

Riders Infant School

Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 4RY

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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 has a clear vision, and with the good support of other senior leaders, has created the school's particularly positive ethos. Members of the governing body share the leadership's aspirations.
- As a result, the teaching and support staff are unanimous in expressing pride in their membership of the school, and in agreeing they know what they are trying to achieve.
- Children's knowledge and skills when they first come to school are particularly low. They get a good start in the Reception Year, and make good progress in all areas of learning, because they are well taught and have good opportunities for practical learning.
- Pupils continue to make good progress across the school in all subjects, and especially in reading. By the end of Year 2, attainment is below average, especially in mathematics, though in reading it is closer to average.
- Pupils enjoy the experience of school and feel safe there.
- The pastoral ethos and high expectations foster positive behaviour and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Teaching is well planned and organised, with a lively pace to learning. Tasks are well matched to pupils of different abilities.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate, and improvement planning is of good quality.
- The curriculum is well designed to develop pupils' skills and knowledge in reading, writing and mathematics, and also to meet their personal needs and interests.
- The school works hard, and with success, to involve parents and carers more fully in supporting their children's learning.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's circumstances, and of its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors have the confidence to ask the school challenging questions about its performance, and carry out their responsibilities to good effect.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not always clarify for pupils as precisely as they could the purpose behind lessons. Similarly, they do not routinely make sure that pupils understand what will count as successful learning.
- The targets that teachers set for pupils do not have enough impact in helping them to understand the next steps in their learning.
- Expectations for neat presentation, and correct formation of numbers and letters are not always high enough in Years 1 and 2.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 13 lessons, of which three were joint observations with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Inspectors also heard a sample of pupils in Years 1 and 2 read.
- Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the school’s staff, the Chair and three other members of the Governing Body, and a representative of the local authority.
- Because there were not enough responses, inspectors were unable to take account of the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They analysed the 14 responses that were on Parent View by the end of the inspection.
- Inspectors also took account of the 39 responses to the questionnaire for school staff.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a range of documents, including the school’s own data on pupils’ current attainment and progress, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to safeguarding, and management of the performance of staff.

Inspection team

Chris Grove, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Stephanie Matthews

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a primary school that is smaller than average in size.
- The school serves a community that forms part of a large estate to the north of Portsmouth.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (which provides additional funding to support children in local authority care, children from service families and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals) is high, and has increased in the last two years. There are currently no children who are looked after by the local authority or who are from service families.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- The school has federated with the adjoining junior school and has the same governing body.
- In March 2012, the school received from Ofsted an interim assessment indicating that it had sustained its good performance, and that the next full inspection would be deferred.
- The school holds the Healthy Schools (Enhanced) award.
- The Phoenix Pre-School takes place on the school's premises but is a privately run facility, and did not form part of this inspection.
- There is a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body but which currently takes place in the adjoining junior school and was therefore not inspected.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, especially in mathematics, by:
 - clarifying more regularly for pupils the precise purpose of lessons, and making sure that they know what will count as successful learning
 - improving the impact of target setting so as to ensure that pupils know and understand the next steps in their learning
 - setting higher expectations for neat presentation of work by pupils and correct formation of numbers and letters.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Across the school, pupils make consistently good progress, especially in reading.
- Children's knowledge and skills when they first enter school are often exceptionally low, especially in their use of language and early skills in literacy and mathematics.
- Because the children are taught well, they make good progress in the Reception Year. Although their skills in listening and speaking, and also in reading, writing and number work, develop well, their attainment by the end of the year typically remains below that which is expected.
- Pupils continue to make good progress in Year 1, and especially in Year 2, as they gain confidence. They are mostly enthusiastic about reading. They use their knowledge of phonics (linking letters and sounds) to pronounce unfamiliar words correctly, and show clear understanding of stories they have read. The school is building successfully on its good links with families to encourage more parents and carers to hear their children reading regularly at home.
- Those pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils, because work in classrooms is well adapted to their needs, and they are well supported by assistants and learning mentors.
- Although pupils make good progress across the school, their very low starting points mean that attainment by the end of Year 2 is below average. However, in the last three years, there has been gradual improvement in writing. Attainment in reading has improved even more, and is closer to average. However, attainment in mathematics is lower.
- In national assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2011, those pupils supported by the pupil premium, who represented exactly half the whole year group, attained higher scores in reading and mathematics, and similar scores in writing, in comparison with other pupils. However, in 2012, when pupils eligible for the pupil premium formed an even higher proportion of the year group, they performed less well than others. The gap in attainment in 2012 was the equivalent of two terms in reading, and one term in writing and mathematics. Pupil premium funding has provided for an additional part-time teacher for early number work, and training for assistants in specialist teaching programmes, for example in speech and language. The school has also employed learning mentors to offer guidance for pupils, and a home-school link worker to promote parents' and carers' involvement in supporting children's learning. This demonstrates the school's strong commitment to promoting equality of opportunity.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils' consistently good progress is the result of the good quality of teaching. Almost all parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire agreed that their children make good progress and are well taught.
- Teachers and assistants are particularly good at forming positive working relationships with pupils and supporting any who may be vulnerable. Teachers also have high expectations for behaviour, and this sets the climate for successful learning.
- Teachers plan lessons well, and their organisation in classrooms is good. Tasks set are well matched to pupils' prior attainment, which ensures good levels of challenge for the wide range of abilities in classes. In successful lessons involving problem solving in mathematics in Year 2, for example, the teachers ensured good progress by closely matching tasks to four different levels of prior attainment.
- Teachers consistently work at a pace which engages pupils' interest, leading to a good sense of direction in lessons. Although planning regularly specifies clear objectives for pupils' learning, teachers do not consistently clarify for pupils the lesson purpose as well as they could. Similarly, teachers do not always indicate clearly what will count as successful learning.
- Learning support assistants make good contributions to pupils' learning, particularly through

