

Riders Junior School

Kingsclere Avenue, Leigh Park, Havant, Hampshire PO9 4RY

Inspection dates	4–5 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Strong leadership has transformed many elements of the school since the previous inspection. In particular, good teaching ensures that pupils' attitudes to learning are now extremely positive.
- All staff share the high ambition of leaders, including governors, to ensure that every pupil succeeds academically and socially.
- Pupils' keenness to learn and good teaching throughout the school mean that all groups are making good progress from their starting points.
- The school's work to meet the particular personal needs of its pupils ensures that they are safe, happy and enjoy school. Behaviour is good.
- The curriculum is interesting and engaging, so pupils enjoy learning and are keen to succeed.
- Teachers use the school's new assessment system well to match work to the specific needs of different pupils. Teachers quickly identify any individuals who are in danger of falling behind and give them suitable extra help.
- Teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills very well. This supports the good progress they make in many other areas.
- All staff maintain a calm working ethos in lessons. They make clear their high expectations of work and behaviour, and pupils try hard to meet these.
- Pupils get on well together, collaborate effectively in their work, and are very tolerant and considerate of others. They understand and respect British values.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils' progress in a range of subjects is hampered by weaknesses in their presentation, handwriting and spelling. Teachers do not stress these aspects enough, or use homework systematically to involve parents in their children's education.
- The tracking of the progress of different groups of pupils is very cumbersome using the school's assessment system. This is particularly the case for the most able.
- Pupils' knowledge of the range of cultures in this country and overseas is weak.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching, and hence pupils' progress, by:
 - insisting that pupils take more care with their presentation
 - raising pupils' spelling skills and ensuring that they use them more consistently in their writing
 - insisting that pupils join their handwriting consistently by the end of Year 4
 - having a more consistent approach to setting out work in mathematics, and checking that pupils follow this
 - making more systematic use of homework to extend pupils' learning and to engage parents more in their children's schooling.

- Give pupils more opportunities to learn about the variety of cultures in modern Britain and in the wider world.

- Refine the school's assessment system so that leaders can track the progress of different groups more efficiently, particularly for the most-able pupils.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The leaders and governors have worked very effectively with colleagues to improve the quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Despite the disruption caused by a substantial building programme, and many changes of staff, a strong team ethos pervades the work of the school. Staff are united in striving to do the best they can for the pupils.
- Central to the improvements that staff have made has been a relentless concentration on promoting pupils' positive attitudes to learning. A common approach and a common vocabulary help staff and pupils to talk about which learning 'muscles' pupils are using in a particular task. Pupils' understanding of how to learn, and of what they need to do to be a successful learner, are now exceptionally clear. These were major weaknesses at the last inspection. Pupils are keen to do well, try hard and are very positive about school.
- Leaders have promoted a consistency of approach by all teachers to their practice that has been a major factor in improvements. Leaders check how well staff work, concentrating on how they help pupils to learn, and provide clear advice and support to help them improve. Teachers are set targets for their performance, and supported in meeting them, including through extra training in particular aspects of their practice. Formal management of teachers' performance ensures that teachers are suitably rewarded for meeting their targets.
- A focus for much of the school's work has been to ensure that pupils' academic and social opportunities are maximised. Governors and staff are ambitious for pupils and work hard with their families and outside agencies to ensure that any potential barriers to achievement are identified and addressed.
- The school has developed its curriculum well in line with new national requirements. A concentration on the key areas of English and mathematics has improved achievement. This has been in parallel with exciting opportunities across other subjects that engage pupils' interest and support their progress. Visits to a variety of places extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, as well as generating an enthusiasm for learning. A good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs complements work in class and is very popular with pupils. Staff, pupils and parents show particular enthusiasm for the annual dance project, 'Rock Challenge'.
- The school has worked effectively with the local authority to implement a system of tracking pupils' progress in line with new government regulations for assessing pupils 'without levels'. Teachers make good use of the information to check on individuals' progress and to ensure that they address any issues promptly. Leaders have made good use of the information to check on the achievement of different groups. However, as the system is not computer-based, this process is cumbersome and takes a lot of staff time. It is particularly difficult to gain an overview of the progress of the most-able pupils. The school has already identified this problem, and is in the process of adopting a computer-based system to make the procedure more efficient.
- The school generally promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils understand and respect British values such as tolerance and the rule of law. A trip to the Houses of Parliament, as well as the elections they hold for the school council, contribute to a good understanding of democracy. Pupils are tolerant of others and value diversity; they are proud of the support they provide to pupils in Tanzania, for example. However, their understanding of the variety of cultures in modern Britain, as well as in the wider world, is hazy, and this is not developed systematically enough.
- The school has made good use of pupil premium funding to support eligible pupils. Carefully tailored academic support has raised their achievement, and a variety of initiatives helps to ensure that these pupils are fully included in the life of the school, including after-school clubs and breakfast club. Other initiatives successfully support the well-being, personal development and emotional needs of these pupils.
- Sports premium is used well and has extended the skills of staff in teaching physical education, as well as increasing the range of after-school clubs and providing more equipment. The school has evaluated the impact carefully, and can show an increased participation in physical activities by pupils, as well as improved levels of fitness in a sample of pupils who were tested 'before' and 'after' the initiative.
- The local authority has provided good support to the school, particularly in developing the role of the governing body, challenging and verifying the school's own evaluations, and developing new assessment systems.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have developed good systems to give them a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governing body is able to provide a good mix of support and challenge to staff,

