

# Rickley Park Primary School

Rickley Lane, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, MK3 6EW

**Inspection dates** 9–10 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b> <b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Require improvement 3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement 3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement 3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement 3
Early years provision		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 across the school, especially in writing.
- The early years teaching does not fully develop boys' writing skills.
- Teaching is not consistently good over time.
- Teachers do not regularly change their lessons when necessary to help pupils make good progress.
- The most able pupils are not consistently stretched in their thinking.
- Apart from the headteacher, senior leaders and subject leaders do not regularly check on the quality of teaching and hold teachers to account for the progress of their pupils.
- Pupils' attention and concentration on their learning can wander, especially when lessons do not challenge and interest them.

### The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school. He has begun to bring about improvement and is fully supported by staff and the governing body.
- As a result of effective monitoring by the headteacher, teaching is improving and there is some good practice in the school.
- The governing body is beginning to question senior leaders more effectively about the quality of teaching and pupils' progress across the school.
- Pupils generally behave well around the school.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school. It works well to keep them safe and secure.
- The provision in the Nursery for children with complex special needs is good.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 22 lessons and observed 19 teachers. The lead inspector, the headteacher and deputy headteacher observed two lessons together.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff, subject leaders, members of the governing body and a group of pupils.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including the school’s own judgements about the quality of teaching and the achievement of pupils; assessments showing pupils’ progress over time; school improvement plans; and policies and procedures regarding the safety and well-being of pupils.
- Pupils’ current and past work was examined and a number of pupils were heard reading.
- The views of 122 parent and carers who completed the Ofsted parent questionnaire were taken into account.
- Inspectors examined 34 Ofsted questionnaires from staff that were completed during the inspection.

## Inspection team

James Henry, Lead inspector	Additional inspector
Linda Rowley	Additional inspector
Kate Robertson	Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Rickley Park Primary School converted to become an academy school in November 2012.
- When its predecessor school, also called Rickley Park Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted in July 2011 it was judged to be good overall.
- Rickley Park is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are White British. About one in five pupils are from a range of Black African and Asian ethnic backgrounds.
- Just over a quarter of pupils are known to be eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium (which provides extra funding for children in local authority care or for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals). This is slightly above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- The school has a nursery and two Reception classes. Children are taught in the Reception classes on a full-time basis.
- The school has nursery provision for up to seven children with complex learning needs who attend each morning.
- The headteacher was appointed in September 2013 and three senior teachers joined the school in September 2014.
- There have been a significant number of new governors appointed since September 2013.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards. These set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to be consistently good by ensuring that:
  - teachers regularly check on pupils' learning in lessons and, where necessary, change activities to help pupils make good progress at all times
  - the most able pupils are consistently challenged
  - teachers regularly check that pupils practise the guidance they are given in marking
  - teaching assistants consistently extend pupils' thinking in activities
  - activities challenge and interest pupils so that they maintain their concentration and improve their behaviour.
- Increase the rate at which pupils learn in writing across the school, especially boys and the most able, by:
  - ensuring pupils produce longer pieces of writing in different styles and in different subjects
  - extending pupils' language skills
  - ensuring activities in the early years provision fully develop boys' writing skills.
- Strengthen the role of senior and subject leaders by ensuring they consistently check on:
  - the progress made by different groups of pupils and use this information to hold teachers to account for the progress of pupils they teach
  - the quality of teaching, and provide feedback and share the good practice that exists in the school to help teachers improve their lessons.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because the task of improving teaching relies too heavily on the headteacher.
- Senior leaders do not consistently check on the quality of teaching and use information measuring pupils' progress to hold teachers to account for the progress of the pupils they teach. Consequently, teaching is not typically good and pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- The role of subject leaders is not developed to ensure they have the skills to check on the quality of teaching and share good ideas that would help teachers improve their lessons.
- The relatively newly appointed headteacher, supported by the governing body and the staff, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. He has created a positive atmosphere in the school where staff and pupils feel valued and involved. He has set a clear direction for the school and is bringing about change.
- The headteacher checks on the quality of teaching rigorously and this is beginning to increase the amount of good teaching across the school.
- The headteacher has a good understanding of the progress of different groups of pupils and past underachievement. He has organised teachers to take smaller-sized classes to help pupils catch up in their learning. This is beginning to work but has yet to ensure pupils make consistently good progress, especially in writing.
- The newly appointed senior leaders have brought new energy to the leadership of the school, to support the headteacher. They have begun to check on the quality of teaching and pupils' progress and provide feedback to staff. This has yet to make a full difference to improving teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Leadership of the provision for children with complex special needs in the Nursery is good. Activities are carefully checked to ensure they promote the development of individual children.
- Additional funding through the pupil premium is used to pay for staff to hear disadvantaged pupils read and hire extra teachers to focus on their learning in Years 1 and 6. This is beginning to close the achievement gap with other pupils across the school but has yet to have a clear impact by the end of Year 6.
- All pupils are taught a wide range of subjects and given an equal opportunity to learn. Activities in school effectively help older pupils make choices and consider their futures when they move to secondary school. For example, assemblies are well balanced and based on values such as tolerance, respect and listening to others. This has a positive effect on pupils' personal development. It also helps the school to promote good relations and deal effectively with any discrimination. Pupils elect their own school council and have visits from the local police to help them understand the importance of democracy and the law.
- Activities provided for pupils foster their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Links with the local church, residential outdoor activities and visits to places of worship such as the local synagogue all promote pupils' personal development.
- School involvement in local charities and events such as the Bletchley Carnival fosters good relations within the community.
- The additional sports funding is used to develop staff expertise in teaching physical education. It is used to pay for the school to join a local school sports partnership and enter competitions. These cover a wide range of activities, such as football, netball, dancing and badminton. The school can show that this work has increased the participation of different groups of pupils in sport. However, it has yet to measure fully the difference this is making to pupils' health and well-being.
- Procedures to ensure pupils are kept safe are effective and meet legal requirements. Adults are fully checked before working in school. All staff have received child protection training.
- The school has received little support since converting to an academy. The headteacher is establishing links with the local authority and other consultants who have worked with senior leaders observing some teaching. This is at relatively early stage of development but is beginning to help the headteacher's senior colleagues gain an accurate picture of the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The headteacher has involved the governing body in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Consequently, the members have accurate information about the quality of teaching over time and the progress of different groups of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics. Governors have undertaken a variety of training, especially about how pupils' progress is measured compared with other schools nationally. Governors visit classrooms regularly, accompanied by the headteacher, in order to gain an independent view of the school. As a result, governors are now questioning the

