

Riverview Junior School

Cimba Wood, Gravesend, Kent, DA12 4SD

Inspection dates

4–5 June 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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils do not make consistently good progress, particularly in writing and mathematics, because there are variations in the quality of teaching across the school.
- There are not enough chances for pupils to practise writing across a range of subjects.
- The progress of disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and the less able pupils is not as rapid as it should be.
- Gaps remain between the attainment of pupils supported by additional funding and the other pupils.
- There is not enough good teaching. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what their pupils can achieve, particularly in their written work.
- Pupils are not always sure what they are expected to learn.
- The marking of pupils' work does not always make clear what pupils must do to move their learning on.
- Leadership, over time, has not done enough to ensure that pupils make at least good progress.
- The school does not have a detailed enough understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The school's systems for improving the quality of teaching are not always used consistently.
- Governors have not held senior leaders to account for the progress pupils are making.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils in Year 6 make good progress.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are showing improvement and are slightly above average overall.
- Black African pupils and those who speak English as an additional language achieve well.
- There is good support in Year 3 to help pupils improve their skills in reading.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, and feel safe. Their behaviour around the school is excellent.
- Attendance is above average,
- The school provides good support for pupils' personal development and well-being.
- Pupils enjoy a wide variety of activities outside the classroom.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 26 lessons, four of which were seen together with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with a group of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors, the school's senior and subject leaders, and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 39 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were 49 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View).
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of school documents, including records of the school's checks on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, the headteacher's termly reports to the governing body and records relating to behaviour, attendance, safeguarding and the tracking of pupils' progress. They also looked closely at pupils' written work for the current school year, and listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

George Logan, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Maura Docherty	Additional Inspector
John Viner	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Riverview Junior School is much larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Although the intake of the school is ethnically diverse, most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Pupils of Black African heritage form the largest single minority ethnic group.
- A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be entitled to free school meals or those looked after by the local authority, is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The school shares a site with its partner infant school.
- The school offers a daily breakfast club which was looked at as part of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that:
 - teachers across the school have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve and modify work set during lessons to make sure that it always challenges pupils
 - teachers and pupils are clear about the intended learning
 - expectations of the quality of pupils' written work are consistently high
 - the marking of pupils' work provides clear guidance as to what pupils need to do to move their learning on and that they have the opportunity to reflect upon and respond to marking.
- Improve achievement so that it is consistently good across the school, ensuring that:
 - all pupils, particularly those in Years 3 and 4, make more rapid progress, especially in writing and mathematics
 - more opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in writing through planned work in a wider range of other subjects
 - disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs, and those who entered the school with lower than expected levels of prior attainment, make more consistent and rapid progress
 - gaps between the achievement of pupils supported by additional funding and their classmates are closed.
- Improve the leadership, management and governance of the school, ensuring that:
 - school self-evaluation is more rigorous, taking account of the views of all stakeholders
 - detailed improvement planning clearly identifies priorities and actions to tackle weaknesses
 - the school draws upon, and is responsive to, good quality external professional advice
 - governors are more rigorous in holding school leaders to account, particularly with regard to pupils' achievement.

