

# Riverview Junior School

Cimba Wood, Gravesend, Kent DA12 4SD

## Inspection dates

4–5 May 2016

## 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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet consistently good. This means that pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is uneven and not yet good across the school.
- Effective questioning is not yet fully embedded across all classes to ensure pupils' depth of knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to check pupils' understanding to ensure that they make more rapid gains in their learning, particularly in mathematics.
- The gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others is too wide.
- The most-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged with demanding work.
- Pupils' spelling is not good enough.
- There has been insufficient time to see the full impact of the work of middle and subject leaders on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress.
- Previous inaccurate assessments mean that senior leaders and governors do not have a strategic and accurate overview of the progress of different groups, as well as their attainment.

### The school has the following strengths

- The interim executive headteacher provides strong leadership. She is ably supported by the local leader of education and other senior leaders. As a result of their work, they have ensured that this is an improving school.
- Since the previous inspection, the governing body has become more effective in supporting the school and holding leaders to account. It now has the necessary skills and expertise to support further improvement.
- Teaching is improving. Staff work hard and respond well to opportunities to further develop their skills.
- Pupils behave well in lessons, around the school and in the playground. They have good attitudes to learning and want to do well. Attendance is above average.
- There are good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are friendly, polite and respectful. Safeguarding procedures are effective, and pupils are looked after well and feel safe in school.

## Full report

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better in order to strengthen outcomes for pupils by:
  - narrowing the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and the achievement of other pupils
  - raising the standard of pupils' spelling skills
  - providing work that is demanding enough to challenge the most-able pupils
  - making sure that effective questioning promotes pupils' depth of knowledge, skills and understanding
  - ensuring that assessment information is used to check pupils' understanding so that they can make more rapid gains in their learning, particularly in mathematics.
- Ensure that senior leaders and governors have a strategic and accurate overview of the progress of different groups, as well as their attainment.
- Ensure that subject and middle leaders have a greater impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- In the time since the previous inspection there has been considerable turbulence in leadership and staffing which resulted in a decline in the school's performance. Since September 2015, when the interim executive headteacher was appointed, the school has made improvements in important areas of its work. There has not been enough time, however, to see the full impact of these improvements on the quality of teaching or pupils' outcomes.
- The executive headteacher has, in a relatively short amount of time, been very effective in raising expectations and establishing the necessary systems and procedures to move the school forward.
- She is supported well by a local leader of education and the new chair of the governing body. There is a shared vision and determination to build on the improvements to move the school to good. Currently, however, although teaching and learning have improved and much is good, the quality is still inconsistent across the school and pupils' progress is uneven across classes and year groups.
- Robust monitoring and evaluation quickly identified significant weaknesses that had persisted for some time and resulted in a decline in standards, except for writing, which had improved. Systems for the management of teachers' performance were not established and teachers lacked direction and guidance to improve their performance. Despite marked improvements, not enough teaching and learning are yet good and standards remain just average by the end of Year 6. Where weaknesses are identified, teachers receive appropriate support and guidance and underperformance is challenged. As a result, inadequate teaching and learning have been eradicated.
- There are now clear systems established to check on teachers' performance, linked to the progress pupils make, and teachers know that they are accountable for pupils' progress. Higher expectations are shared with staff and there is now a shared sense of purpose, drive, enthusiasm and determination to continue and increase the pace of improvement.
- The strategic work of the interim executive headteacher, the local leader of education and the governing body under the new chair has had positive benefits for middle leaders, staff and pupils in forging improvements. Very recent new appointments of an interim head of school, a leader for special educational needs and an interim deputy headteacher have been made to increase leadership capacity.
- Middle leaders know the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and areas of responsibility. Since September they have had clear accountability and say that they now feel empowered and inspired to make a difference. The impact of their work has resulted in greater consistency in the approaches to teaching and learning, especially in mathematics and English, whereas leaders reported that previously 'everyone was doing their own thing'. There has not yet been enough time to see the full impact of their work on the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' progress.
- Equality of opportunity is promoted and all groups are involved in every aspect of school life. Leaders are aware, however, that not all groups of pupils achieve as well as they can. Rigorous systems have been introduced to ensure that the progress of individual pupils is regularly and accurately checked. At the beginning of the academic year, assessment information was not secure, making it difficult for leaders to quantify the progress pupils are currently making. As a result, senior leaders are not yet able to have a strategic and secure overview of the progress of vulnerable groups.
- The school fosters good relationships between all pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted effectively through the school's values and the curriculum. Leaders ensure that pupils learn without discrimination of any kind. Pupils are effectively prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The subjects taught are broad and balanced, with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and mathematics. The curriculum is starting to provide more opportunities to link different subjects to promote more purposeful, exciting and creative teaching and learning. One member of staff wrote, 'I am now able to plan and teach an exciting curriculum that the pupils love'.
- The curriculum is enriched by extra activities such as clubs, trips and visitors to school that inspire and motivate pupils as well as giving them opportunities to learn new skills.
- The school is making effective use of the primary school physical education and sports funding. The funding is spent in a range of ways to enhance the existing provision for physical education. These include membership of the Gravesham Sports Partnership, which helps to enhance the skills of pupils and teachers and therefore improve outcomes for pupils. There are increased opportunities for pupils to take part in a wider range of sports and competitive events.

- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils had not in the past come under sufficient scrutiny to ensure it was being spent wisely and making a difference for pupils. It is now high on the agenda for the leadership team and there is a 'pupil premium champion' in each year group. The impact of the funding is now monitored very closely and leaders are aware that outcomes need to improve for disadvantaged pupils to narrow the gap between their attainment and the attainment of other pupils nationally and in the school.

The majority of parents are positive about all aspects of the school and would recommend the school to another parent. A minority, however, expressed their concerns mainly concerning homework, communication, the progress their children make and the information they receive about progress. Several commented positively on the changes in the school since September. Others, however, feel that the many changes in staffing and leadership since the previous inspection have had a negative impact on their children's learning, particularly for the older pupils. One parent wrote: 'As my child is currently in Year 6, I am happy with the school this year in light of the changes since September. However, teaching has failed him for the previous years. Fortunately he is receiving a much improved education this year and is now thoroughly enjoying school'.

- Inspectors acknowledge that leaders, including governors, need to build relationships with parents to secure the confidence of the minority who expressed their concerns.
- Effective support from the local authority has included working with different year groups to improve teaching and outcomes and supporting the development of middle leadership.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Governance has strengthened significantly since the previous inspection. A new chair of the governing body was appointed in November 2015. He is a national leader of governance and the governing body benefits in its work from his skills, experience and expertise. He is supported by an experienced vice-chair. The reconstituted governing body has the necessary skills to provide a strategic overview of the school's performance and development and to hold senior leaders to account.
  - Governors are now actively involved in the school and share the ambition and determination of the interim executive headteacher to continue to improve the school. They are fully aware of the strengths of the school and the priorities for further improvement. They have correctly identified the need to monitor the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is money well spent and is making a difference to the outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. There is also an awareness of the need to monitor how the primary school physical education and sports funding is spent and its impact.
  - The governing body is now operating on a more professional footing and is establishing structures and systems to monitor the work of the school and provide challenge and support to the leadership team. It has fully supported the interim executive headteacher in expecting nothing less than good or better teaching and the actions that have been taken to tackle underperformance. Governors oversee the performance management process, which is now established. They know that this and a robust training programme are helping to improve the quality of teaching and that pay progression and promotion are linked to pupils' progress.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. All requirements are fully met. Policies are up to date and procedures are robust, including those involving external agencies to benefit pupils. Procedures to check staff suitability are systematic and robust. The site is safe and secure.

