

Riders Junior School

Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park, Havant, PO9 4RY

Inspection dates

30–31 January 2014

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		Require improvement	3
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' attitudes to learning require improvement to match the positive attitudes and perseverance of pupils in Year 6.
- In particular, pupils' understanding of what constitutes good learning is not developed well enough and teachers do not explain sufficiently well what pupils need to do to improve their learning.
- Teachers give pupils too little time to act on their marking.
- Teachers do not sufficiently emphasise the learning expected of the pupils and the behaviour associated with it.
- Not all teachers maximise the opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and writing skills.

The school has the following strengths

- The executive headteacher, aided by her head of the junior school, has very quickly brought about improvements in teaching and the progress of pupils. This is a fast-improving school.
- Through skilled mentoring and guidance, senior managers have ensured that there are more good lessons now. During the inspection, outstanding teaching was observed.
- Pupils behave positively in lessons and their safety is good. They show respect for their peers, listening to their contributions during whole-class sessions.
- Pupils tell of behaviour improving and that they feel safe. Their parents and carers agree.
- The school provides high levels of support for those pupils and families who are finding life challenging.
- Skilled and knowledgeable subject and other leaders are having a positive effect on school improvement, especially in the areas of literacy, numeracy and inclusion.
- Governors show a passion for improving the school. Through the use of a wide range of strategies, they learn about the work of the school and are increasingly acting as 'critical friends' to the school.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning and teaching in 13 lessons. This included visits to linking sounds and letters (phonics) and guided reading sessions.
- In addition, two visits were made to lessons designed to support literacy.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and looked at information about pupils’ progress and attainment, the school’s development plan, subject action plans, governing body documentation, and policies and procedures. Those relating to health and safety and safeguarding of pupils were also scrutinised.
- Pupils from Year 3 were heard reading.
- The 20 parental responses to Ofsted’s online Parent View survey, along with one letter from a parent, were also considered. The school’s most recent parent and pupil surveys were also considered.
- Questionnaires completed by 41 members of the school staff were also taken into account.
- Discussions were held with senior and other leaders, teachers, three governors, pupils, parents, carers and a representative from the local authority.

Inspection team

Michael Pye, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Jacqueline Good

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- In 2013 the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in receipt of free school meals, looked-after children and pupils from service families, is well above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well above average. A similarly well-above-average proportion of pupils is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs. The main needs of these pupils relate to moderate learning difficulties.
- Pupils come from a predominantly White British background.
- Since the last inspection the school has formed a federation with the on-site infant school. The current executive headteacher and the headteacher of the junior school were appointed in the summer of 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop in all year groups the positive attitudes to learning seen in Year 6 by:
 - ensuring pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of what makes a good learner
 - ensuring pupils know clearly what they need to do to make progress
 - developing pupils' perseverance when things become more challenging.
- Ensure good progress and improve attainment through further raising the quality of teaching and learning by:
 - embedding the marking policy so as to allow all pupils sufficient time to act on teachers' comments and feedback
 - ensuring that teachers communicate clearly to pupils the learning and behaviour expected of them
 - maximising opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and writing skills.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- In 2013 at the end of Year 6, attainment was well below average; reading was the strongest subject, with mathematics the weakest. Achievement levels were well below expected levels.
- Pupils have regular opportunities to read in school. The low-attaining pupils heard reading found some difficulty in blending their sounds. However, they have good prediction skills.
- The home–school diary requires improvement. Currently teachers do not give sufficient guidance to parents on how they can support their child’s reading.
- The picture currently is one of rapid improvement, especially for the older pupils. Pupils in the current Year 6 are on track to meet the national average in mathematics and writing, and are above average in reading.
- During themed topic work, pupils get some good opportunities to practise their skills. For example, work on a coloured picture of the sky allowed them to practise their extended writing and their descriptive language.
- The improvements seen in attainment are mirrored when the current progress rates are seen. There are examples of good progress in the school, especially for older pupils in writing.
- Elsewhere, the improvements in the quality of teaching are helping to ensure that progress rates have also improved, although, overall, they still require improvement.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs benefit well from some good support work from teachers and learning support assistants. There is a noticeable improvement in these pupils’ levels of achievement. If they meet their targets, which seems likely, they will have made good progress.
- Ongoing assessment and progress reviews help to ensure that pupils known to be entitled to the pupil premium are tracked carefully.
- As a result of the whole-school focus on these pupils, there are areas where they are doing better than their peers, for example in writing and mathematics in Year 6. Elsewhere the gap is closing.
- The gender difference in attainment and progress (in English, where girls did better than boys, and in mathematics, where boys did better than girls) has been eradicated in some classes but more work remains to be done to close the gender gap in other areas.
- The progress and attainment of high attainers have improved and, in the current Year 6, a number of pupils are scheduled to take the higher-level tests in writing, reading and mathematics.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- There are areas of teaching and learning that require further improvement.
- The marking policy has been recently reviewed. There are examples of good guidance being given about what pupils need to do to improve their work further, but this is not consistent across all classes. There is a need for pupils to be given more time to act on the next steps suggested.
- Pupils’ progress slows when they lose track of what they have to learn or what they have learnt. For example, in a mathematics lesson, pupils described what they had done the previous day rather than what they had learnt.
- The quality and depth of feedback to and discussion about pupils’ learning are too varied. For example, in a mathematics lesson, learning slowed when there was too much information for pupils to take in.
- On occasions, opportunities are missed to maximise pupils’ speaking and writing. For example, in a phonics lesson which was judged as requiring improvement, the learning and progress dipped when time was lost in repeating instructions to the pupils about the task they were required to

do.

