

Riverside Junior School

Holme Street, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 8EE

Inspection dates 10–11 July 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	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		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching is not consistently good across all year groups, and no outstanding teaching was observed.
- The positive impact of improvements in the quality of leadership, including governance, has only recently become evident in better teaching and achievement. The school recognises that more time is needed to secure good leadership and management at all levels across the school.
- Teachers do not always express high expectations of pupils' work and learning habits, for example, to ensure that pupils are expected to do more work independently.
- Although standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above average overall, they are not as high as they could be if all pupils made good or better progress. This is why achievement is not yet good.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through a good range of well-planned activities within and beyond the school's day-to-day curriculum.
- The school is committed to the inclusion of all pupils, who are and cared for and equally valued.
- Pupils enjoy school and say they feel safe. Behaviour is typically good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- The headteacher and all staff know the pupils well as individuals, listen to their views and support their personal development.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 10 lessons across the school and most teachers, including those in job-share arrangements, were seen.
- Meetings were held with leaders, teachers, the Chair and vice-chair of the Governing Body, a representative of the local authority and a group of pupils.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to take into account. However, inspectors looked at a summary of the school's own recent survey of parents' views.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of policies and other documents, including the school's own data on current pupils' progress, improvement plans and monitoring information, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of recent governing body meetings and safeguarding arrangements.
- Inspectors also took into account evidence from the school's previous monitoring inspection visit in March 2013.

Inspection team

Marguerite Murphy, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

John Nixon

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

- This is a smaller than average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional funding based on the number of pupils in local authority care, from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- A below average proportion of pupils has additional needs that are supported through school action, while the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- When the school was last inspected in January 2012, it was judged inadequate and placed in special measures. Significant improvement was required in achievement, teaching and leadership and management. The school received three monitoring visits by HMI to check on its progress. This inspection was the outcome of its fourth monitoring visit.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve further the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good and some is outstanding by:
 - ensuring that teachers use their knowledge of pupils' individual strengths and previous attainment to tailor work and challenges more closely to their specific needs
 - raise further the expectations of, and enhance opportunities for, pupils to demonstrate more independent learning skills across all subjects
 - improving teachers' skills in listening to and questioning pupils effectively to assess their understanding, reinforce previous learning and accelerate their progress in future learning
 - developing pupils' abilities to construct and present their ideas and findings clearly and confidently to a variety of audiences beyond the one-to-one or small group situations
 - further developing the partnerships with other schools to enhance opportunities for joint staff training and the sharing of ideas and best practice between teachers and support staff.
- Ensure that leaders and managers maintain the momentum of continuous improvement and raised expectations by:
 - building on recent work to develop the school's vision, to ensure it is fully reflected in action plans for improvement that will enable it to become a reality within the community
 - reviewing the school's pay policy and setting clear and challenging performance management objectives for teachers that are appropriate to their salary scale and responsibilities
 - using the communication strategy being developed by leaders and governors to enhance the information shared with the school community and beyond, including keeping the website up to date and compliant with more recent regulations.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school having reached above average attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. Their attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is above average and has been for several years, although this masked the fact that some pupils had made inadequate progress from their starting points. This situation has now been remedied.
- It was noted in the school's third monitoring inspection in March 2013, that Year 6 pupils were on track to continue the upward trend in standards seen in 2012. The unvalidated results of national tests in 2013 show that many of their targets have even been exceeded.
- The achievements of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs have improved greatly from the inadequate picture at the last inspection. They now make similar progress to their peers. A number of pupils with additional learning needs in Year 6 actually made outstanding progress in reading this year.
- A significant factor in this was the more rapid progress made by some pupils in Year 6, as a result of more closely focused and targeted support to enable them to make up for previous underachievement. A relative weakness showed in mathematics where a small number of pupils made less than expected progress during Year 6. Despite this, over half of the pupils reached the higher Level 5 or above in mathematics.
- The acceleration of pupils' progress across the school, however, is variable and is linked to the quality of teaching over time. In some year groups there remains catching up to do.
- Although improvements have been made in pupils' writing across the school, the proportion making or exceeding expected progress in writing is still lower than in reading and mathematics.
- The gap between the attainment of those supported by pupil premium funding and other pupils is similar to that typically found and is narrowing successfully as achievement across the school continues to improve.
- Many pupils read regularly from a good range of books within and beyond the school. They demonstrate an enjoyment and appreciation of literature. One pupil described a love of poetry because it 'allows your imagination to run wild!'
- Most pupils are very confident speakers when making their own views and opinions known in a conversational manner. They are less proficient in expressing ideas and explaining what they have learned in a clear and well-constructed way to a larger audience, for example, in front of the class or a larger group.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching is good in the majority of lessons, but requires improvement overall. This is due to the variability between classes and even by teachers themselves, when some find it difficult to deliver consistently good lessons across a range of subjects.
- In the better lessons, teachers make good use of assessment information to build on the skills of pupils of all ability levels and provide sufficiently challenging tasks to move their learning on. They use a range of strategies and flexible ways of working to get the best from pupils. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils made good progress in understanding mathematical problems by being encouraged to formulate their own questions for others to solve. This good practice is not yet consistent across the school.
- Some pupils find it hard to work well as part of a team, or to listen carefully to others and value the contributions of their classmates. Effective teaching promotes purposeful talk, good listening skills and collaboration between pupils that contribute to better learning, but this is not always evident even in some of the good lessons.
- Sometimes, teachers are too quick to provide guidance or clues on answers to challenging questions before giving sufficient thinking time for pupils to come up with their own solutions.

