

Reedings Junior School

Bullfields, Sawbridgeworth, CM21 9DD

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Reedings Junior School is a well-organised and friendly place. Pupils enjoy school. They like their teachers and feel safe and valued.
- The school is managed well. Recent changes in the senior leadership team have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and pupils' progress.
- School leaders know the school's strengths and areas for improvement well. An effective development plan is being put into practice successfully.
- The governing body is well informed and knowledgeable about school performance. It is working closely with head teacher and has made a significant contribution to recent improvements in the school.
- Pupils achieve well. By Year 6, they reach higher standards than the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Current pupils are making good progress in all main subjects.
- Teaching is good and is improving. Teachers manage their classes well and plan interesting activities that engage pupils.
- Pupils behave well. They get along with their classmates and are polite around school and in lessons.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs do not make as much progress as they could in English and mathematics.
- Weaker readers are not always supported well enough to develop confidence in their reading quickly.
- Teachers do not always take sufficient account of what pupils already know when planning.
- Not all teachers regularly give pupils clear written advice about how to improve their work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons or parts of lessons, including six which were observed jointly with the headteacher. They also looked at pupils' written work in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- Meetings were held with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the headteacher and other school leaders. An inspector spoke by telephone to a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke formally to two groups of pupils, and informally with other pupils in lessons and around the school. An inspector listened to pupils reading, talked to them about their reading habits and looked at their reading records.
- Several of the school's documents were examined. These included: the school's own evaluation of its performance and its development plan; information about pupils' progress and the support given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs; evidence about the quality of teaching; and records about behaviour, safeguarding and attendance.
- Inspectors took account of 67 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), one letter from a parent and the views expressed by parents as they arrived to drop off their children.
- An inspector analysed nine responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

James McVeigh, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Denise Bonnette-Anderson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Reedings Junior School is of average size for a primary school. There are two classes in each year group from Year 3 to Year 6.
- An interim headteacher has been leading the school, on a part-time basis, since January 2013. A new permanent headteacher has been appointed for September 2014.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium (the extra government funding given to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or in local authority care) is below average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is similar to the national average. The proportion supported through 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further by making sure all teachers:
 - plan activities that build on what pupils already know and take account of any special needs
 - advise pupils on how to improve their work and ensure that pupils respond to on the advice.
- Accelerate the progress weaker readers make in reading by ensuring that they have regular opportunities to read to their teachers and enhancing the collection of books they can choose from.
- Ensure disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make as good progress as their classmates by:
 - regularly checking on the effectiveness of the extra help given
 - ensuring that when pupils are supported outside the classroom they do not miss key learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- In recent years, Year 6 pupils have reached standards above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils currently in Year 6 are on track to reach similar standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Past year groups have mostly made good progress, though progress dipped in 2013 in mathematics and reading. The school's records of pupils' performance and their work in books show that pupils are currently making rapid progress.
- The most able pupils are achieving well. They make good progress in writing, because they are encouraged to write at length in a range of subjects. For example, 'story week' generated high quality writing from more-able pupils. Handwriting is taught effectively. Pupils form letters accurately and write neatly and legibly.
- Pupils develop a good understanding of basic number facts and learn how to carry out calculations, such as multiplication and division. The school encourages pupils to practise regularly and extend their mathematical skills further through a software program that pupils enjoy.
- Pupils are used to sharing their ideas with their 'learning partner' or in front of the whole class. They become confident speakers and listen carefully to one another. For example, all the house captains showed great presence in an assembly as they explained to the whole school why members of their house were receiving certificates.
- Pupils read regularly at school and parents are effectively encouraged to support their children's reading at home. Regular whole-class reading sessions allow confident readers to practise and improve quickly, but weaker readers do not get enough individual attention to show the same rapid progress.
- The school uses pupil premium funding to provide effective support for eligible pupils. The very few eligible pupils in Year 6 in 2013 made the same progress as their classmates. Similar pupils currently in the school are making at least good progress in most year groups.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs fell in 2013. Their progress was slowest in reading and particularly mathematics. The recently appointed headteacher has ensured that a support programme, better matched to their needs, is in place and as a result the progress of many has improved.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving. Much of the teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and manage their classes well. They plan activities that interest and engage pupils. For example, in a lesson on data handling, pupils in Year 3 were busily sorting out 'smarties' into different groups and completing tally tables to identify the most popular colour. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed and support identified pupils well.
- Pupils like their teachers. Teachers praise pupils appropriately when they contribute their ideas or complete tasks. Pupils feel valued and behave well.

