

Richard Hill Church of England Primary School

Anstey Lane, Thurmaston, Leicester, LE7 7JA

Inspection dates

7–8 October 2015

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The school's overall effectiveness requires improvement because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils are not yet good.
- Moves by leaders to raise pupils' attainment and speed up their progress have been hindered by staff changes. As a result, not all pupils are yet reaching their full potential.
- There are inconsistencies in how well teachers match work to the range of ability in the class.
- Teachers do not always ensure the good progress of lower-attaining and disadvantaged pupils who need to catch up.
- Some pupils have limited knowledge of number facts, which slows down the progress they make in mathematics lessons.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their mathematics skills in problem solving and in other subjects.
- Teachers do not make sure that pupils maintain good standards of writing when they write in subjects other than English.
- There are limited opportunities for pupils to write extensively.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders, including governors, are rapidly improving the quality of teaching; this is having a positive effect on the amount of progress current pupils are making.
- Strong leadership ensures the school is a happy place where staff and pupils thrive. Pupils behave well and say they enjoy their learning.
- Pupils say they feel safe and secure.
- Leaders have established thorough systems to check pupils' progress and involve staff in understanding what pupils should achieve.
- The interesting curriculum and range of extra activities promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural and physical development well.
- Early years provision is good. Children achieve well because of good teaching.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and speed up pupils' progress by making sure that teachers consistently:
 - provide work that is well matched to the range of ability in the class
 - enable lower-attaining and disadvantaged pupils who need to catch up to make good progress in lessons.

- Improve outcomes in mathematics by:
 - making sure pupils consolidate and apply number skills in problem-solving tasks and by using mathematics in other subjects more frequently
 - ensuring pupils acquire quick mental recall of number facts.

