

Ryton Community Infant School

Main Road, Ryton, Tyne and Wear NE40 3AF

Inspection dates	13–14 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Most pupils make expected progress across the school, including those with disabilities and special educational needs. However, pupils are not always challenged to make more rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics to catch up quickly or to reach the highest levels of attainment by the end of Year 2.
- The proportion of children who reach the expected level for their age at the end of the Reception year has improved to above the national average. Not enough children make better progress from their secure starting points to exceed the expected level, particularly in reading, writing and number skills.
- Leaders' actions to check on the quality of teaching do not focus incisively enough on the difference that teaching makes to pupils' progress.
- The curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to use their own ideas in their writing and to apply their writing skills in a range of subjects.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not always use questions effectively to encourage pupils to think deeply about their learning.
- Some adults do not have a sufficiently secure understanding of the teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they represent) to ensure that all pupils make good progress in their reading.
- Leaders, including governors, do not ensure that targets set for teachers and in the school development plan are precise enough to ensure good academic outcomes for all pupils.
- Middle leaders do not have enough opportunities to use their considerable abilities to improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher, well supported by staff, has created a culture where respect and tolerance are prized. Pupils are polite and considerate of others. They conduct themselves well in school.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have improved. Leaders have taken action to close the gaps in children's attainment in the early years.
- Parents are extremely positive about the school. They are confident that their children are safe and well cared for. Pupils are happy and enjoy school.
- Leaders know children and their families very well. They go the extra mile to ensure that all pupils, including those with additional needs, have full access to the broad curriculum on offer.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of good or better teaching so that pupils make consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that teachers set sufficiently challenging work to enable all pupils, particularly the most able and children in early years, to capitalise on their starting points
 - extending the emerging good practice in problem solving and mathematical reasoning so that it is a regular feature of the curriculum across all classes
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write independently, using their own ideas, and to apply their writing skills in other subjects across the curriculum
 - improving the subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants in phonics
 - making sure that adults use questions effectively to probe pupils' understanding and to encourage them to think deeply about their learning.

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that leaders sharply evaluate the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning and progress over time
 - setting precise targets which enable governors to hold teachers and leaders to account for the outcomes of all pupils
 - providing middle leaders with the training and opportunities they need to take a full role in improving teachers' performance.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have not taken sufficiently effective action to ensure that all teaching secures good progress from all groups of pupils. Not enough pupils achieve well from their starting points, and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 fluctuate.
- Since the last inspection, leaders have increased the frequency of the checks they undertake on the quality of teaching. However, they do not always use these activities to evaluate the progress being made by individuals and groups of pupils, and to link this to what they know about pupils' achievement over time. This has limited their ability to improve the quality of teaching.
- Middle leaders have played an important role in securing improvements in the school. For example, the early years leader has introduced a range of strategies to improve children's writing. This is beginning to increase the proportion of children exceeding the expected level at the end of the Reception year. However, middle leaders and senior leaders other than the headteacher do not have enough opportunities to evaluate and improve the performance of teachers. Leaders recognise that they would benefit from additional training to help them to take on this role.
- Systems are in place to manage the performance of teachers. However, targets for teachers are not precise enough in defining the expected improvements in outcomes for different groups of pupils. As a result, the quality of teaching is not improving quickly enough.
- The headteacher is committed to providing an education that allows every child to develop their unique skills and their individuality. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Every pupil learns to play a musical instrument and has a chance to perform to an audience. Pupils across Key Stage 1 learn a modern foreign language and their school experience is enriched through a range of visits and visitors. However, leaders acknowledge that the curriculum is not yet enabling all pupils to make the progress they should in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Leaders have shown creativity in their approach to developing the skills that pupils need to become successful citizens. Their work with the Olympic legacy project 'Blazing the Trail' has effectively promoted values such as respect, equality and courage. Pupils have developed their understanding of the importance of rules through sport. Leaders have ensured that pupils respect others' differences through the work they have done to celebrate and recognise different types of family units. These elements contribute to the school's strong provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the leadership in the school and appreciate the concern that is shown for their welfare. Leaders have created a culture of teamworking and an ethos which, as a staff member indicated to the inspection team, they proudly share.
- Leaders have accepted external advice to help them to improve. The local authority correctly identified the issues that the school needs to address and have begun to provide support. This has led to improvements in the proportion of children working at the expected level for their age at the end of their Reception year.
- Leaders have used additional funding well to improve outcomes for pupils. Extra support provided by the pupil premium has resulted in gaps in attainment narrowing for disadvantaged pupils. (The pupil premium is government funding provided for those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after by the local authority. Physical education (PE) and sport funding has been used well to improve the teaching of gymnastics and has increased pupils' participation in extra-curricular and inter-school competitive sport.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding (protecting children and making sure they are safe) where staff are clear about their responsibilities. Leaders take pride in knowing every child and every family well. This enables them to work well with children and families to overcome barriers to learning: for example, where a child has significant medical needs. Leaders work particularly well with external agencies to ensure that their most vulnerable pupils receive the support they need. Parents value this and all respondents to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire indicated that their children are happy, safe and well looked after.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are committed to providing a high-quality education for all children. They visit the school and use their professional experience to check on aspects of pupils' performance and to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are managed appropriately. This has resulted in improvements such as more timely support for pupils who are not making progress quickly enough.