headteacher and senior leaders more effectively about the quality of teaching and pupil achievement. The performance of the headteacher is managed well. There are systems to deal with any staff underperformance and to check that any promotion or increase in salary for staff is clearly linked to their quality of teaching.

### The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

#### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement because there are occasions in lessons when pupils' attention wanders and they do not concentrate, especially when tasks do not interest them. This can slow the pace at which they learn.
- Pupils say that there is 'some messing around in lessons'. There were a few instances seen by inspectors when pupils were not fully concentrating on their learning.
- Pupils say that behaviour around the school, in the dinner hall and in the playground is mostly good and that they enjoy school.
- Almost all the parents who completed the Ofsted questionnaire felt that the school made sure that pupils behave well.
- Pupils are normally polite and courteous to each other and to the adults in the school.
- Staff usually manage pupils' behaviour well and generally pupils respond positively when corrected.

#### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and that there is little bullying or offensive name calling of any nature. Pupils have confidence in staff to deal with any problems when they occur.
- Responses in the Ofsted parent questionnaire show most parents who replied think that the school deals effectively with bullying.
- The school has good procedures to help pupils keep themselves safe. For example, when asked, pupils had a good understanding of how to stay safe when using the internet.
- Attendance has improved and is now above the national average. This is due to the school highlighting to pupils and parents the importance of regular attendance and introducing initiatives that reward good attendance.

### The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because pupils' work, school assessments and observations in lessons show that teaching is not typically good.
- Pupils do not always understand what they are learning in reading, writing and mathematics because tasks are not always altered to help pupils learn at a quicker rate.
- There are occasions when the most able pupils are not fully challenged, especially in writing.
- Sometimes pupils are not given enough time to complete tasks before they are asked to share their ideas with others.
- In an effort to help pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, teaching assistants can undertake tasks for them and this can slow the pace at which pupils learn, especially in developing their thinking skills.
- Not all teachers regularly check that pupils respond and practise the guidance they have been given in marking. Some pupils' work shows that they are making the same mistakes repeatedly when they have been corrected earlier.
- There is some good teaching in the school and teaching is improving. This is beginning to make a difference to the rate at which pupils learn in reading and mathematics, but less so in writing. As a result of improvements in teaching, pupils are beginning to make better overall progress.
- Teachers know pupils well and are now using assessments more effectively to check on the progress of different groups, including the that of the most able.
- Teachers generally plan lessons well with tasks to include different ability groups, especially pupils with special educational needs. This helps to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to learn.

