

# Ravensthorpe Primary School

Brigstock Court, Peterborough, PE3 7NB

## Inspection dates

5–6 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
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

- Not enough pupils make consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- While teaching improved last year, improvement has faltered in some classes this year.
- Sometimes the work is too easy or hard for pupils to make good progress, and guidance as to how they can improve is not always clear.
- Pupils who are capable of attaining high standards are not always given the type of work which will help them achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to practise and develop their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects and activities.

### The school has the following strengths

- Much teaching is at least good, but this is not consistent across all year groups.
- Many pupils make good progress, and pupils who speak English as an additional language do particularly well.
- Pupils behave well around school and are polite and helpful. They are also very tolerant of those who find good behaviour difficult and help include them in their lessons and activities.
- Pupils feel safe and know how to keep themselves safe in different situation.
- New pupils are warmly welcomed to the school and settle in quickly.
- Pupils' particularly good spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is nurtured successfully. It underpins an exciting curriculum, giving pupils a wide range of experiences and opportunities which many would not get beyond school.
- The strong leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders means that the school is continually improving.
- The governors have a very clear understanding of the school's strengths and how it can do better. They visit regularly and ask challenging questions of the headteacher and senior leaders to check on progress

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 20 lessons or parts of lessons, eight of which were seen together with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, other staff, two groups of pupils, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, and a representative of the local authority.
- Informal discussions were held with parents and carers.
- There were insufficient responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) to display the results but the inspectors took into account the school's own parental questionnaires and 26 completed staff questionnaires.
- The inspectors observed the school's work and reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's checks on its performance, its analysis and tracking of pupils' progress, records of behaviour and safety, school improvement plans, records relating to classroom observations and the management of staff performance, safeguarding arrangements and records of meetings of the governing body.
- The inspector also looked at pupils' work, listened to pupils read and checked information on attendance.

## Inspection team

Susan Hughes, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Lynne Lowery

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A large proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the start of the Reception year and the number of pupils on roll is increasing. In September 2013 the school took on an additional Year 1 class and new building work will enable it to take more pupils next year.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, have a parent in the armed forces or are in local authority care, is above average.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language are well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The school has had a number of staff changes over recent years. The headteacher took up post in September 2011 and the deputy headteacher in 2012. Five class teachers joined the school between July 2012 and September 2013.
- Since September, staff absence and two new teachers joining the school have meant further changes in staffing.
- The last inspection in June 2012 brought the school out of special measures.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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

- Ensure that pupils in all years make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Increase the amount of good and outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - learning activities set for pupils in lessons take full account of what they already know and can do so that they are neither too easy or difficult, but help them develop their literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects
  - more-able pupils have opportunities to develop high level skills in literacy and numeracy so that they can reach higher standards in English and mathematics
  - marking in all subjects gives pupils clear guidance as to how they can improve and making sure that they act upon this advice.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because the rate of pupils' progress varies through the school. Last year, achievement had improved and many pupils made good progress, but progress is less consistent this year. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, pupils made expected progress from Key Stage 1, but not enough had made more than expected progress. Fewer pupils attained the higher levels in reading than those nationally.
- Pupils get a good start to school life in the Reception class. They typically arrive with skills well below those expected for their age. Good teaching enables their good progress and they start in Key Stage 1 with better developed skills, though still weak in some areas, particularly reading and writing. Fifty seven per cent of the children achieved a good level of development in reading and slightly fewer made the same level of development in writing. No-one achieved higher levels than those expected for their age in reading and writing.
- Progress throughout Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics is less rapid. The results of the most recent Year 1 national screening check on how well pupils know phonics (the sounds that letters represent in words) were below average. However, during the inspection, pupils showed that they understood how to use their phonic skills to read unfamiliar words such as 'snares', even if they did not fully understand the meaning.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is good in many year groups, but again, patches of slower progress mean that overall pupils are not making as much progress as they should. Exceptionally good progress in some classes such as Year 5 makes up for slower progress in others and pupils leave the school with average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium make good progress because they are well supported in small groups or on a one-to-one basis as needed. There is now little difference in attainment between them and other pupils in reading and mathematics. In writing, while pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013 were two terms behind other pupils, throughout the school the gap in achievement with other pupils is narrowing quickly.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are also supported well. Many join the school part-way through their education, and arrive speaking little or no English. The use of the school's own pupils as 'language ambassadors', bilingual staff and the sensitive support of adults and pupils alike mean that they quickly settle in. They soon acquire enough English vocabulary to take a full part in lessons and make good progress year-on-year.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in most year groups. Since the deputy headteacher started overseeing support for these pupils, their needs have been quickly identified and appropriate support put in place. A small but significant number of pupils have very complex needs and receive one-to-one help to enable them to work successfully alongside other pupils in the classroom.
- Pupils make good progress in physical education. Their skills, and those of their teachers, are developed through good use of specialist sports coaches and using the expertise of additional part-time staff. During the inspection Year 3 pupils were observed enjoying a dancing lesson which was ably led by one of these teachers.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it is not consistently good throughout the school. While the quality of teaching improved last year, some changes and turbulence to staffing this year have meant that teaching is currently more variable.
- In some lessons work is too easy for pupils, especially those who are more-able. This means that they do not have the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they need to attain the levels of which they are capable. Occasionally, the teacher's instructions are unclear and pupils find it difficult to settle to a task because they are not sure what to do or the information presented is too difficult for them. Pupils become easily distracted on these occasions and do not make the progress they should.
- Lessons are often linked to the topic pupils are studying. For example, Year 2 pupils practised their letter-writing skills during a lesson about Florence Nightingale in which their historical knowledge and cultural appreciation were also fostered. Pupils say they enjoy these links, but teachers' guidance to help them improve varies. For example, while marking in most English books identifies errors and gives pupils advice about how they can improve, similar errors in topic work are not so rigorously corrected, leaving pupils unclear about expectations for different forms of writing.
- During the inspection, particularly good progress was seen when teachers' good subject knowledge and questioning made pupils think deeply about their answers. They checked what pupil already knew and built on this to move forward in their learning. For example, in a science lesson, Year 5 pupils confidently described why different methods of preserving food inhibited the activity of the microbes. They understood about 'good' and 'bad' bacteria and drew appropriate links between modern preserving methods and those used in Tudor times.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make progress that is at least as good as that of other pupils because of the effective help they receive. Some pupils have one-to-one or group support from well-briefed adults who are sensitive to their specific needs. Pupils who benefit from the pupil premium funding are equally well supported and make good progress in most year groups.
- Good teaching in the Reception class ensures that children develop a range of skills, especially language skills as, for many, these are particularly weak when they start school. Adults encourage children to talk about what they are doing so that they develop a wide vocabulary which they use in their own writing and in better understanding the books they read. There is a good balance between adult-led learning and opportunities for children to practise their skills and explore while playing together, both indoors and outside. During the inspection, children enjoyed pouring soapy water down a chute and describing what was happening.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They try hard to concentrate on their work and, even when they get distracted by other activities happening in the classroom, are careful not to disturb others. They talk enthusiastically about lessons, clubs and other activities in school.

