

# Ravensdale Junior School

Devonshire Drive, Mickleover, Derby, DE3 9EY

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Teaching is good. It has improved considerably since the last inspection.
- Pupils, and different groups of pupils, achieve well and have made quick progress in this school year.
- The outstanding commitment of the headteacher and other senior leaders has resulted in rapid improvements.
- Leaders have tackled quickly and well previous weaknesses in teaching and pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Their very good attitudes make a considerable contribution to the school's calm and safe environment.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Governors have a good and detailed understanding of the school's strengths and future development needs and provide firm challenge to senior leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to make sure that all groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, make excellent progress.
- Leaders of subjects other than English and mathematics have not had an equally strong impact on improving the quality of pupils' learning.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by 11 teachers.
- The inspection team held meetings with senior and subject leaders, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and six other members, and a representative from the local authority.
- There were insufficient responses recorded on Parent View, the online questionnaire, to draw conclusions. However, inspectors took into account the school's very recent survey of parents. Inspectors also spoke to parents in the playground at the beginning and end of the school day. The results of the 17 completed staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- The inspection team analysed information about pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour. They reviewed a range of documents, including the school's improvement plan, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

James McNeillie, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Rachel Howie

Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.*

### Information about this school

- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Most students are White British, with the remainder from a range of backgrounds including of Indian, Pakistani and mixed heritages.
- Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average, as are the proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The number of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for pupils in the care of the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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

- Improve teaching so that more is outstanding and pupils make excellent progress in all subjects by ensuring that:
  - teachers help all pupils to have a precise understanding of how best to maximise their learning and skills in all subjects
  - all pupils respond to and act on the helpful written feedback they receive so that they can improve their work
  - teaching assistants in all lessons support pupils to develop as independent learners
  - pupils use and develop their reading, writing and mathematics skills to a high level in all subjects
  - the current opportunities for teachers to learn best practice from each other are extended.
- Strengthen further the school's leadership by developing the role of subject leaders to improve pupils' progress and skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress in school and there have been considerable improvements in every class this academic year. Most pupils are catching up on previous underachievement.
- School leaders' initial analysis of the 2013 Year 6 test results suggest that most pupils have made good progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their slightly below-average starting points in Year 3. Some pupils have made outstanding progress in mathematics. Observations of pupils' learning and the quality of work in their books confirm these improvements.
- Different groups of pupils, including those from all backgrounds, achieve well in school. School leaders track the progress pupils make very carefully and this means that teachers can provide additional support to individuals or groups of pupils when necessary.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are now making quicker progress in each year group and any gaps in the progress between these pupils and their classmates are narrowing quickly. The school's special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) use the information they have about these pupils to make sure that any additional support is making a difference. Some, but not all, pupils who need extra help make outstanding progress in their learning.
- The achievement of pupils supported by additional government funding is also good, in part due to sensible spending of this money to provide small-group and individual support for literacy and mathematics. Test results in 2012 showed that these pupils were about two terms behind their classmates in their English and mathematics skills and were more likely to be absent from school. These gaps between this group of pupils currently in school and their classmates have narrowed as a result of the good progress they are now making.
- Younger pupils who struggle with reading have a good range of strategies to help them work out how to read words and understand texts. The school's information on these pupils' progress, and confirmed by inspectors listening to pupils read and observing their learning, show that these strategies are making a good difference.
- Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in subjects they study during 'topic' time. This is as a result of their positive attitudes to learning, good teaching and the interesting activities teachers plan, such as investigating food chains in science. However, fewer pupils make rapid progress in their learning in these subjects when compared to English or mathematics.
- Since the time of the last inspection, pupils are much better able to use their literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects and have more opportunities to complete extended writing activities. However, there is more still to do to make sure that pupils use these skills to a high level in subjects other than English and mathematics.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Most lessons have a brisk pace, are planned to challenge and support pupils, and include activities that engage and excite them. This means that pupils of different abilities and needs make good progress.