- Governors receive information about the performance of teachers and the achievement of pupils. However, targets to increase pupils' attainment and progress are not precise enough in the school's development plan. This limits the governing body's ability to accurately measure the impact of leaders' actions.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Although teachers' assessment of pupils' work is accurate and teachers can identify the skills that pupils have mastered, this information is not always used effectively to plan next steps which are sufficiently challenging for pupils, particularly for the most able. As a result, not enough teaching is enabling pupils to make consistently good or better progress in their learning.
- An over-structured approach to the teaching of writing is limiting pupils' ability to use their own ideas in their work. Consequently, some pupils are demotivated and say they do not enjoy writing. Pupils are not developing the skills they need to write independently at length and to apply these skills in other subjects.
- Where teaching is most effective, teachers plan activities which build on pupils' interests and abilities. For example, pupils were enthused by their work on knights and castles following a school visit to Warkworth. At times, when teaching does not excite them or provide enough challenge, pupils show less interest in their learning.
- Where teaching is securing the best progress from pupils, teachers use questioning extremely well to check what pupils know and deepen their learning. In a mathematics lesson where children were solving a problem, the teacher asked a pupil to explain why his strategy had been particularly effective. This enabled the teacher to assess his understanding and gave the pupil the opportunity to articulate his thinking. At times, some adults miss opportunities to use questions to this good effect.
- Pupils have appropriate strategies to help them tackle unfamiliar words and an average proportion of pupils reach the expected level for their age in the national phonics check in Year 1. They enjoy reading and are enthusiastic about their 'Bookworm' challenge which is supporting them to read widely. However, some adults do not have a sufficiently deep understanding of phonics teaching to help pupils with lower starting points to catch up as quickly as they should.
- The quality of teaching of mathematics has improved. Training for staff has increased opportunities for pupils to solve problems and investigate using number. A wide range of practical apparatus supports pupils to talk through their mathematical reasoning. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment in mathematics.
- A new system for marking pupils' work has been developed in conjunction with the neighbouring junior school. This is being implemented consistently by all teachers across the school and correctly identifies what pupils have achieved in their learning. Most pupils respond to teachers' corrections and improve their work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare **is good**

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Leaders have developed a curriculum which enables children to become well-rounded individuals. Creative opportunities have been provided for pupils in Key Stage 1 to develop their confidence in exploring and discussing their feelings. Cookery workshops and daily PE and sport sessions help pupils to understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. These actions make a very positive contribution to pupils' physical and emotional well-being.
- Incidents of bullying are extremely rare. When issues occur, they are addressed swiftly. Leaders have supported pupils to understand different types of bullying and the impact they can have on the victim. This has contributed to the prevention of bullying in school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of being safe and they feel safe in school. They recognise the security systems in place within their school to protect them. They can articulate the potential risks when they are online and know the steps they should take to safeguard themselves.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.