- Teachers benefit from good quality feedback from senior staff. This is bringing about quick improvements to the quality of teaching. This is particularly seen when teachers explain to pupils what they expect. For example, in a physical education lesson, the teacher made sure, before the work started, that the pupils knew the behaviour expected and understood that the lesson was designed to boost teamwork.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and, when they know the pupils very well, it leads to good, focused questioning and assessment. In one outstanding lesson, for example, a pupil was asked why she had been chosen to answer the teacher's question. She replied, 'Because I normally get this wrong.' She did not get it wrong on this occasion.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well. The majority do not lead the pupils but allow them to make mistakes and learn.
- The behaviour policy has been recently reviewed. During lessons, teachers use positive strategies to ensure that they manage pupils' behaviour effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils require improvement

- Older pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to, and persevere with, their learning. However, elsewhere, attitudes require improvement. Not all pupils take sufficient pride in the presentation of their work and there is evidence of them going off task when faced with more difficult work.
- Very often the pupils simply carry out tasks rather than considering the learning. There is insufficient guidance for them about what they are learning, what the habits are (for example, resilience) of good learners, and what they need to do to improve their work.
- Behaviour requires improvement. However, pupils say that behaviour has improved.
- Observations showed that during the inspection there is very little ongoing disruption to lessons; pupils are now able to concentrate on their learning.
- The safety of pupils is good. They know how to keep safe in a range of situations but are not yet involved in assessing risks.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. They know about the different types of bullying and are able to describe the risks associated with cyber-bullying.
- All parents completing the online survey believe their child feels safe at school. The very large majority judged that their child is happy and well looked after.
- Pupils said that when the school learns about any issues it acts effectively and quickly. The senior management team has introduced new support systems which are having a positive effect on the ethos of the school.
- Senior managers have focused well and successfully on attendance. This has been improved, with the number of persistent absentees dropping; there remains more to do to raise attendance from just below average.
- A key to improving attendance has been the very positive work of the home–school link workers, introduced by the senior leadership.

The leadership and management are good

- The vision for school improvement has been well shared. It is linked to the aim of making this school outstanding, with the motto, 'Can't waste a minute!' adding urgency to the drive for improvement.
- The new senior leaders have moved quickly to share management and leadership responsibilities. Consequently, a range of skilled leaders participate in checking work and accurately evaluating their areas of responsibility. This is bringing improvements.
- The literacy leader has focused appropriately and quickly on promoting wider vocabulary. The numeracy leader's monitoring led to the identification of the need to promote pupils' strategies for calculation.

- Meanwhile, the inclusion manager has established very effective tracking procedures which are having a positive effect on the outcomes for the disabled pupils or those who have special educational needs.
- From their checking of the school's work, appropriate plans for development are identified. The school's single development plan (reviewed termly) is a highly focused document which contributes to the improvements in the school.
- Subject action plans, however, do not sufficiently show how the subject supports the targets for whole-school development.
- There has been an uncompromising drive to improve the quality of teaching. This has quickly improved the number of good and better lessons and, consequently, pupils' rates of progress.
- Performance management is used well to help improve teaching and progress rates. Teachers are under no illusion that future pay and promotion are linked to their success in the classroom.
- Continuing professional development, including visits to good and outstanding schools, supports well the targets set in the teachers' appraisals.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, with good enhancement including theatre visits, residential trips and other visits and visitors.
- The extra government funding for sport has been used to employ a specialist coach. This has led to the establishment of girls' and boys' football clubs and has also benefited teachers' skills and knowledge. The effect on pupils' health is seen in the current attendance of 40 pupils at these after-school clubs.
- The school issues regular curriculum information letters and newsletters, and parents can access these on the school's website. These positive links are reflected in the large majority of the parents completing the online survey feeling they receive valuable information from the school.
- Furthermore, the work of the school in supporting the families and pupils who face challenging circumstances is a very positive aspect. The emotional literacy support workers in every class play a crucial part in supporting pupils requiring their guidance, allowing these pupils to concentrate on their school work.
- External links are growing. Already the pupils benefit from the support from the secondary cluster member in mathematics and sports. Links with varied social and health agencies are very strong.
- Local authority input has been good, particularly in supporting the areas of literacy, numeracy and strategies for improving behaviour.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors fully back the vision for the school and appreciate the improvements that have taken place.
 - They check on the work of the school through the use of various strategies; they visit, have oral and written reports from subject and senior leaders and gain good information about pupils' progress.
 - More attention to formalising meetings with pupils is required to allow governors to obtain information about the pupils' view of school life.
 - Governors have a secure knowledge of which pupils are eligible for the pupil premium and have regular and detailed reports about their progress.
 - Their visits also enable them to have an accurate view of the quality of teaching. They know where the best teaching is in the school.
 - At the whole-school level, governors are using challenging performance management targets to help guide and support school improvement.
 - Health and safety, safeguarding and child protection, and other statutory requirements are 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

Unique reference number	115908
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	431711

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Melissa Carden
Headteacher	Anne Parker (executive)
Date of previous school inspection	11–12 November 2010
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