

Rudston Primary School

Rudston Road, Liverpool, Merseyside, L16 4PQ

Inspection dates

21–22 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	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.

- Pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average in reading, writing and mathematics because they are taught well. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make a positive start to their school life because teaching is good and they make good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs, the most able pupils and those supported through the pupil premium funding make good progress.
- Teaching is good. Some is outstanding. Teachers know their subjects and communicate this knowledge to pupils in ways that make learning a stimulating experience.
- Pupils' behaviour and arrangements for their safety are good. Pupils are impeccably turned-out in their uniforms and ready to learn; they are a credit to their parents and their school.
- Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has brought two schools and two governing bodies together successfully. Leaders, teachers and governors have worked together closely and effectively to raise standards and improve teaching.
- The curriculum is a significant strength in bringing about successful learning in many subjects. At its heart is the requirement that learning in each subject must include the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. These are well developed and pupils are very competent readers, skilful and creative writers and confident mathematicians.
- Governance is good. Governors look at pupils' work, they meet pupils regularly and examine very closely how well pupils are doing.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are friendly and welcoming. They are excited and curious about learning because of stimulating activities and good teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding to enable pupils to make even better progress and reach even higher standards.
- The school's challenging targets are not high enough to help teachers aim for the very best standards that pupils, especially the most able, can achieve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 19 part lessons taught by 17 teachers, including two lessons that were observed jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors reviewed pupils' books and analysed pupils' work from each year group with the headteacher. Inspectors also observed the school's work, including the school's explanation of how well it is doing and its plans for improvement, documents related to behaviour and safeguarding, records of governing body meetings and information on pupils' progress.
- Meetings were held with pupils, staff, three members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors analysed the 60 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), talked to parents before and after school and looked at parents' views collected by the school. Inspectors also took account of the 34 responses from staff to the inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Marie Cordey, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

John Shutt

Additional Inspector

Doug Scholes

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Rudston is larger than the average-sized primary school. It is the amalgamation of a separate infant school and a junior school, which took place in September 2012.
- The proportion of pupils known to be supported through the pupil premium is below the national average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average. The number of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- There are a nursery and a children's centre on site which were not part of this inspection. The inspection reports for these settings are available at www.ofsted.gov.uk

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards, especially for the most able pupils, and increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by:
 - setting even more challenging targets for pupils, clearly stated in all their books and in teachers' records so that pupils make exceptional progress in order to reach standards that are in the top 10% nationally
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking so that each pupil is in no doubt about what exactly is required from them to improve their work and teachers check that pupils have acted on the advice given.
- Improve leadership and management from good to outstanding by:
 - increasing teachers' knowledge of the highest National Curriculum levels, such as Level 6 and Level 7 in Key Stage 2 to enable them to plan work that will raise pupils' expectations of themselves and stretch them even further.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting points in Key Stages 1 and 2 and in reading, writing and mathematics. A focus on grammar, punctuation and spelling in every class equips pupils well for the future because they use punctuation and grammar appropriately and spelling is mostly accurate.
- Progress in lessons and over time, as seen in pupils' books, is good. In some classes in Years 5 and 6, it is more rapid because of outstanding teaching.
- Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are strong. The school's focus on improving standards in mathematics and in writing has successfully transformed pupils' skills and knowledge. Pupils have thoroughly enjoyed improving their work because the curriculum deliberately concentrates on improving literacy and numeracy in all subjects.
- Art and history bring learning to life and increase pupils' knowledge, cultural development and artistic appreciation. Pupils gain detailed knowledge of history century by century and write letters, journals, biographies and lengthy stories; they communicate precise information about art and crafts, including how important mathematics is to these subjects.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Some make exceptional progress because of outstanding teaching and support, not just for their academic development but also for their personal and emotional development. This reflects the school's commitment to ensuring every child is given an equal opportunity and is free from discrimination.
- The most able pupils make good progress. Occasionally, targets are not sufficiently challenging and work in lessons is not of a high enough level to result in pupils making exceptional progress and attaining standards in the top 10% in the country.
- The pupil premium funding is used effectively and precisely to raise standards and improve progress for pupils eligible for this funding. The standards and progress of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals are broadly similar to those of other pupils and small differences in their achievement in English and mathematics are narrowing.
- The additional primary school sport funding has been used well to appoint an exceptionally knowledgeable and enthusiastic sports coach. Children in Year 1, for instance, practise gymnastic skills that are at a level well above their chronological age and use sophisticated sport terminology confidently. They 'walk like a gymnast', start and finish their moves precisely and explain what they are doing extremely enthusiastically and seriously.
- The achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. Children are happy when learning early skills in reading, writing and number because it is part of almost every activity. While playing in sand, they count up numbers or create imaginative stories, for instance. They sound out letters and words to each other or enthusiastically seek out books to look at or read. Consequently, they grasp basic skills in reading, writing and number that prepare them well for learning in Key Stage 1.

