

Ryecroft Primary Academy

Kesteven Close, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 0LS

Inspection dates

8–9 April 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Outstanding | 1 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Quality of teaching | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Outstanding | 1 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The leadership and management of Ryecroft are outstanding. The inspirational headteacher and equally dedicated staff are having a big impact upon the achievement and well-being of pupils in their care.
- This is a happy, vibrant school where the welfare of pupils and the community are paramount and as a result all pupils achieve extremely well.
- Children start school with skills and knowledge that are exceptionally low for their age. However, progress across school is rapid and they reach standards that are above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing by the end of Year 6.
- Vulnerable pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, and those eligible for the pupil premium receive excellent support that helps them achieve equally well.
- Teaching is outstanding because pupils are set demanding tasks. Work set by teachers helps pupils to learn exceptionally well, whatever their ability. Pupils are supported by highly skilled teaching assistants.
- Marking provides pupils with very clear instructions on how they can make their work even better.
- A stimulating and varied range of subjects is taught. However, ways of developing basic skills of literacy and numeracy are not yet being explored fully in all subjects.
- Pupils say they are happy and feel very safe in school. Behaviour in class is exemplary and movement around school is orderly and managed extremely well. Pupils are very keen to learn and enjoy the responsibilities they are given.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness through an exciting range of subjects and life-enriching experiences.
- The governors are an important part of the team and share the staff's ambitions for the school and, more importantly, for the pupils. They provide support and challenge in equal measure.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 15 lessons or parts of lessons, two of which were observed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. They looked at a range of pupils' work and heard a number of pupils from Years 2 and 6 read.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and the Primary Director of the Trust.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's data on pupils' progress, and records relating to pupils' behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- Inspectors were unable to take into account responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) as there were too few to register. However, inspectors did chat informally with a small number of parents. The views of staff and pupils were considered.
- Inspectors visited the breakfast club and the Willows nursery which provides for two-year-olds. The latter did not form part of this inspection.

Inspection team

Christine Millett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Melvyn Hemmings

Additional Inspector

Rajinder Harrison

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ryecroft is an average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil-premium funding is well above that found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also well above average.
- An increasing number of pupils start and leave the school at different times during the year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2012 the school converted to an academy, becoming part of the Northern Education Trust.
- Since the school was inspected as Ryecroft Primary School in 2010, there have been a number of changes in staff and a nursery for two-year-olds has opened.
- The headteacher is a local leader of education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Pursue the development of the new curriculum, building on the opportunities pupils have to further improve their reading, writing and mathematical and communication skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children start school with skills, knowledge and understanding that are well below those that are typical for their age. They settle quickly, receive excellent support and guidance in a stimulating learning environment, and as a result, make rapid progress. However, children's skills are still below average by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The Willows, the school's provision for two-year-olds, is coming to the end of its second year and is seen to be having a tremendous impact upon the starting points of the small number of children who attend, when they go into the nursery.
- Letters and the sounds they make are taught extremely well in the Nursery and Reception classes and this continues in Year 1. In 2013 the results of the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 were in line with the national average.
- Good levels of progress continue in Key Stage 1 as pupils continue to catch up. Even so, by the end of Year 2, standards are still below those expected in reading, writing and mathematics. Recent assessments, however, show standards are rising.
- Progress accelerates further in Key Stage 2 so that the proportion of pupils making expected levels of progress in reading and mathematics is higher than that found nationally and in line in writing. Progress in reading exceeds expected levels. From their very low starting points pupils make excellent progress in writing and mathematics. Pupils reach above average standards in reading and mathematics. However, standards in writing are not as strong, as the starting points were so much lower.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve equally well. They make similar levels of progress to those of their classmates because of outstanding teaching by well-qualified adults who understand their needs well.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high. The inspectors looked closely at their progress in reading, writing and mathematics and found this to be at least as rapid as that of their classmates. This shows that the school uses the pupil premium money very effectively, for example to provide additional support and equipment in order to address any weaknesses in learning.
- The most-able pupils are making outstanding progress throughout the school too. The outstanding progress made by all groups of pupils shows how well the school is promoting equality of opportunity for all.
- Pupils enjoy reading and do so regularly. They read with expression and understanding, and have access to good quality reading materials. Pupils are able to use their knowledge of letters and sounds extremely confidently to work out unfamiliar words.
- Work in pupils' books, in all year groups, shows that their progress from the start of the year has been outstanding. This examination of work, alongside the school's data for tracking pupils' achievement, show that pupils make even and sustained progress as they move through the school.
- A much higher proportion of pupils is now joining and leaving the school part way through the school year which has a significant impact upon published results. However, the school ensures that all pupils achieve to the very best of their ability during their time in school and are extremely well prepared for the next stages in their education.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons and want to learn. They experience a great sense of achievement from everything they do. This begins in the Reception class where one child proudly announced, 'I did it! I wrote my name!'
- The excellent relationships between staff and pupils mean that pupils are confident learners

prepared to try hard, unafraid of making mistakes and able to challenge their teachers. Errors in pupils' thinking are quickly spotted and skilfully corrected.