- Improve outcomes in writing by:
 - giving pupils wider opportunities to write at length
 - expecting the same standard of writing, spelling and punctuation whenever pupils write.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The leadership and management have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Leaders transmit high expectations successfully to staff and pupils. They make sure the school is a purposeful place where good behaviour and good teaching flourish. As a result, pupils behave well and teaching is improving strongly. Inspectors received many positive comments from parents in support of the school. For example, one parent wrote, 'All staff are approachable and respected by parents and the pupils. A delightful and very positive school.'
- The headteacher is determinedly improving the outcomes for pupils and giving all pupils equal opportunity to succeed. She heads a strong staff team who are now quickly addressing key areas for improvement. For example, revised policies mean that there is now a consistent approach to the marking of pupils' work and effective management of pupils' behaviour; improvements in the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent) and reading have a positive effect on pupils' learning; thorough systems are used effectively to check pupils' progress.
- Subject leaders improve teaching effectively. Those who are new to their roles quickly identify what needs to be done and receive good guidance on how to carry out their responsibilities. Good support from the local authority and the diocese helps the school to check the accuracy of teachers' assessments and to develop leadership roles well.
- A positive return from the questionnaire submitted by staff indicates that they feel well supported. Leaders motivate staff to do their jobs well by creating a common sense of purpose. As a result of continuous professional development, no time is wasted in implementing new approaches. Staff rapidly act upon advice and share their expertise keenly. They benefit from working with teachers from other schools to improve their practice.
- The pupil premium funding has been used adequately to support eligible pupils in their personal and academic achievements. Leaders recognise that closing the gaps in performance between these pupils and their peers is a key priority. The funding is now targeted more accurately and is improving outcomes for eligible pupils more rapidly. However, more work is needed to ensure all these pupils make the good progress they should.
- The curriculum, including in the early years, provides a range of subjects and extra activities that motivate learning and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Leaders check regularly to make sure that the curriculum promotes pupils' learning effectively. The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain by teaching about key values of respect and tolerance and an understanding of cultural diversity. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- A creative approach to planning and linking subjects together, along with improving teaching and raised expectations, is having a positive impact on pupils' personal development and progress. The primary sports funding is used well to widen the staff's expertise and pupils' skills, leading to high levels of participation and enjoyment.
- **The governance of the school**
 - is good and has improved markedly since the previous inspection. Governors now monitor the school's work systematically and ask the right questions to hold the school to account. They know the school well and are committed to continued improvement.
 - Governors link their visits to the school and their discussions with staff to the school's priorities. They know about the quality of teaching and have tackled underperformance in order to ensure improvement.
 - Governors are clear about the strengths in teaching and how good teaching links to good outcomes for pupils. They carry out the performance management of the headteacher and know how staff are helped to improve their work. Governors check information about pupils' progress and know how well different groups are doing, including those eligible for support from the pupil premium funding. The governing body is well informed about the school's curriculum and how it promotes key British values. Governors review policies regularly and make sure that statutory requirements are met.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school's systems to keep pupils safe are thorough. Leaders work well with parents to make sure that pupils are well supported should any concerns arise. Policies are consistently applied and understood by staff, who receive relevant training in how to keep pupils safe. Appropriate vetting checks are carried out to ensure the safe recruitment of staff.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- There is some variation between classes in how well teachers pitch work to match pupils' abilities, which affects the amount of progress pupils make.
- Lower-attaining and disadvantaged pupils sometimes struggle to do well in lessons because the work is too hard and they do not always have the right resources to help them to make sense of their learning. The inspection found that these pupils generally make good progress when working in small groups or individually with learning support assistants but they do not always make the same good progress in whole-class lessons.
- In mathematics, problem-solving tasks and the use of mathematics in other subjects are not frequent enough. Teaching has not ensured that pupils consistently acquire solid number facts. However, the teaching of mathematics is improving. Staff are effectively plugging the gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding after a period of underachievement in the subject. Lessons now focus successfully on consolidating and building on what pupils, including the most able, already know and on deepening their understanding.
- In writing, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to write at length. They do not always expect pupils to write well whenever they write in a range of subjects. The school's information about pupils' progress and the work in English books shows that the teaching of writing, spelling, punctuation and grammar is regular and well structured and attainment is rising.
- A major improvement since the previous inspection is the way in which teachers mark pupils' work. All staff consistently follow the school's marking policy in a range of subjects. They effectively make sure pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do in order to improve their work.
- Teachers are adept at recognising misconceptions during lessons and ask the right questions to make sure pupils understand. They use information from previous learning well to move pupils forward and to reshape tasks for those who do not fully understand. Together with leaders, teachers check the progress pupils make and are strengthening their skills in using the information effectively to improve the outcomes for pupils.
- Teachers, including in the Reception class, motivate learning well. They provide interesting tasks and topics to encourage discussion and prompt pupils to want to find out more. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 visited the zoo to stimulate learning about animals and habitats. In the Year 5 and Year 6 class, the teacher aided pupils' learning about the native North Americans effectively by linking history, geography and literacy.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and what they should achieve by the end of lessons. No time is wasted. Staff instil positive attitudes and expect pupils to do their best. As a result, pupils are attentive and concentrate well. Good relationships promote personal development strongly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils become confident learners because staff help them to recognise their personal qualities well. Pupils know what the school does to help them to improve and they like to do their best. They strive to win the school's awards and are keen to be recognised as a 'Student of the Week'.
- Staff give pupils the confidence to 'have a go' and try new experiences. As a result, pupils participate willingly in the range of activities. In sports, they quickly learn new skills and are actively involved, with a positive effect on their physical well-being. Those who are less confident are supported well by staff in their emotional and personal development to become fully involved in the school community.
- From the time they start school, pupils take on small jobs to aid the school's smooth daily running. Those in the school council speak proudly of how they help to improve the school's facilities. Their involvement aids their understanding of democracy and fairness. Pupils are quick to help each other. They demonstrate a good understanding of respect and tolerance towards others because these values permeate the school's work.
- Pupils say they feel safe and that they enjoy school. They know about the different forms of bullying and

