

Ryefield Primary School

Ryefield Avenue, Hillingdon, Uxbridge, UB10 9DE

Inspection dates

6–7 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress is not consistently good across the school, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Teaching in Key Stage 2 is not always pitched at the right level for all pupils and this slows the pace at which skills improve.
- Pupils do not make as much progress in writing as in reading and mathematics.
- Teachers do not always expect enough of their pupils when they are writing or make clear to them how to improve their work.
- The teaching of basic skills such as punctuation and grammar is not always systematic enough.
- Not all teachers take enough responsibility for checking the progress of pupils in their class.
- Checks on how well pupils are learning are not frequent enough so that dips in progress can be identified and tackled even more quickly.

The school has the following strengths

- The relatively new headteacher is ensuring that the school is improving quickly. She has halted the decline in pupils' achievement in Key Stage 2. Pupils who had fallen behind have been helped to get back on track and attainment is beginning to rise.
- Leaders already have a good track record for improving teaching. Remaining weaknesses are being tackled with unflinching rigour by all leaders, including the governing body.
- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are taught well and learn new skills quickly.
- In Key Stage 1, progress is good in most classes. Teaching builds well on pupils' starting points.
- Throughout the school, pupils behave well and feel very safe. There is a delightful atmosphere in lessons because pupils are keen to learn and support each other well.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy school. They arrive each morning with smiling faces, reflecting the willingness of staff to go the extra mile to make the school a safe and happy place for children to learn in.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 26 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with the headteacher. In addition, the inspectors made a number of short visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with pupils, members of the governing body, members of staff and a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the views of 53 parents and carers who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). The inspectors also read letters from parents and carers and talked to some at the start of the school day.
- The inspectors observed the school's work, heard pupils read, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information about pupils' learning and progress, planning and monitoring documents, the school development plan, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding information.
- The inspectors analysed 34 questionnaires from staff.

Inspection team

Mike Capper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Melanie Clapton	Additional Inspector
Raminder Arora	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. The school is larger than at the time of the previous inspection and the number on roll continues to grow.
- Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds and about one in four speaks English as an additional language. More pupils than usual join or leave the school during the year.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught in a Nursery and three Reception classes.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported at school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding given to the school for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children who are looked after by the local authority and the children of service families) is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Since the previous inspection in 2009, there have been many changes in teaching staff. The headteacher took up post in September 2011 and the deputy headteacher in September 2012.
- The breakfast and after-school clubs are run by external providers and were not inspected.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 by ensuring that work is not too hard or too easy for any pupils.
- Close the gap between pupils' attainment in writing and reading by:
 - ensuring that teachers always expect enough of the pupils when they are writing and making more effective use of marking and verbal feedback to help them understand how to improve
 - ensuring that basic skills such as grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught systematically across the school.
- Improve the use of information about pupils' performance by:
 - ensuring that there are more frequent checks on progress over time and that they are always accurate
 - ensuring that teachers have a better understanding of what assessment checks tell them about progress in their class so that they can take more responsibility for identifying and tackling dips.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because progress is not yet consistently good. Despite recent improvement, there are still variations in pupils' progress between key stages. In Key Stage 2, pupils do not always make enough progress, especially in writing. Attainment at the end of Year 6 is broadly average but it is beginning to rise, although less rapidly than in Key Stage 1. This is because in some lessons in Key Stage 2, work does not provide the right level of challenge for all pupils.
- Writing skills in Key Stage 2 improve slowly. Pupils in Year 6 do not always punctuate their work correctly and spelling is not accurate enough. While pupils are writing with increased confidence due to the stronger links that are now being made between subjects, attainment in writing continues to lag behind reading and is not improving quickly enough.
- Pupils make the best progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1, where teaching is stronger. When children start school, few are working at the expected levels for their age. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes, especially in developing early literacy skills.
- Pupils in Year 2 carry out simple calculations accurately, write well for a range of purposes and read confidently. They have a good knowledge of the sounds that letters make (phonics) and use this knowledge well to help them read unknown words.
- The gap between the attainment of pupils who benefit from the pupil premium and others is smaller than that found nationally. In national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2012, eligible pupils were attaining about a term behind their classmates in both English and mathematics. Leaders use the pupil premium to employ additional staff to support eligible pupils in small groups or individually and this helps to close the gap. Eligible pupils make the best progress in Key Stage 1, and then build steadily on this in Key Stage 2.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make the same uneven progress as others, doing better in Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. Those with a statement of special educational needs make the best progress. They receive high quality support outside lessons which takes good account of their differing needs.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain at the same levels as others by the end of Year 6. They make good progress in developing skills in speaking English, enabling them to take a full part in all activities.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The amount of good teaching is improving. However, teaching still requires improvement because, in Key Stage 2 in particular, teachers do not always plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. There are too many occasions when work is too hard or too easy for some pupils and this means skills do not always improve quickly enough.
- When pupils are writing, teachers do not always expect enough of them. Basic writing skills such as spelling, punctuation and grammar are not taught systematically enough in Key Stage 2. Leaders have already identified this as an important factor in the gap between attainment in writing and reading and plans are already in hand to tackle this weakness.
- The quality of marking and verbal feedback varies across the school. Sometimes it gives clear guidance about how to improve but this is not consistent in all classes. In writing, pupils are not always clear about the next steps in their learning. In a small number of classes, work is not marked regularly enough.
- There is good and occasionally outstanding teaching in all parts of the school. For example, exceptionally good practice was seen in a numeracy lesson in Key Stage 2 where the teacher provided high levels of challenge and was constantly checking pupils' understanding before moving on to the next step as they learnt about 'Carroll Diagrams'.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, adults plan exciting activities. Children are given good opportunities to select for themselves where they are going to work and adults intervene at just the right time to move learning on quickly. In Key Stage 1, pupils are usually challenged well because most teachers have high expectations.
- In all classes, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. They make good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboards to bring subjects alive. Consequently, in most lessons, pupils are interested, ensuring that time is not wasted.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils are proud of their school and are keen to do well. They thoroughly enjoy school and work in lessons without fear of failure, confidently sharing ideas and listening sensitively to each other's views.
- Around school and in lessons, pupils behave well. They are polite and courteous and happily talk to visitors about their work. They feel that the school rules are 'fair' and they like the fact that good behaviour is rewarded through the 'Be-the-Best-You-Can-Club'.
- Lunchtime is calm and harmonious, and pupils mix together well when, for example, sharing their 'picnic' lunches. Pupils work hard in lessons, although just occasionally they become fidgety and lose concentration when teaching does not challenge them fully.
- Pupils feel very safe. They are very confident that any worries are tackled quickly and they say that there is very little bullying or 'falling-out'. Extensive work in lessons and assemblies has helped pupils to understand better what is meant by bullying. They explain confidently about the dangers of cyber-bullying and know how name-calling can be hurtful.
- The school fosters good relationships between pupils and tackles discrimination rigorously. Newly arrived pupils are supported well and settle quickly. As one said, 'We soon make friends and then keep them!'
- Good use is made of the pupil premium to ensure that eligible pupils can participate fully in activities and to support families where absence is too frequent. This has been successful and attendance has improved in the current year to above average levels. As one pupil said, 'We do not want to miss school because we like being with our friends and work is fun.'