An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across the school is not consistent enough for overall achievement to be judged as good. The rate of progress pupils make had slowed in the last two years. While pupils currently make particularly good progress in Year 6, progress in Years 3 and 4, particularly in mathematics and writing, is not rapid or consistent enough.
- Despite considerable investment in support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, these pupils have, in recent years, made inconsistent progress from their starting points. The current progress of these pupils, and for other pupils who entered the school as lower attainers, is not rapid enough.
- Year 6 pupils supported by additional funding in 2013 were around two terms behind their classmates in reading, writing and mathematics. While this was a wider gap than in 2012, current data show that, with increasingly well-targeted support, eligible pupils currently make progress similar to their classmates. Nevertheless, variability in attainment remains, with the widest gap, around four terms, in Year 5.
- The attainment of pupils on entry to Year 3 is currently broadly average. Attainment at the end of Year 6, currently broadly average, has shown a modest year-on-year increase in the last three years, although only just keeping pace with increases nationally.
- The progress of current Year 6 pupils is slightly better than that of Year 6 pupils last year, with pupils making up some lost ground. This is partly because the school has focused on enabling more-able pupils to work at the highest available level (Level 6) in mathematics and writing. The school aims to meet the needs of all groups of pupils more effectively through organising teaching in English and mathematics according to pupils' ability levels. This is beginning to lead to some improvements in achievement.
- The school makes good provision to support pupils who enter Year 3 with deficits in their knowledge of phonics (the sounds letters represent). The school is now beginning to extend this good quality support to older pupils so that they can develop their skills as readers.
- Black African pupils achieve well, as do pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils make good progress in most year groups, achieving standards above those typically achieved by similar pupils nationally.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because there are inconsistencies in pupils' learning across the school. While pupils tend to learn most rapidly in Year 6, progress elsewhere is too variable.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve, nor do they always modify the work set during lessons to make sure that it always challenges pupils.
- At times, teachers do not pay enough attention to planning learning. As a result, pupils do not always have a clear understanding of what they are expected to learn and this slows their progress.
- There is variability in teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' written work. Consequently, some work is poorly presented.
- Marking does not always provide pupils with explicit guidance on how to make improvements to their work. Pupils do not have enough chances to respond to teachers' marking and correct errors.
- When teaching is most effective, pupils learn well. In a successful mathematics session on problem solving, with able Year 5 pupils, the teacher planned learning thoroughly, providing a wide range of tasks at the right level. This enabled all pupils to maintain interest and move their learning on. Pupils were enthusiastic and involved, as they generated new ideas for their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils generally display mature attitudes to learning. They work well together, taking account of each other's views.
- Inappropriate behaviour, and exclusions, are rare. Effective systems ensure a consistent response to any issues. The work of the family liaison officer contributes to good engagement by particular pupils and their families. Parents recognise the positive ethos in the school.
- Pupils respond well to the school behaviour policy. Their conduct is generally impeccable. Where concerns arise, school leaders respond rapidly. A few parents feel that school leaders occasionally over react to minor behavioural issues. However, all pupils are fully aware of the school's high expectations of their behaviour and this contributes to the very orderly atmosphere in the school.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils say that they feel safe within the school site.
- The school ensures that pupils recognise a range of risks. Year 6 pupils appreciate the risks around, for example cyber bullying, and have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe.
- Pupils recognise that bullying may take many forms, but do not regard it as an issue. They are confident that any problems will be addressed by the school.
- Attendance is above average. Most pupils arrive punctually.
- The well-managed breakfast club provides well for those pupils who arrive early. They have access to a good range of activities.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because outcomes for pupils are not consistently good. Although leaders and governors want the best for the pupils, the approach to addressing current weaknesses in teaching and achievement is not having enough impact.
- School self-evaluation lacks rigour and does not take account of the views of stakeholders. As a result, the school does not have a detailed enough awareness of its strengths and weaknesses.
- The school's improvement plan does not identify clearly enough the school's main priorities and this has hindered the school's efforts to improve teaching and achievement more rapidly.
- The school does not engage readily with its local authority and has not been responsive to recent offers of support. The school does not retain any other external professional advice to provide support or challenge.
- Systems for the management of teachers' performance are closely linked to salary progression. However, the use of systems to improve teaching and outcomes for pupils is not robust enough. Although senior leaders are accurate in their view of the quality of teaching, and there have been recent improvements in quality, not enough has been done to eliminate variations across the school so that teaching and achievement are good.
- Middle leaders who manage individual subjects have had relevant training, have implemented effective systems for checking pupils' outcomes and have a close knowledge of relevant information on achievement. As a result, they are now beginning to have a positive impact on improving teaching and learning.
- School leaders monitor the impact of pupil premium funding closely. They recognise that, while there is some emerging impact, further work is needed to close the gap.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs. The school is well positioned to embrace the planned new curriculum. Work in literacy and numeracy is given priority to boost achievement, but there is not enough emphasis on developing pupils' skills in writing through subjects such as history, geography or science. Extra-curricular and enrichment provision is a significant strength, with pupils benefiting from a variety of activities, including a particularly extensive range of sports clubs.

- Planning for the use of the primary sport funding is thorough. Targeted staff training ensures that initiatives are sustainable. Additional clubs allow more pupils to participate in sport.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision to support multicultural awareness is less evident.
- The quality of pastoral support is good. The school is successful in promoting pupils' personal development.
- The school provides considerable support for parents in challenging circumstances. However, some parents feel that the school is not always responsive to their concerns.
- Safeguarding arrangements fully meet national requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Minutes of governing body meetings show that governors receive very detailed information from the headteacher. However, this does not focus enough on the weaker aspects of teaching and achievement. Governors do not review information thoroughly enough to hold leaders to account, particularly with regard to pupils' achievement. The governing body is not yet involved enough in identifying the school's key strengths and weaknesses. Governors have, however, undertaken recent training. Newer governors, in particular, have a clear understanding of how the school's performance compares with that of other schools, making good use of available data. They are now gaining a clearer understanding of what needs to be done and are determined to drive through improvements. Governors are committed to tackling discrimination and promoting good relationships so that all pupils have an equal opportunity to succeed. They have some understanding of the quality of teaching. They are aware that pay and promotion are closely linked to teachers' effectiveness. Governors understand the impact of decisions about the use of additional funding to close gaps in pupils' achievement, while recognising that the achievement of these pupils is not yet fully aligned with the others. Governors and senior leaders ensure that all statutory duties are met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	
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	118444
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	440076

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	489
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	William Lambert
Headteacher	Rosemary Dymond
Date of previous school inspection	13 July 2011
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