. However some, especially more-able pupils, lose interest in their learning when the work set is too easy for them.
- Good standards of care and well-embedded systems ensure that all pupils develop self-confidence and feel safe in school. Work with families and outside agencies has improved overall attendance and supported the welfare of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and who to turn to if they have a problem. They understand about safety and different types of bullying. They say that bullying is very rare, and trust the adults in school to deal with it effectively. Inspectors saw no incidents of bullying or aggressive behaviour during the inspection, though a few parents and carers wished to discuss some previous incidents with the inspection team.
- A significant number of parents and carers expressed a lack confidence in the school's procedures to deal effectively with bullying, and, in particular, the way in which the school leaders communicate with parents and carers about behaviour. Inspectors agree that communication of these issues is not handled consistently enough, but that the school manages any incidents appropriately.

### **The leadership and management**

### **are inadequate**

- Pupils' attainment and progress have declined since the last inspection and the areas for improvement highlighted at that time have not been addressed. Inadequate achievement and weak teaching have increased under the leadership of the current headteacher and governing body. This demonstrates a lack of capacity to deal with weaknesses. Not all senior and subject leaders make accurate checks on the quality of teaching or provide clear feedback to teachers so they can improve their practice.
- The school has received intensive support from the local authority since November 2012 to boost its capacity and increase rates of progress. Recent appointments to the senior leadership team have begun to give a greater focus to planning for school development, but this has not had time to have had an impact on teaching and learning.
- There is too much weak teaching, because the headteacher and other school leaders have not ensured that training is effective. There has been insufficient support for teachers to plan challenging lessons for mixed-age classes. As a result, teachers' expectations have been too low. The system for managing teachers' performance has recently been revised and strengthened and teachers welcome the greater challenge that is now provided through the targets that are set for them.

- The newly appointed 'progress managers' have swiftly established new ways of making checks on pupils' progress and begun to help staff understand their accountability for pupils' progress. However, this action has not had time to become embedded throughout the school or to close gaps in pupils' learning. The school has not ensured that there is equality of learning opportunities for all groups of pupils.
  - Communication with parents and carers is poor. Although some parents and carers, especially of children in the Reception classes, gave positive views of the school, over half the parents and carers who completed Parent View were dissatisfied with the way the school responded to their concerns and with the leadership of the school. This view was supported by the majority of parents and carers who spoke to the inspectors during the inspection.
  - The introduction of the 'Values' programme since September 2011, with the support of the new assistant headteacher, has quickly become a central feature of the school's behaviour policy and provision for personal development. This has resulted in pupils who can talk with confidence about right and wrong and have a good understanding of spiritual, social and cultural issues.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - Governors have not been sufficiently rigorous in holding the school to account for the quality of teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. Although governors have taken part in training and understand how data on the school's performance compare with all schools nationally, they have not made sufficient checks on the school's development since the previous inspection. Attainment has been allowed to decline for too long. Governors have not made sure that the pupil premium funding is used effectively to support the learning of those pupils for whom it is intended. Changes to the allocation of governor roles and responsibilities have recently helped the governors to challenge the school more rigorously. However, agreed procedures for feeding back information to the whole governing body are not always followed and governors do not have a shared view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have limited knowledge of the relationship between the quality of teaching and how well teachers are paid within the school. This restricts their ability to ensure that the school delivers value for money. Governors are meticulous in ensuring the safety of pupils through regular health and safety checks and monitoring safeguarding arrangements.
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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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118452
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	405772

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	272
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andy Halpin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Caren Gardner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 833177
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