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and other leaders are ensuring good improvement across the school. The backlog of underachievement in Key Stage 2 is being tackled well. Leaders share the headteacher's strong commitment to ensuring that pupils' progress is good across the school.
- Improvements instigated since the headteacher took up post are already proving beneficial. Phonics is being taught more systematically than in the past. The curriculum (subjects and the topics taught) has been much improved so that learning has become more purposeful than in the past. The curriculum contributes well to pupils' personal development by focusing well on key values such as trust and respect and by giving them good opportunities to take responsibility. Sport is given a high profile and this is greatly appreciated by parents, carers and pupils.
- Leaders are successfully improving teaching. There is regular monitoring of lessons and an insistence on high standards of teaching. As a result, progress across the school has already picked up. Leaders are doing the right things to iron out the remaining inconsistencies in teaching so that even more is good.
- The school has a wealth of data on pupils' progress, but leaders know that not all assessments are accurate or frequent enough to help them track progress securely. Although teachers are becoming more involved in using data to check the progress of the pupils in their class, this is not yet consistently strong making it difficult for them to respond quickly to dips in progress as

they arise.

- The local authority has provided limited support since the previous inspection when the school was judged to be 'good'. School leaders have, however, made good use of external support from their 'Challenge Partners' (groups of schools working together) and others to help them to secure improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Although there has been a high turnover of governors, the governing body is improving its skills quickly. Experienced governors from other schools who have been appointed through the local authority are providing good training and support to the governing body. This is ensuring that there is more challenge in meetings. Governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and this, along with their own analysis of data, means that they now have a clear picture of how well the school is doing in comparison with others. They check the use of the pupil premium closely to ensure that it is being used successfully to close the gap in attainment for eligible groups. Other spending is also closely monitored and governors are planning well for imminent school expansion and building work. With support from the headteacher, the governing body monitors the quality of teaching carefully. Governors know where it is stronger or weaker and ensure that only good performance is rewarded financially. Governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.
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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

Unique reference number	102397
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	412113

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	501
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Thomas Zacharias
Headteacher	Nicola Forster
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 October 2009
Telephone number	01895 238328
Fax number	01895 236343
Email address	ryefield@hillingdongrid.org

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