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

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement because, despite some more effective and good teaching, leading to improving outcomes for pupils, inconsistencies remain across classes and subjects.
- There is some variation between classes in how well teachers use assessment to check pupils' understanding and to ensure that they make rapid gains in their learning. Not all teachers have high enough expectations of all pupils or what they can achieve in a lesson or over time. There are some good examples of teachers' skilled questioning that promotes pupils' depth of knowledge, skills and understanding; however, this is not at the same level in all classes.
- Work for the most-able pupils is not always sufficiently demanding to enable them to make the rapid progress of which they are capable. Sometimes pupils have to complete work that is too easy before they move on to more challenging tasks.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and the good relationships they have with teachers mean that they try hard and want to do well. As a result, they are confident when encouraged to take risks with their learning and try things out for themselves. The most successful learning occurs when pupils are fully engaged and interested in the tasks provided.
- Pupils in Year 3, for example, were fully engaged and motivated when filming a re-enactment of the Battle of Hastings. Skilled questioning from the teacher helped pupils to increase the depth of their knowledge and skills of the use of technology as well as their historical understanding. Expectations were high for pupils' engagement and learning.
- Pupils work well together because they respect and listen to the views of others even if they do not always agree with their opinions. Pupils in Year 6, for example, listened well to the examples others gave of the correct use of colons and semi-colons and this helped them to make good progress.
- There are some good examples of the school's policy for marking and feedback being used to good effect where teachers' comments are helping pupils to improve their work. However, this is not as effective in all classes.
- In reading, book collections to promote and motivate reading have been established in classes. The quality and use of these 'reading areas' is having more of an impact in some classes than in others.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to meet the increased challenges and higher expectations required to improve pupils' learning. Year-group teams are very supportive of each other. Most teachers are enthusiastic, committed and keen to take advice and learn from leaders and colleagues in other schools about improving the quality of their teaching.

## **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 enjoy their time at school and this is reflected in improved and above-average attendance.
- Pupils are increasingly confident and self-assured, have good attitudes to learning and want to do well.
- Pupils are polite and friendly and respectful of adults and each other. They show respect, tolerance and understanding for diversity in school and in the wider community.
- Pupils also have respect for the school environment and appreciate the considerable changes that have been made inside and in the playground. A group of pupils agreed that the new playground equipment, including a multi-use games area, 'makes the school a happier place to be'. Litter-pickers make sure the grounds are clean and tidy.
- Pupils enjoy the responsibilities they are given and take them seriously. Peer mediators, for example, help to sort out any disputes should they arise and are well regarded by other pupils.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying and understand the difference between bullying and friends falling out. They say that adults always sort out any issues and they are confident to seek support from adults if they have any concerns.
- Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know how to keep safe in a range of situations in and out of school. They understand and have a good awareness of e-safety and promote it well across the school. Pupils in Year 4, for example, enjoyed creating posters on computers giving instructions to younger pupils about internet safety.
- Attendance has improved and is above the national average. Staff work effectively with parents and external agencies to promote regular attendance for all.
- Pupils who attend the breakfast club get a safe, healthy and social start to their day.
- Most parents who responded to the questionnaire agree that their children are happy at school, feel safe and are well looked after.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The large majority of parents agree that the school makes sure that pupils are well behaved.
- Pupils conduct themselves well in the playground, at lunchtimes and around the school.