- Staff's knowledge and enthusiasm for subjects, together with extremely high expectations, result in an excellent response from pupils to the challenges set for them. Teachers ask really searching questions to make pupils think deeply and they ensure that all pupils are involved in discussions. This was seen in a lesson when pupils were discussing whether a footballer should earn more than a nurse. Different points of view were expressed clearly and backed up with well-reasoned answers.
- Teaching assistants play an important part in all lessons. They model language well and encourage pupils to think for themselves and not expect to be told the answer. This approach helps pupils to be highly successful learners.
- Vulnerable pupils are extremely well supported and the school has a growing reputation for its success in meeting the needs of these pupils. Excellent systems are in place for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities and those eligible for the pupil premium. There are regular reviews to ensure that support is effective in helping pupils learn.
- Marking gives pupils extremely clear guidance about how their work can be improved. This is especially effective because pupils are always given time to read teachers' comments, correct mistakes or complete an additional challenge.
- Homework is used well to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and describe it as 'caring and kind, amazing and awesome'. One pupil described teachers as being 'selfless' and went on to say 'our class is our other family'. These comments accurately capture the extremely caring nature of the school where pupils are at the heart of everything that takes place.
- Pupils are friendly, polite and confident. They enjoy discussing their work and showing visitors around their school. This was very evident in the way Year 5 ambassadors showed visitors around the exhibits on display in the school art gallery, the culmination of a whole-school project carried out in conjunction with a local art gallery.
- All pupils, from the oldest to the youngest, enjoy the range of responsibilities they are given. Members of the school council have been highly successful in securing funding for different projects such as the purchase of gardening equipment. Another example is when children in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that all equipment is put away in its proper place.
- In all classes, no time is wasted because of inappropriate behaviour. All pupils are very aware of the rewards and sanctions that are in place to encourage the very best behaviour. They say that everyone is treated fairly.
- On the rare occasions when a pupil struggles to meet the demands of the classroom, this is managed extremely well by experienced staff. The nurture room provides short-term, focused support for these pupils. Poppy, the specially trained nurture dog, helps relieve pupils' stress and anxieties.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of bullying in all its forms and are adamant that it does not take place. Issues relating to cyber-bullying and social media are addressed extremely well. The whole school, along with parents and governors, devised their own e-safety campaign including their own slogan, 'Is this right for me? Is this right for you?', and wrist bands.
- Attendance has improved considerably and is now above average. This reflects pupils' enjoyment of school and also the determined efforts by leaders and managers to get pupils to school. Mini-buses collect pupils and bring them to school in time to enjoy the extremely popular and very well-organised breakfast club.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Pupils feel extremely safe in school. They are taught how to stay safe and keep others safe. Learning in the forest school and on residential visits allows pupils to have adventures in carefully supervised locations.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The determination of the exceptionally capable and caring headteacher acts as an inspiration to all staff who are united in a very strong commitment to do the very best they can for the benefit of all pupils in school and the community as a whole. As a local leader the headteacher supports other schools within the local partnership of schools.
- The headteacher, deputy head, other leaders and the governing body show their high expectations by setting challenging targets for teachers and pupils. These targets are enthusiastically embraced by staff who work very successfully to achieve them. Staff morale is high.
- Middle leaders have a very clear understanding of their roles. They lead their areas of responsibility extremely well, both by example and in working collaboratively with colleagues within the school or in the authority.
- Teaching is led and managed extremely well with a strong commitment to providing opportunities for teachers to continue to develop their skills. This is also apparent in teachers' readiness to help one another either through the sharing of ideas or trying out new approaches to teaching such as recording lessons in order to improve practice. There is a clear link between targets and pay progression through the new arrangements to check teachers' performance.
- The school has an unquestionable commitment to ensuring that every pupil has an equal opportunity to succeed. Assemblies are used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through respectful behaviour, enthusiastic singing and consideration and understanding of other cultures and faiths.
- The range of subjects taught is based on themes and links well with work in English and mathematics. It widens pupils' view of the world through an extremely extensive range of visits, visitors and school clubs. The way subjects are taught is currently under review in light of current changes in order to develop basic skills better across all subjects.
- The school encourages the involvement of parents and provides many opportunities for them to be involved in school life. For example, 'Stay and Play' in the Reception classes is very well attended.
- Leaders are spending the new primary school sports funding very well to provide additional sporting opportunities with qualified staff.
- The school is extremely well supported by the Trust and has maintained a good working relationship with the local authority.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have a highly accurate picture of how well the school is doing compared with other schools through their regular visits to see the school at work and their clear understanding of data on pupils' progress. They use this information well to ask leaders searching questions about its performance. Governors check that the management of teachers' performance is thorough. They know that pay progression is dependent on teachers meeting targets relating to pupil progress. Governors are very knowledgeable about current educational and school priorities. They are very well informed as to how the sports funding money is being used and know that pupil-premium funding is proving effective in raising the attainment of eligible pupils. The extremely high level of commitment of governors to the school is evidence of how seriously and conscientiously they take their responsibilities. Safeguarding procedures are extremely thorough and meet current requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| 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

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| Unique reference number | 138675 |
| Local authority | Bradford |
| Inspection number | 440106 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 2–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 265 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Andy Sykes Sarah Kirk |
| Headteacher | Jayne Clarke |
| Date of previous school inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Telephone number | 01274 683128 |
| Fax number | Not applicable |
| Email address | office@ryecroftacademy.co.uk |

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