The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils learn well in their lessons and over time because of good teaching. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and classrooms are very busy places where pupils expect to work hard, persevere and to take the utmost care in the presentation of their work.
- Challenging targets spur pupils to achieve their potential. Teachers have good subject knowledge, especially of levels 1 to 5 of the National Curriculum. They have less knowledge about levels 6 and 7 and this hampers the most able pupils from making exceptional progress.
- Good teaching deliberately builds on pupils' knowledge in order to challenge and stimulate pupils further. In Year 4, for example, pupils use dictionaries to look up the meaning of new words even if it takes them a long time to find what they want. They build up confidence and resilience

and take pride in finding out things for themselves.

- When teaching is outstanding, pupils are challenged to achieve way beyond what is expected from them. Pupils in Year 6 listened attentively to an exciting introduction to shape and space in their mathematics lesson and were clearly ready to learn. They enjoy the excitement of learning new things and of constantly revising and checking their work so that it is the best it can be. Examples of outstanding teaching are demonstrated to other teachers who are then stimulated to move their own teaching from good to outstanding.
- Teachers emphasise reading, writing and mathematical skills in nearly all lessons. They reinforce and build on pupils' basic skills in grammar, spelling and punctuation and extend this to paragraph and essay construction. Pupils' books include lengthy pieces of writing that are evident in their work as early as in Year 1.
- Teachers stress the use of mathematical language in mathematics and other subjects. They check that it is used accurately by pupils. Consequently, as well as gaining mathematical knowledge and strategies to help them solve mathematical problems, pupils use numeracy for personal finance, budgeting for trips or when making timelines in history, for example.
- Home learning journals are packed with work that is clearly relished by the pupils as well as their parents. Homework is far from routine. It always includes practice in basic skills but can be anything from research on the finer parts of ancient pottery to extended essays that might be 12 pages long.
- Teaching assistants plan work with the class teacher to support pupils with special educational needs. In addition, the marking of pupils' work is used to identify how well the support is helping pupils to improve their work. Support staff then focus precisely on what needs to be done to help pupils improve.
- Marking is regular and helpful in most books. Occasionally, pupils are not sure exactly what is expected from them in order to make their work better; when this is not checked by the teacher, pupils do not improve their work.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn well because of good teaching. They particularly enjoy playing outdoors, looking at storybooks and practising their knowledge of numbers and words in stimulating activities led by skilled and effective staff.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are courteous to one another, to staff and to visitors. This stems from a comprehensive behaviour policy which focuses on behaviour from the youngest to the oldest pupil. Children in the Reception classes regularly open doors for adults and for each other.
- All ages of pupils play together cooperatively and good behaviour is reinforced and practised by staff. Year 5 pupils are reminded of the privilege of sitting at the back of the hall in assembly and their responsibilities when 'buddying' with children in the Reception classes. Pupils are proud to be monitors, school councillors and helpers and welcome their responsibilities. Parents, staff and pupils believe that behaviour is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive because they look forward to good teaching in their lessons. For the most part, they are prompt when coming into lessons after breaks and listen carefully to their teachers. Occasionally, systems to move pupils from one group to another or after breaks do not work well enough and pupils are late for lessons. This interrupts the learning of other pupils and causes a little restlessness.
- Pupils' attendance last year was average. School actions to improve attendance by working with parents, improving the curriculum and the quality of teaching have led to attendance that is now above average.
- Children in the Reception classes settle down quickly because of the attractive classes covered with exciting displays and the care of all staff to nurture each child.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Procedures to look after pupils' safety are thorough and regularly checked. Senior staff and governors responsible for safeguarding