talk sensibly about what to do if they have a problem, including when using technology. They say they know how to deal with any concerns because they receive good guidance during lessons and assemblies. The school's behaviour records show that incidents are rare but any that do occur are thoroughly recorded and dealt with quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Staff make sure that pupils find their work interesting. As a result, pupils have positive attitudes to learning which contribute strongly to the progress they make in lessons. They are clear about the school's rules and sanctions and conform well because the school's behaviour policy is applied consistently by staff.
- Pupils show the same levels of good behaviour when working with a range of adults, including during before- and after-school activities. They respond well and enjoy new learning. For example, during the inspection, pupils listened attentively when a visitor from a local charity led an assembly. They were keen to answer questions and offer their ideas.
- Classrooms are busy places where pupils share ideas and resources well with each other. Teachers create a climate of mutual respect where views are valued. Good arrangements ensure that lunchtimes proceed smoothly, giving pupils good opportunities to be sociable and mix with others of all ages.
- Attendance is above average. Few pupils stay away from school for lengthy periods of time. Leaders have good systems to monitor absence and encourage good attendance and punctuality. The well-run breakfast club provides a positive start to the day and ensures that those pupils who might otherwise be late are in lessons on time.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- The good start children make in the Reception class has not been sufficiently built upon in recent years to make sure that pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is being urgently addressed by leaders but outcomes currently require improvement because not all pupils in all classes are yet making strong progress.
- The end of Year 6 national test results in 2014 show that pupils reached above-average standards in reading. In mathematics and writing, standards were average but pupils did not make sufficiently good progress from their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. The school's information shows that progress across the key stage for Year 6 pupils in 2015 was variable.
- In 2014, the proportion of the most-able pupils who achieved the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics was above average by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, proportions were above average in writing and mathematics and well above in reading. All of these pupils made the expected progress across the key stage and some did even better than expected in mathematics. Current pupils are on track to make the expected progress but are not always sufficiently challenged in lessons to do even better.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make variable rates of progress in line with their peers. They make good progress when teaching builds effectively upon their previous learning and provides the resources they need to succeed. Positive relationships with staff help pupils to develop confidence in their abilities. Leaders have made inroads in improving resources and ensuring correct identification of special educational needs. They build strong partnerships with parents and prepare pupils well for their move to the secondary school.
- In 2014, there were too few disadvantaged pupils in Year 6 to comment upon their relative attainment without risk of identifying individual pupils. The school's information shows that the progress of these pupils has been variable. More accurate targeting of support is now speeding up progress. Pupils work well with teaching assistants to make small steps in their learning.
- The school's information shows that attainment is on the rise with marked improvement in the amount of progress pupils now make term on term. Leaders have raised the expectation of what all groups of pupils should achieve in a range of subjects and make staff accountable for the amount of progress pupils make.

Early years provision

is good

- Outcomes for children by the end of the early years are stronger than those for pupils in the rest of the school. Children make good progress in the Reception class because the quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Leadership of the early years is good. There are good arrangements for children when they start in the Reception class which help them to settle quickly. Staff maintain regular and positive links with parents. As a result, parents are involved in their children's learning and are kept well informed about their children's progress.
- Leaders review information on how well children are doing frequently. They use the information well to match activities to children's abilities. Leaders are evaluating the use of additional funding more closely to make sure it is effective in closing any gaps in performance for disadvantaged children.
- Children behave well. At the time of the inspection, they already showed a good understanding of how to share with each other, move around the school sensibly and follow instructions. Staff place a high priority on making sure that children are happy to come to school. They pay due regard to children's welfare and keeping them safe. They create a nurturing environment where children's confidence and feelings of security flourish.
- Teaching is good. Staff provide well-organised and interesting tasks, often linked to a topic which children enjoy. Staff recognise that reading and writing may be weaker skills for some children when they start school and provide plenty of opportunities for children to develop a love of reading and write frequently. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of phonics, which is organised well to provide the right level of teaching for various abilities.
- Outcomes for children are good. They achieve well across all areas of learning from various starting points. This means they are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	120205
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10001833

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	152
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marian Driver
Headteacher	Nicola Quinn
Telephone number	0116 234 0212
Website	www.richardhillschool.co.uk
Email address	office@richardhill.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25–26 September 2013

Information about this school

- Since the previous inspection, the school has experienced significant staff and leadership changes. The headteacher took up post in January 2014. Three teachers joined the school in September 2015.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Most pupils are of White background.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is below average. This funding is received for pupils who are, or have been, eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The early years comprises a Reception class, which children attend full time.
- The school runs a daily breakfast and after-school club which is managed by the governing body.
- A section 48 inspection of religious education did not take place at the same time as this inspection.
- The school works closely with a teaching school alliance.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed nine lessons and one assembly. Two observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher. The inspectors also observed some teaching of small groups of pupils. In all, seven members of staff were seen teaching.
- The inspectors observed playtimes, lunchtimes and after-school activities. An inspector visited the breakfast club, which is managed by the governing body.
- The inspectors looked at samples of work from all classes, spoke to pupils about their work during lessons and listened to pupils read.
- The inspectors held meetings with a group of pupils, members of the governing body, leaders and staff. An inspector also spoke to a representative of the local authority and a school improvement partner from the diocese.
- The inspectors analysed 42 responses from parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and took account of written comments. The inspectors also spoke to parents during the inspection.
- The inspectors analysed 15 responses to the questionnaire completed by school staff.
- The inspectors observed the school's work. They looked at progress and attendance information, improvement planning, evidence of the monitoring of teaching and documentation relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

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Ofsted Inspector

Philip Garnham

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