- As a result of good-quality training from experts in school and the local authority, teaching has improved considerably. These improvements include how well teachers plan lessons that allow pupils to learn quickly and the quality of teachers' written feedback.
- Teachers ask excellent questions, such as 'Why?' and 'How do you know?' and 'Can you prove that?', which mean that pupils have to explain their answers and opinions in detail and this results in better learning. High expectations that pupils should respond in full sentences to questions asked in class means that pupils have well-developed oral communication skills.
- Teaching makes a significant contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Outstanding teaching in a Year 5 religious education lesson enabled pupils to consider sensitively their beliefs about tolerance. Each class has a 'Spiritual Journey' and teachers make good links with these to encourage pupils to reflect on their views and those of others.
- In many lessons, pupils work independently of their teachers; for example, they are given time to explore their ideas in pairs or groups and are challenged to test out their ideas on their own. Teaching assistants often support pupils to learn independently, but this is not always so.
- Marking is regular and teachers commonly provide helpful written feedback to pupils using the school's 'two stars and a wish' technique. Pupils like this consistent approach and some, although not yet all, respond to and act on these points for improvement.
- Where teaching is most effective, the teacher helps pupils to understand the learning process very well and this leads pupils to make quick progress. For example, in a Year 3 literacy lesson, the teacher explained how pupils could make a sentence more interesting by adding more descriptive words and by changing the structure of the sentence. Pupils were then able to apply this approach to their own work. This very strong practice of showing pupils very explicitly the steps they need to take to maximise their learning is not consistent in all classes.

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

- Pupils are polite, welcoming and friendly, and their conduct around the school is responsible and considerate of others. They feel safe and are reassured that there is always someone to help them if they need it, including older pupils who are prefects.
- In lessons, pupils behave well. They understand and meet the school's high expectations of respectful behaviour, respond quickly to well-established routines and work well together in pairs or in groups to support each other's learning. In doing so, pupils reflect the school's 'RAVENS' values very well.
- Pupils have an excellent appreciation of different faiths and beliefs and are keen to understand and celebrate their classmates' diverse backgrounds through discussions in a range of subjects, assemblies and other activities.
- Bullying is rare. Pupils understand what it means to be unkind to someone else and are confident that members of staff will quickly deal with any unkindness if it happens. The school's records of incidents confirm this.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and continues to improve for all groups. There is healthy competition between classes to see which has the best attendance and pupils are excited to

receive attendance reward certificates.

- There have been no exclusions from school since September. The deputy headteacher keeps a careful weekly check on records of pupils' behaviour and this shows that the small number of incidents of poor behaviour continues to decrease.
- Members of staff, including the learning mentor, offer good support to pupils who sometimes find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. School leaders are using additional government funding to support these pupils and their families, which is having a good impact.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has shown an outstanding commitment to improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement. She has achieved this, with the strong support of senior leaders and governors, by setting challenging targets for pupils' achievement and linking these to the management of teachers' performance.
- The headteacher is a visible presence around the school and pupils enjoy talking to her and sharing their news. She listens to them and provides them with opportunities to develop their leadership and communication skills; for example, by encouraging three Year 6 girls to lead a whole-school assembly on the topic of the rights of women.
- All staff who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire agreed that they were proud to be part of the school, with one commenting, 'I relish the lively atmosphere where children always come first.'
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching mean that senior leaders know where there are strengths and weaknesses. When necessary, leaders have provided support and challenge to individual teachers to make sure that their teaching improves. This has worked well. Teachers have also worked together to share and observe good practice and the senior leaders have sensible plans to develop this further.
- The leaders of English, mathematics and special educational needs have been effective in making sure that there have been improvements in their areas of responsibility. This is because of regular checking of how well pupils are achieving and providing support to teachers when necessary.
- Other subject leaders have also evaluated the progress pupils are making and are involved in checking the quality of work in these subjects. These leaders ensure that pupils have access to a broad range of knowledge and skill beyond English and mathematics. However, their roles and the impact of their work are less well developed.
- Pupils have many opportunities to take part in sporting, social and cultural activities outside of the classroom. These support the strong development of their wider skills and contribute to pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe meet national requirements. The headteacher provides regular training in school and to other schools on behalf of the local authority. Pupils who are most at potential risk are very well supported and school leaders work closely with other agencies in doing so. Rigorous procedures are in place to follow up any unexplained absences.

■ The local authority has provided good-quality support and challenge to the school. Training for leaders, teachers and governors has contributed well to the school's improvements, including by checking that teachers are assessing pupils' work accurately. Local authority officers have also provided excellent regular reviews of the school's work which have supported leaders and governors to identify next steps for improvement.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There have been striking improvements since the last inspection. Governors have the necessary skills to fulfil their roles and hold the headteacher and others to account for all aspects of the school's work, including how well additional government funding is being spent. They know how well pupils and groups of pupils in this school are achieving compared to all pupils nationally, and they have a detailed understanding of the progress of pupils in each class. Governors request and analyse information about the quality of teaching, know where teaching is strongest and what is needed to make further improvements. They also have a good overview of the management of teachers' performance, including any decisions about additional financial payments to teachers.

## 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>	112760
<b>Local authority</b>	Derby City
<b>Inspection number</b>	420472

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	308
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jackie Drake
<b>Headteacher</b>	Paula Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2012
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