

Ranelagh Primary School

Pauls Road, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 0AN

Inspection dates 3–4 July 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' progress is inconsistent and, as a result, not all pupils achieve as well as they could. Attainment is below average in writing and is not improving quickly enough.
- Teaching is too variable and in some year groups there is not enough good teaching.
- Not all teachers have high enough expectations of pupils. As a result, pupils are not making good progress over a sustained period.
- Teachers' marking of pupils' work is not sufficiently effective. Comments do not always help pupils to improve their work. Some teachers do not check to see that their guidance is followed.
- Leaders do not always use the information from the checks they make on teaching quickly enough to address areas of weakness.
- Teachers with leadership roles, such as those responsible for subjects, do not contribute well enough to improving the school's effectiveness.

The school has the following strengths

- Pupils are now making better progress than in the past in reading and mathematics. As a result, standards are rising in these areas.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are strong. The school provides a safe and caring environment that pupils appreciate.
- Behaviour is good and this is greatly valued by the pupils and their parents.
- Teachers manage their classes well and very good use is made of additional adults to support individuals and groups.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language, receive good support so that they achieve well.
- The school teaches topics and themes that appeal to pupils' interests.
- The governing body know a lot about the school because they visit regularly and talk to teachers, parents and pupils. They ask leaders increasingly searching questions about the school's performance.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 lessons. One of these lessons was seen jointly with the headteacher.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, the assistant headteacher, other teachers, six governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Pupils’ books and records of their progress were scrutinised.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading and discussed their reading experiences with them.
- Account was taken of the 24 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire for parents. Inspectors talked informally to parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also examined 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school’s development plan and analysis of its strengths and weaknesses, safeguarding policies and records, other school policies and records of checks made by leaders on the quality of teaching.

Inspection team

Linda Phillips, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Maria Rees-Johnson

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Just over half of the pupils are White British, the remainder coming from a range of other ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for pupils who are in the care of the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- Many of the teachers have joined the school since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching so it is good or better and results in pupils making consistently good progress, particularly in writing, by:
 - ensuring that all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and of their handwriting and presentation
 - making sure that marking shows pupils clearly how to improve their work, and that all teachers check that pupils act on the advice they are given.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - making sure that leaders make full use of the information gained from their checks on teaching to rectify weaknesses quickly
 - ensuring that teachers with leadership responsibilities play a full and effective part in raising pupils' achievement and improving teaching.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' progress across the school has been too inconsistent over time and is still not good in some year groups. Although standards in reading and mathematics are now rising across the school, writing is not improving quickly enough in Key Stage 2.
- In recent years, pupils have typically not made good progress in Years 1 and 2. In 2013, at the end of the Year 2, standards were below average. Progress has been inconsistent in Years 3 to 6 and, until this year, pupils' attainment, especially in reading and writing has been below average at the end of Year 6. Few of the more able pupils have reached higher levels of attainment in writing. Boys have performed less well than girls in reading and writing.
- The school's record of pupils' progress, learning in lessons and in work pupils' books all show that progress in reading, writing and mathematics is now rising quickly in Years 1 and 2 for all groups including boys, more able pupils and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Progress in the learning of phonics (using letters and the sounds they make to read and spell) has improved in Year 1.
- Progress in Key Stage 2 is better in some classes than others, particularly in writing, because some teachers' expectations are not high enough. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6. Teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment indicate that there is a marked improvement this school year in reading and mathematics. This improvement can also be seen in the quality of work in older pupils' books, although progress in writing remains weaker than other subjects.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress from low starting points, particularly in personal and social development because teaching is good. More children, than in previous years, have met the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year. However, there are few children exceeding these goals.
- The improving picture in achievement is particularly evident in the progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language. Work seen during the inspection and school data show that these pupils are making good progress.
- In 2013, the attainment of pupils eligible for free school meals was over a term behind that of other pupils in reading and writing at the end of Year 6. In mathematics, however, pupils eligible for free school meals were on average almost five terms behind other pupils. The work in pupils' books and school data indicates that the gap had been reduced this year because progress, particularly in mathematics, has improved.
- The school has made sure that pupils are motivated to read through the development of reading journals, weekly reading challenges and rewards. Reading records are up to date and enable teachers to monitor pupils' reading habits and their progress. These records show that with encouragement, pupils are reading more widely and frequently.
- The careful use of the extra funding for sports has had a positive impact on the development of pupil's competencies on the playing field and pupil's physical skills. It has provided a wider range of physical activities and contributed to growing levels of confidence.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching has not been consistently good enough to ensure that pupils have reached the levels of which they are capable, especially in writing. Some teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are still not high enough, and the level of challenge in Years 3 to 6 is too variable. Some teachers do not have high expectations of handwriting and presentation.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but they do not always give them the clear guidance required to bring about improvement. Comments teachers make are not always clear enough for pupils to understand what is required to improve their work. Not all advice or guidance is followed by pupils and not all teachers check up on how well pupils have responded to the feedback they have been given. As a result, improvement is not brought about quickly enough.
- Teachers are very positive and want to improve their own skills through regular training but not all have yet had sufficient opportunities to observe and learn from the strongest teaching in their own school or through links with other schools.
- The school's own observations and evidence from inspection show that teaching is improving in most years and subjects. Effective learning was seen in a Year 6 class, for example, when pupils were asked to use a range of mathematical skills in activities related to a recent outing. Pupils did well in developing and using their knowledge to manipulate data and construct graphs.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress because adults know them well and are skilled in guiding each child in their next steps in learning. They are particularly successful in helping children to improve their knowledge of shape, space and measures, in making relationships and in developing their self-confidence.
- Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and this encourages very positive attitudes to learning in classrooms. Inspectors saw many good examples where pupils were keen to develop their skills and were enthusiastic about their learning. Where these positive attitudes are harnessed pupils learn effectively. For example, in a mathematics lesson the use of dice to generate numbers for a block graph effectively supported pupil's learning by encouraging them to use mathematical language.
- Teaching assistants and other adults who support learning are careful to question and challenge rather than just tell pupils what to do. Learning is successfully adapted for small groups or on a one-to-one basis. This is helping pupils who are supported by the pupil premium, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to make good progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. This is the case in lessons, around the school and outside in the playground. Pupils are lively and friendly and try hard to be well mannered and polite to adults, typically standing back at doorways.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to their learning. Responses from parents indicate unanimous approval of the way the school manages behaviour. Teachers manage their classes well. Very occasionally a very few pupils lose interest in their learning. Other pupils are adept at not allowing this to distract them.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils, along with their parents and