- Pupils generally respond well in question-and-answer sessions with teachers, who show good subject knowledge in giving pupils new information and guidance to help them in their learning.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because they do not make consistently good progress across the school. Progress varies between subjects. It is better overall in mathematics and reading than in writing.
- Pupils' work and school assessments show that different groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, make broadly expected progress.
- The most able pupils make broadly expected progress in reading and writing but often good progress in mathematics, as shown by the number making more-than-expected progress in mathematics in the last academic year.
- School assessments show that progress in reading, writing and mathematics fluctuates across the school. Pupils often make better progress in Years 2 and 6 than in other year groups. The headteacher has recognised this and organised extra support and smaller-sized classes for pupils to help them catch up.
- Overall in the lessons observed, pupils are beginning to make better progress. For example, in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils were making good progress in learning about solving problems. By the end of the lesson they were able to explain their thinking clearly, using a range of mathematical language.
- Pupils' work shows that some pupils, particularly boys and the most able, are using a limited range of language and not producing longer pieces of writing.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2014 was below the 2013 national average in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly in the number of pupils achieving the expected or higher levels in writing.
- This represents broadly expected progress given that the attainment of this group of pupils was below the national average when they were at the end of Key Stage 1.
- School assessments suggest that following effective support given to pupils across Key Stage 2, those currently in Year 6 are on track to raise attainment to a level above the 2013 national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2014 rose in reading, writing and mathematics, and was slightly above the 2013 national average. School assessments show some pupils made good progress in view of their attainment at the beginning of Year 1, which was broadly as expected for their age.
- The school's Key Stage 2 national test results in 2014, when compared with the most recently available national results, showed that the average points score (a method for measuring pupils' attainment) for disadvantaged pupils was approximately three points below that of all pupils nationally. It was also below that of other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. This meant that disadvantaged pupils left the school over two terms behind all pupils nationally and other pupils in the school in reading, writing and mathematics. While school assessments show that the gap is closing in the different classes across the school, this gap has not been closed when compared with results in 2013.

### **The early years provision**

### **requires improvement**

- The early years provision requires improvement because teaching is not consistently good. There are occasions when teachers do not fully extend children's language and thinking skills. For example, they do not always encourage children to answer questions fully.
- Leaders in the early years area do not regularly undertake formal observations of lessons and share good ideas that would help teachers improve.
- Information about children's progress is not consistently used by senior leaders to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the early years teaching.
- The most able children are not always fully challenged, especially in developing their language skills.
- Children enter the early years with a wide range of abilities, but with attainment slightly below what is expected in their communication and language skills. They make expected progress overall in their learning. In 2013/14, the majority of girls achieved a good level of development by the end of Reception Year. The boys did not achieve as well as girls, especially in developing their writing skills.
- At the end of 2014, girls entered Year 1 with a much higher level of development than boys, especially in writing. This is partly because activities in the early years do not fully engage boys in developing their early writing skills.

- Children who have special educational needs in the main early years provision make broadly expected progress in the different areas of learning. Staff are effective in helping these children develop their self-confidence to try different activities and engage with other children and adults.
- Safeguarding procedures meet requirements and children feel safe.
- The early years classrooms and outdoor learning area are resourced well. Staff plan interesting and enjoyable activities that encourage children to explore and learn, especially in developing their physical skills.
- Children behave and cooperate well during different activities. Relationships in the early years are good, with children settling quickly in the morning and enjoying school.
- The nursery specialist provision for children who have complex learning needs is good. There is caring and effective one-to-one teaching, with a good range of resources to stimulate children and support their individual development.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	138933
<b>Local authority</b>	Milton Keynes
<b>Inspection number</b>	449215

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	466
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Diane Farmer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Glenn Booth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01908 372979
<b>Fax number</b>	01908 372979
<b>Email address</b>	office@rickleypark.milton-keynes.sch.uk

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