Similarly, pupils have quite a relaxed attitude to their learning and are reluctant to push themselves harder. Not all teachers counteract this by articulating high expectations of the work pupils are expected to complete independently in the lesson.

- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning as they work well alongside teachers and provide targeted support and challenge to groups of pupils in lessons.
- Pupils recognise teachers' strengths in promoting creativity across the school. As one pupil explained 'we don't have many art lessons but we do so much art!' This, along with the range of visits, activities and imaginative and regular use of the outdoor environment, contributes to a good curriculum and to pupils' enjoyment of learning.
- Teachers are developing confidence in their ability to respond quickly and adjust the curriculum to meet pupils' needs and interests. Opportunities to 'make things real' work well, for example, in the Year 3 mathematics lessons in the local park. When Year 6 were asked about what they had learned following a visit to the supermarket, one pupil replied on behalf of many when saying 'there's more maths to shopping than you think!'

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils who spoke with inspectors were very positive about the improvements in behaviour since the school's last inspection. They were also clear about what constitutes different forms of bullying and the importance of telling adults if there is a problem so that it can be quickly dealt with.
- Pupils know about ways in which they can keep themselves safe and are well informed on matters of e-safety and cyber-bullying, which they are regularly reminded of in assemblies. Pupils are confident that homophobic bullying is not an issue. In fact, Riverside has recently become a Primary School Champion with the Stonewall organisation.
- Pupils are quite articulate in expressing their feelings and feel comfortable to talk to staff on any matters that concern them. They can also be reflective, for example in recognising that levels of staff supervision contribute to keeping them safe. Leaders are also aware of the need for vigilance at times when some pupils can be boisterous, such as at break and lunchtimes.
- Most pupils attend regularly and are punctual. Overall attendance levels fluctuate between average and just above. It has been known for a small number of pupils to have isolated days off with reasons that are not fully notified to the school, and these are followed up by the learning mentor.
- Most parents who responded to the school's survey agree that their child is treated fairly and that someone will listen to them if there are any concerns.
- Pupils are proud of their school and happy to be here, saying that they would also recommend it to others.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher, leaders and governors are committed to continuous learning and improvement to develop their skills. The monitoring and guidance received from the local authority and the National Leaders in Education programme has supported them along the way. There is now capacity to secure further improvement across the school by sustaining the upward trend in pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and learning.
- Senior leaders have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and the key priorities for improvement. Teachers are observed and given useful feedback to inform their training and development priorities. The developing partnerships with other schools are proving beneficial in enabling staff to widen their horizons and share ideas and good practice.
- The school's pupil premium allocation, although not a significant amount of additional funding, has been used towards maintaining levels of support for targeted pupils, such as through teaching assistants or the learning mentor. Leaders make regular checks on the progress being

made by all groups of pupils in order to identify any gaps in their achievements and put targeted support in place quickly to narrow these.

- Improvements in the leadership of provision for disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are having a positive impact on their achievements. Also, teachers have a better awareness of how to adjust learning tasks to ensure the needs of those pupils are more closely met.
- The school's safeguarding policies and procedures meet statutory requirements.
- Staff are held to account through regular reviews of information on pupils' progress. However, the school's performance management procedures are yet to be reviewed against more recent national requirements. These are intended to ensure that teachers' performance and targets are commensurate with the expectations for their particular responsibilities and salary scales.
- The recent survey of parents' views identified that some would appreciate receiving more information about their child's progress, what they are learning and how they can help. The school has plans to act on these suggestions in the new school year.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body makes a positive contribution to the strategic direction of the school and has been influential in helping to develop its vision for the future, in consultation with parents, staff and pupils. Governors recognise the need to draw this work together as soon as possible through its proposals for a new communication strategy, which includes improvements to the quality of information on the school's website.
 - Governors have a good range of skills and experience and know the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are aware of how effective teaching is in different parts of the school. They understand the information provided on the tracking of pupils' progress and ask appropriate questions to hold leaders to account.
 - Governors acknowledge the challenges to be faced in maintaining a balanced budget with fluctuations in the number of pupils on roll. They understand the importance of careful financial management and the need to monitor the impact of allocated resources to achieve best value.

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	107529
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	420664

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Dermo
Headteacher	Val Eggleton
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2012
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