their well-focused support for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs.

- Teachers and assistants show very good understanding of the needs of children in the Reception classes, and plan a well-judged range of activities indoors and in the outside area. 'Play' activities support children's learning particularly well. More formal work, such as phonics, is also very effective because teachers make learning enjoyable and fully engage children's interest. Work in small groups with an adult is especially well managed because tasks are closely matched to children's needs, and resources are well used to support learning.
- Although teachers set targets for pupils, there are missed opportunities to increase their impact by regularly ensuring pupils' understanding of the next steps in their learning in mathematics, and also in writing.
- Pupils write with increasing accuracy in their spelling and in work in mathematics. However, teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not set high enough expectations for correctly formed numbers and letters, or for neat presentation of pupils' written work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The warm, caring ethos and good relationships with adults promote pupils' positive attitudes to school and their readiness to learn.
- Inspection evidence indicates good behaviour in lessons and around the school, as well as in the hall at lunchtime. At breaktimes, pupils enjoy using the range of small play equipment and making positive contact with others in the playground. Pupils themselves confirm that standards of behaviour are good.
- Pupils feel safe in school, and with hardly an exception parents and carers, and members of staff, share their view. Pupils know about how to keep themselves safe, for example on roads or near water, and are aware of the need to exercise care in using the internet.
- They say that bullying is rare, and that the occasional issue of misbehaviour is well handled by school staff. Pupils know too about the possible dangers from cyber bullying. Records show that incidents of racism are also rare. For these reasons, the school needs to make little use of exclusions.
- Although the rate of attendance is below average, it has improved as a result of effective action by the attendance officer appointed by the federation. The extent of persistent absence has reduced for the same reason.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher's vision sees the school at the heart of the local community, and meeting the academic and personal needs of pupils. Good support by other senior leaders and the members of the governing body lead to the school's strong team spirit. This is confirmed by the survey, where members of staff unanimously agreed that the school is well led and managed and that they know what they are trying to achieve.
- Leaders track and analyse pupils' progress closely, and undertake a range of activities to check the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, they have a good understanding about pupils' performance, based on accurate self-evaluation. This leads to well-devised improvement planning aimed at further accelerating progress and raising attainment.
- Through the curriculum, the school realises its vision well. In the Reception classes, carefully devised opportunities to learn through practical experiences are combined with whole-class and small-group teaching of early reading skills and learning in mathematics. To meet pupils' ongoing needs, this approach is extended into Year 1. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 includes a continuing focus on developing pupils' learning in reading, writing and mathematics, and good opportunities to explore exciting topics, such as pirates, and to develop new skills, for instance in art and in science. The Healthy Schools award attests to the strong focus on promoting healthy lifestyles. The good number of after-school clubs includes sports.

- The school makes strenuous efforts to encourage parents' and carers' involvement in their children's education, most especially through supporting their school learning.
- The local authority understands the school's circumstances well, and has an accurate view of its performance. It is confident in the school leadership's good capacity for self-evaluation and for further planned improvement, and has provided light-touch support.
- Leaders maintain a rigorous focus on all aspects of safeguarding, which fully meet requirements. They are at pains to ensure that vulnerable pupils are especially well supported.
- The capacity to secure further improvement is demonstrated by pupils' consistently good progress, leading to improvement in attainment in writing and especially in reading in recent years. The school has met the improvement issues from the previous inspection through greater involvement of parents and carers, an improved curriculum, and a better focus on mathematics in the Reception Year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has a good understanding of its role in holding the school to account. Governors have an accurate overview of pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching, from leaders' reports and direct contacts with the school, and understand the nationally produced data on pupils' performance, and its implications. They are well informed about pupil premium funding, and know that the additional resources are spent to good effect, despite lower outcomes in 2012. Governors undertake the headteacher's annual performance management responsibly. They are clear that other members of staff are formally appraised, and that care is taken to ensure that salary progression is warranted. The importance of undertaking further training, for instance to discharge additional responsibilities following federation, is fully recognised.

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	115909
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	412065

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	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	174
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Goodall
Headteacher	Janet Hayward
Date of previous school inspection	18–19 March 2009
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