- Respect and tolerance are at the heart of this school. Leaders set a strong example where every child, family and staff member is valued. Pupils follow their example, are polite and courteous, and show care and concern for adults and one another.
- Pupils take responsibility for their behaviour. Leaders have given pupils ownership of this through the mini-buddies scheme. Pupils value this and speak highly of the work of the buddies to provide games and activities at playtimes to reduce the risk of boisterous behaviour.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They work hard in lessons and their attendance has improved. Very occasionally, in some classes, a few pupils go off task and talk when they should be working. This tends to occur if activities are not sufficiently challenging.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' attainment by the time they leave school has fluctuated over recent years. By the end of Year 2 in 2015, most pupils made expected progress from their starting points. However, not enough pupils made better than expected progress, particularly in reading and writing, to catch up quickly or to reach the highest levels of attainment. The school has begun to tackle this issue in mathematics and, in 2015, the proportions of pupils who achieved and exceeded age-related expectations increased at the end of Year 2.
- Not enough pupils currently in the school are making consistently good progress in writing and mathematics from the end of the Reception class. In particular, the most-able pupils are not yet making rapid enough progress to secure the highest levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.
- As a result of the school's work to improve reading, the proportion of pupils currently in the school making expected and better than expected progress has increased. The proportion of pupils who achieve the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics check has improved over time and is broadly in line with national averages.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils has improved. Previously wide gaps in the attainment of children at the end of the Reception year were successfully closed in 2015. In Year 1, the gaps narrowed for pupils reaching the expected level in the phonics check in 2015. A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils reached the highest levels of attainment at the end of Year 2 in 2015 than in previous years. The learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in Key Stage 1 show that they make expected progress in reading, writing and mathematics. However, teaching does not yet secure the good progress that these pupils need to enable them to reach their potential.
- The achievement of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is carefully monitored across the school. Additional support and leaders' close working with external agencies enables pupils to make broadly expected progress in reading and writing, and particularly good progress from their starting points in mathematics.

Early years provision

requires improvement

- Almost all children make the expected progress across the early years and a higher proportion than nationally reach the expected level at the end of Reception and are ready for Year 1. However, not enough make better than typical progress to achieve as well as they can and exceed expected levels, particularly in reading, writing and number.
- Leaders do not have sufficient opportunities to monitor the quality of provision across all classes in the early years. Consequently, they have not taken sufficient action to ensure that teaching is consistently good enough so that all children, particularly the most able, make the progress they are capable of.
- Teaching does not always challenge children to make good enough progress from their starting points. At times, adults do not ask the right questions or provide tasks that deepen children's knowledge and understanding.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not display consistently secure subject knowledge in phonics. Occasionally, they model sounds incorrectly. Children copy these mistakes and this creates misconceptions in their understanding of letters and the sounds they make.
- Children cooperate well with each other and with adults. Teachers and teaching assistants set high expectations for behaviour and have established clear routines which children understand.
- The learning environment is organised effectively to support children's independence. Resources are easily accessible so that children can make choices about their learning. This enables children to improve their self-confidence and develop their individuality.

- Parents are very positive about the relationship between home and school which is established in the early years. They regard staff as approachable and appreciate the opportunities to contribute to home-school books and their children's learning journals. This good communication has enabled staff to get to know children well and quickly identify children who may have additional needs.
- Adults support children well to make safe choices. In an activity to build an obstacle course for other children, the teacher supported a group of boys to test the course. The children took this very seriously, showing concern for keeping their friends safe.
- Leaders have used pupil premium funding well in the early years. The proportion of disadvantaged children reaching the expected good level of development at the end of the Reception classes rose sharply in 2015 and exceeded the national average for all children. This ensures that these children are well placed to achieve at high levels in the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	108352
Local authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	10003906

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	153
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Christine McHatton
Headteacher	Mrs Janice V Porter
Telephone number	0191 413 2776
Website	www.rytonfederation.org/infants
Email address	rytoncommunityinfantschool@gateshead.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	18 November 2010

Information about this school

- This school is an infant school catering for pupils aged 3 to 7 and is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the pupil premium provides support is below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is less than half of the national average.
- Pupils attend Nursery on a part-time basis and Reception class on a full-time basis.
- The school shares a campus with a junior school and a secondary school. The school was previously federated with the junior school. At the time of the inspection, the governing body had suspended the federation.
- The school holds a gold kite mark for the Olympic legacy 'Blazing the Trail' sport scheme which is coordinated by the Gateshead School Sports Partnership.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the quality of teaching and learning across all classes, including observing teaching jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors looked at the standard of current pupils' work, listened to pupils read and talked to them about their learning and their experiences at school.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, the chair, vice-chair and other members of the governing body and a group of pupils. An inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspection team evaluated a wide range of school documents, including the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, information on pupils' progress, records of the checks made on the quality of teaching, minutes of governing body meetings, information on safeguarding and a range of policies.
- The inspection team considered the views expressed in 20 questionnaire returns from staff.
- Inspectors talked to parents and reviewed the 39 responses made by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

Claire Brown, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Inkster	Her Majesty's Inspector
Susan Hayter	Her Majesty's Inspector

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