pupils undertake advanced safety training on a regular basis. Pupils say they feel safe and their parents agree.

- Pupils know how to keep safe and also how to take sensible risks. Year 1 pupils learned the difficult skill of vaulting in a gymnastics lesson. They stumbled at times but were closely supervised and persevered until they could do it.
- Behaviour logs are up to date and regularly reviewed to see if there are any patterns of poor behaviour. These instances are rare and dealt with very quickly. The vast majority of parents have no concerns about bullying, although a significant number of parents did not know whether there was any bullying or not. The effectiveness of the school's work to deal with bullying is not made clear enough.

The leadership and management are good

- The most important effect of the good leadership and management of the school is in the way they have tackled weaknesses in teaching and improved its quality. Senior and middle leaders and the governing body have effectively used performance management targets, professional training and support to improve learning in each class. They have managed some changes in staff effectively to place the most suitable and knowledgeable staff in the classes that match their strengths.
- Leaders have worked closely with other teachers through visiting outstanding schools to promote outstanding teaching and to help create a stimulating and broad curriculum with a close focus on basic skills.
- Newly qualified teachers, all staff and the governors appreciate working together and are proud to be united in their work to improve how well pupils do here. The headteacher's ambitions for pupils have inspired staff to 'dream, believe and achieve', which is the school's motto.
- The headteacher provides clear direction for leaders and governors backed up by plainly written guidance and systems to manage behaviour, improve teaching, raise standards and make sure the school is a happy place for pupils to learn and develop. The staff questionnaire unanimously endorsed the effectiveness of leadership and management in providing a good education for pupils.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastic about improving how well pupils do. Carefully tailored professional training helps them to be successful in their work. They are knowledgeable about what is required from them and committed to the school's vision of providing the best education for its pupils.
- The displays around school and in classrooms are outstanding. This strikes visitors as soon as they enter the school and sets the scene for enjoyable learning and high-quality work. Displays by artists, potters and writers, for instance, are presented along first-class work by pupils in art, craft, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils are set challenging targets for them to make good progress but these are not always included in pupils' books or teachers' records. Targets do not routinely focus on exceptional progress and teachers are not typically aware of what knowledge pupils need to acquire in order to reach the highest levels of work.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is taken very seriously and is reflected in their good behaviour, their thoughtfulness and their outstanding cultural development. They speak knowledgeably and informatively about artists, historical figures and ecological issues because they are encouraged to become aware of the world around them from their first year in school.
- The local authority has provided strong support for the school; it both guides and challenges the pupils' performance, and helps to improve the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance of the school is good. The governing body has quickly become effective because of its determination, and that of the headteacher, to make a difference to the lives of pupils in the school. Governors regularly take part in training to be more effective and involved in

school life. They are very knowledgeable about pupils' standards and often visit lessons and examine pupils' work. They are passionate about improving teaching and have worked closely with the headteacher in the past year to produce very thorough performance management systems. These are directly linked to good and better teaching and its impact on pupils' progress. Public money is spent wisely and effectively to improve how well pupils do. The pupil premium funding is allocated to those who are entitled to it to enable them to attend after-school clubs, residential and day trips. It is also spent on books to take home as well as on one-to-one teaching where appropriate. This has a clear impact on improving standards that governors are able to measure in their checks on pupils' progress.

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	137888
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	430660

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	415
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Ball
Headteacher	Vicky Pierce
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	0151 722 2435
Fax number	n/a
Email address	headteacher@rudston.liverpool.sch.uk

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