- Pupils are generally attentive in lessons and meet the expectations from their teachers for good behaviour. On occasion, however, when lessons do not fully engage the interest or enthusiasm of pupils, a few can lose their focus on learning and become quietly distracted.
- School records confirm that behaviour is good and has improved over time. Any incidents are carefully logged and any action taken is followed up. There is insufficient analysis, however, of the behaviour of different groups of pupils.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because it is not yet good in all classes and subjects. Although improving since September, progress is uneven across the school because the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent.
- In the national tests in 2015, pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 was broadly in line with the national average in reading and below average in mathematics and grammar, punctuation and spelling. Attainment dipped slightly from the previous year. Writing improved from the previous year and was above average. The proportion who reached the expected level in writing was average, but an above-average proportion reached the higher Level 5. A legacy of weaker teaching and staffing disruption means that some pupils who have fallen behind in their learning have not fully caught up.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who made the expected progress in reading and writing was above average but it was significantly below average in mathematics. Too few pupils made more than expected progress in reading and mathematics to lift their attainment.
- The work in pupils' books since September shows that progress is improving in reading, writing and mathematics and in a range of other subjects as pupils become more confident and self-assured learners.
- The school has focused on mathematics, and pupils' work in books since September shows improving progress as a result. Too few of the most-able pupils, however, are challenged sufficiently with more demanding work to enable them to consistently make the progress of which they are capable.
- Currently, writing remains a focus across the year groups to ensure that more pupils achieve the expectations for their age.
- Since September, there has been a focus on pupils' grammar, punctuation and spelling. The impact is evident in the increasingly accurate use and knowledge of grammar and punctuation seen in pupils' current work. Leaders have correctly identified, however, that spelling remains weak and plans are in place to develop pupils' skills in this area.
- Since September there has been greater promotion of reading across the school. In Year 3 and Year 4, there are more opportunities for pupils to read to adults and reading challenges have been introduced. The most-able readers enjoy a wide range of texts and can talk with enthusiasm about favourite authors and styles of writing, giving considered reasons for their opinions, and read aloud with fluency and expression.
- As in mathematics, too few of the most-able pupils achieve to their capabilities in reading and writing. Expectations are not always high enough. Currently, the most-able pupils in all year groups do respond well to challenges when they are presented with them, which is helping them to make faster progress.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils currently in the school is, as with other pupils, uneven across classes and subjects. In 2015, the gap in attainment between this group and that of other pupils in the school and other pupils nationally narrowed. The school's current information shows that there is a significant gap in the proportion currently working at the expectation for their age when compared with others in the school. Senior leaders, including governors, are taking determined action to tackle this. All staff now know who the disadvantaged pupils are in their class, information they did not previously have prior to September. Teachers have action plans and accountability for the progress of disadvantaged pupils in their classes. The impact of the use of the additional funding is now being monitored very closely to ensure it is making a difference for pupils.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are making similar progress as others, which means that it is uneven across the school but improving. The proportion of these pupils currently working at the expectations for their age is considerably below that of other pupils. The new leader for special educational needs has quickly put in place actions to tackle previous weaknesses in the provision, including training for all staff. It is too soon to see the full impact of this skilled work on pupils' outcomes.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	118444
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	10012298

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	483
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Nicole Caulfield (interim executive headteacher)
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 352620
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.riverview-junior.co.uk">www.riverview-junior.co.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:headteacher@riverview-junior.kent.sch.uk">headteacher@riverview-junior.kent.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4–5 June 2014

## Information about this school

- Riverview is larger than the average-sized junior school.
- Most pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is below average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability 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 meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school provides a daily breakfast club.
- The school is currently led by an interim executive headteacher, appointed in July 2015, who is also the headteacher of the infant school on the same site, an interim deputy headteacher appointed in October 2015, and an interim head of school who was appointed in April 2016. The leader of special educational needs was appointed in April 2016 and had previously been assistant special educational needs leader since September 2015. The school is also currently supported by a local leader of education, who is headteacher at Culverstone Green Primary School. The substantive headteacher retired in April 2015.



## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 21 lessons, many of which were joint observations with the interim executive headteacher or the interim head of school.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their learning and looked at the work in pupils' books. They observed pupils at break- and lunchtime and asked them for their views on the school. Inspectors also talked to pupils about reading and listened to some pupils read.
- Meetings were held with the interim executive headteacher, the interim head of school, the local leader of education, other staff with key leadership responsibilities, governors and the local authority school improvement adviser.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including: the school's own check on its performance and the quality of teaching; improvement plans; information on pupils' attainment and progress; and records relating to attendance, behaviour and safeguarding.
- Inspectors looked at the 80 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, which included 33 written comments, and spoke to some parents at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 52 questionnaires returned by staff and 50 returned by pupils.

## Inspection team

Margaret Coussins, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Jenner	Ofsted Inspector



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