carers, believe strongly that the school is a safe place to be where everyone is valued. Pupils told the inspectors that bullying rarely happens and adults quickly sort things out. They have a good awareness of the different forms of bullying and understand the dangers of misusing the internet and social networking sites.

- The school works closely with other professionals and services, supporting and promoting links with families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. This contributes well to pupils' safety and well-being.
- Attendance has risen this year and is now above the national average. The school has worked hard to engage with parents and encourage them to ensure their children attend school every day. The improved attendance also reflects the improvements in teaching evident in many classes and pupils' enthusiasm for school.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not done enough to sustain pupils' achievement at a good level over time. There are still inconsistencies in the rate of progress for different year groups. Improvements in teaching are being made but the pace of improvement is limited by insufficiently rigorous follow-up action to rectify weaknesses when the quality of teaching has been checked.
- The school has recently recognised the need to provide training for staff who have the potential to take on more responsibility. Teachers with subject leadership responsibilities have undertaken training but have yet to develop their roles within the school. Subject leaders are not yet well enough involved in implementing plans to raise achievement and improve teaching.
- Performance management systems have been established and staff targets linked to improved outcomes for pupils. However, links to salary progression are at an early stage of development.
- The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The staff team work well together. The initial checks undertaken when children start in the Nursery ensure that teaching is directly focused on their learning needs from the outset.
- The subjects and topics the pupils are taught appeal to their interests. Educational visits, creative workshops and themes such as the First World War successfully promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school's caring atmosphere and strong links within its community ensure it is a happy place to be.
- The school is using the primary school sports funding effectively; an increasing number of pupils take part in physical activity both during school hours and beyond and there are more opportunities to take part in competitions. These initiatives are beginning to make a positive contribution to pupil's health and well-being.
- Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated in the school. All pupils have equal access to the wide range of opportunities available to them.
- The local authority provides effective support and is a positive partner in the process of school improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have increased their knowledge and understanding of pupils' progress, the quality

of teaching and the performance management of teachers so that they are now able to question senior leaders and help to bring about improvements. Governors understand data about pupils' progress and how well the school is doing compared to schools nationally. They know how additional funding is spent, including the pupil premium, and have used data to question leaders about improving the progress of all pupils further. Governors are clear about the school's priorities for improvement.

- The governing body carries out its statutory duties effectively. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are well managed, regularly reviewed and meet regulatory requirements.

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	124645
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	444191

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	212
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Thomas
Headteacher	Diane Ekins
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2011
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