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

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are polite and helpful to both adults and each other. During the inspection, pupils were overheard thanking each other and politely saying 'excuse me' and 'you're welcome' at appropriate times, following the good role models of their teachers.
- Pupils have a good understanding of what bullying is and the different forms it can take,

including physical, emotional, cyber and racist bullying. They say that it occasionally happens in school but there is always someone they can tell who will sort it out.

- Pupils feel safe and know how to stay safe in different situations. They have learnt about getting to school safely, both by bike and on foot, making sure that they are not distracted by listening to music while travelling along busy streets. They know about safe use of the internet and are aware of safety issues connected with the current building work.
- Older pupils look out for younger ones. They say that the system of 'Playpals', where older pupils organise games and activities at playtimes, works well. They also think that the system for classes to work together to earn 'Golden Time' encourages good behaviour.
- In lessons, pupils show a mature approach to those who have very specific behavioural needs. If someone is having difficulty settling, they sensibly ignore them and continue with their own work and activities. Skilled adults support these pupils so that learning is rarely disrupted.
- The school has worked closely with parents to encourage good attendance. As a result, attendance has improved year-on-year and is now at the expected level for a primary school.

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

- Leadership and management are good. Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher and senior leaders, the school has continued to improve since they led it out of special measures eighteen months ago. Standards are steadily rising because pupils' work is rigorously tracked and those in danger of falling behind are quickly helped to keep up. The headteacher and senior leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and ensure that it continues to improve.
- Changes to staffing have led to support systems being developed and are now in place to ensure that teaching becomes consistently good. Class teachers are held accountable for the progress their pupils make. The appraisal system for checking teachers' performance, introduced last year, contributes to improving teaching. Individual targets are used by the headteacher and the governing body to measure whether pay rises and promotion are justified by results. Teachers say that they have good training opportunities to develop and refine their skills.
- The skills of subject leaders are being developed well. This means that they are able to track pupils' progress in their subjects and accurately identify what needs to be done to improve achievement and raise standards. They are taking an increasingly active role in driving school improvement priorities.
- The subjects pupils learn are lively and exciting. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils were keen to respond to a letter, supposedly from the builders currently working on site, as they learnt how to prioritise and order information appropriately. The school also provides a wide range of experiences that many pupils would not otherwise get, including visits to art exhibitions, a new residential visit, visiting theatre and dance groups, and all pupils learning to play a musical instrument.
- The school works well with other local schools to develop both staff and pupils' skills. For example, physical education is taught well, in part because of the way the new sports funding is being spent on specialist coaching and joint activities with other schools.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is a particular strength of the school and

underpins all it does. Close links with community organisations give pupils the opportunity to improve their environment. They planted strawberries around the shopping area as part of the 'Incredible Edibles' project and planted trees with the Woodland Trust.

- International links and links with local faith groups help pupils develop an understanding and respect for different cultures and beliefs. The pupils also bring their own diverse experiences to the school and are encouraged to share these and lead celebrations of their own cultures. This supports the school's drive to ensure equality of opportunity and high aspirations to make sure that all pupils achieve equally well. Leaders take a zero stance to discrimination which ensures that all pupils feel included in the school community.
- The local authority provided good support for the school while it was in special measures. It has now accurately identified that the school is well led and managed and so appropriate support is provided as and when the school requests it.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have an accurate view of the strengths of the school, how it can improve and the challenges it faces. They are very supportive but also ask challenging questions of school leaders to make sure of continued improvement. Regular, well-reported visits help them check for themselves how well the school is doing. Governors have a good understanding of how the pupil premium is spent and make sure this is helping eligible pupils make good progress. They are less clear about how the Primary Sports Funding will impact on pupils' well-being, but are acutely aware of the good partnership working with local schools to develop physical education and sports opportunities. The governors know how the system for appraising and setting targets for teachers contributes to the quality of teaching and they use school data effectively to check pupils' progress. They ensure that teachers' pay rises are linked to the progress their pupils make and have formed a new committee to focus on this. Governors have made sure that national requirements for safeguarding and child protection are fully met.

## 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>	110761
<b>Local authority</b>	Peterborough
<b>Inspection number</b>	430585

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	222
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Glennis Bentley MBE
<b>Headteacher</b>	Martin Fry
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 June 2012
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