- Teachers often question pupils skilfully to extend their understanding. The teacher's questions in a mathematics lesson prompted Year 4 pupils to fully explain their reasoning for deciding the value of a point indicated on an unmarked scale. Some pupils were able to see mistakes in their reasoning as they gave their explanations and all made good progress.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard. They usually explain clearly what pupils should be able to do when they have completed an activity.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly. Teachers give encouraging feedback and some provide useful comments about what pupils need to do to improve or harder questions for pupils to answer. However, this practice is not yet consistent in every class and pupils do not always act on the advice in comments.
- Not all teachers are using the information that marking and other assessments provide to make sure that lessons cover the next steps in learning that pupils need. Also, some tasks are not modified well enough for those who are disabled or have special educational needs so a few still make slower progress than they should.
- Classrooms are well organised with informative displays, but there are few books or areas for reading. Also, the library is small with little space for pupils to sit and enjoy reading or choose books. Both of these things mean that reading does not have such a high profile as writing in the school. Examples of pupils' written work abound in classes and in corridors.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They enjoy coming to school and get on well with each other.
- Around the school pupils are polite and courteous. They greet visitors pleasantly, holding doors open for them and willingly explaining where things are. At playtimes, pupils always have someone to talk to or to play with. Play leaders take their roles seriously in making sure playground activities are well organised and everyone is happy.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are usually attentive in class and work sensibly when in pairs or small groups. Written work in books show most pupils complete tasks well. Pupils know the school rules and understand that they need to behave well to make good progress at school. Pupils are keen to move up the 'behaviour ladder' and make sure they do not fall below 'ready-for-learning' behaviour. Occasionally, when work is too hard or does not build on what they already know, some pupils lose concentration or become restless.
- School staff manage behaviour well. The few incidents of misbehaviour are fully recorded and resolved quickly. Pupils understand what bullying is and the different forms it can take. They say that bullying rarely happens and, when it does, teachers sort it out quickly.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The site is secure and play times are well supervised by adults. All staff are appropriately trained in safeguarding. Adults follow the child protection guidelines closely.
- Pupils understand how to stay healthy and safe. They can explain what a healthy diet is and the need for regular exercise. Pupils enjoy the good amount of physical exercise, including swimming, they get at school. They have been informed about potentially dangerous activities, such as firework displays, when members of the police have visited, and have carried out their

own research on road safety in their area.

- Good attendance is recognised and celebrated in the school's newsletter. Pupils attend regularly and absences are followed up promptly. Attendance is above the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- The recently reorganised leadership team, with the strong backing of the governing body, has made sure that improving teaching and pupils' achievement are the school's main priorities. The dip in achievement last year has been reversed and both teaching and pupils' achievement are improving. The interim executive headteacher has had an immediate positive impact on the school's performance.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school and have implemented well-focused development plans. School leaders know that improvement has to continue and be sustained. The school makes good use of the local authority to provide training and an objective view of progress.
- School leaders check the quality of teaching regularly. By observing lessons and looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work, they get an accurate picture of teaching. Teachers are set meaningful targets to raise pupils' achievement and improve their own professional development. A good range of training opportunities, both in-house and externally, are made available. The work of teaching assistants is checked in a similar manner.
- The school has a friendly but purposeful atmosphere and runs smoothly each day. Teachers now meet with school leaders regularly to check that pupils are making good progress. Effective programmes to give extra support to any pupils showing signs of slipping behind have recently been introduced.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs has been rationalised. However, there remains work to be done to make sure that teachers take full responsibility for checking how well these pupils do when working outside the classroom, and to make sure that they cover key things the rest of the class may have learnt whilst they are supported elsewhere.
- Subject leaders have been closely involved in managing their subjects. They have taken on greater responsibility for planning how subjects should be taught and checking the progress of pupils, and are increasing their role in assessing the quality of teaching.
- The school is working hard to foster good relationships with parents. For example, there is an active parent-teacher association, governors run a parental surgery and information is provided to support parents in helping their children to learn at home.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well through lessons, assemblies and its broad curriculum. There is a good focus on French, sport, art and music and further enrichment through a good range of visits, visitors and clubs. For example, pupils hear speakers from different religions and take part in creative arts events, such as African drumming and Indian dance. Pupils are particularly proud of the 'bug hotel,' which they recently built in gardening club.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to take on extra responsibilities, such as peer mediator, house captain, monitor and school council representative.

- Sport is strong in school. The primary school sport funding is used well to promote pupils' further participation in and enjoyment of sport. There are a greater range of sports available, including such things as lawn bowls and table tennis, more competitive events and specialist teaching to improve pupils' skills but also teachers own coaching expertise. The school checks how much physical activity each pupil is doing and effectively encourages pupils to take part in sport outside of school. Pupils are more active and there are benefits for their health and fitness.

- The school meets all safeguarding requirements. Equality of opportunity is promoted effectively and pupil premium funding is used to enhance the opportunities that eligible pupils have to achieve well, for example, by providing extra support from teaching assistants to accelerate progress in mathematics.

- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body, recently restructured, is a great strength of the school. Governors have a good range of relevant skills and experience but are very proactive in developing better skills, such as through further training, in areas judged to be weaker.
 - Governors understand school information well and have a very good knowledge about teaching and pupils' progress through reports from the head teacher and their own frequent and regular focused visits. They support the school very well and are tenacious in holding leaders to account for their actions, ensuring the school stays on the right track to improve. They make sure that pay rises for teachers are tied to improvements in pupils' progress.
 - Governors are closely involved with a local authority representative in setting challenging targets for the headteacher and ensuring the school's funds are spent wisely, such as in awarding pay increases to teachers and allocating the pupil premium.

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	117280
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	444109

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	240
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Samantha Young
Headteacher	Shirley Whales
Date of previous school inspection	7 July 2010
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