based on this information. Governors are determined to keep on improving the school and to make it the heart of the local community so that all pupils have the same good opportunities to succeed. The governors keep a careful eye on spending and evaluate its effectiveness well. For example, they know the impact of the pupil premium and the extra money for developing pupils' physical education.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has very good procedures to protect pupils and makes keeping them safe a high priority. It is particularly vigilant in checking on the well-being of pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Strong links are made with parents as well as with outside agencies to make sure that all pupils are safe, and that the school responds quickly and decisively when issues arise. Training is frequent and regular so that all staff and governors keep abreast of current regulations and requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teachers are very successful in generating a positive approach to learning in pupils. The approach is consistent from class to class, and in assemblies, so pupils have a common vocabulary to discuss their own approach to learning, and what will make them successful.
- Teachers' positive relationships with pupils, the establishment of clear routines and adults' calm approach to any problems mean that classes are purposeful places of learning where pupils are keen to do well, work hard and get on well together.
- Teachers make effective use of their good understanding of pupils' existing achievements and their knowledge of them as people to set work that is challenging, manageable and interesting. This strongly supports the good progress pupils make. The most-able pupils make good progress because they are given more difficult work and challenged to extend themselves. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are given easier work that is still challenging at their level, and adults give them extra help when appropriate.
- Teachers are very effective at involving pupils in lessons. Lively presentations, often clarifying explanations using interactive whiteboards, hold pupils' attention and maintain their interest. Teachers give pupils lots of opportunities to work together and to discuss their work together in a structured way. This has a very positive effect on pupils' engagement with tasks, their learning, especially their speaking and listening skills, and their good collaborative skills.
- Teachers make good use of the extra adults in class to support pupils' learning. In particular, teaching assistants work with teachers in monitoring pupils' ongoing progress, intervening quickly to address misconceptions or correct mistakes, and challenging pupils to improve their work.
- Teachers give pupils clear feedback about how they are getting on, both verbally and in marking their books. The work in their books shows clearly that pupils respond positively to their teachers' advice, and improve their work accordingly.
- Teachers have high expectations of the content of pupils' work and of their behaviour. This can be seen, for example, in the increasing sophistication and complexity of pupils' writing. However, staff are not consistent in insisting that pupils present their work neatly, write in a joined hand and spell common words accurately. A lack of neatness and an inconsistent approach to setting out calculations in mathematics also slows pupils' progress in that subject.
- Teachers set regular homework for reading and spelling. However, there is not a systematic approach to using homework to extend pupils' learning in other areas, or to involving parents in their children's learning.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. It is particularly effective in keeping a careful track of the well-being of any pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Strong liaison with a variety of outside agencies supports this work well.
- A lot of effort goes into making good links with parents and helping them to be involved in school life and in their children's learning. Parents particularly praise the efforts of the home-school link workers in making this process effective. The provision of trips out in the holidays for parents and pupils is just one example of the school's work.

- The school also employs several staff who have a specific remit to support pupils' behaviour, attendance and their social and emotional development in the school. This is effective in ensuring that pupils are able to cope with the routine upsets of everyday life, and so are ready to learn in class.
- The school puts an enormous effort into improving attendance, and this has risen since the last inspection, but still remains below average. Significant improvements have been made in the attendance of pupils who previously had very high absence rates.
- Pupils rightly feel safe in school and have learned how to keep themselves and their friends safe in different situations. They understand about different kinds of bullying and how this differs from other misbehaviour. They are adamant that they would quickly tell an adult if they or a classmate had a problem, and are confident that adults would deal with the situation quickly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils get on well together and cooperate well when required. They are keen to learn and enjoy school. They move around the building sensibly and are polite and friendly. A group of Year 6 pupils stressed how much behaviour around the school had improved in the last two years.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning have improved considerably since the last inspection, and underpin their much-improved progress. Pupils are keen to learn and concentrate well, listening attentively to adults or to each other. They tackle difficult work with increasing confidence and show resilience when they are puzzled or make mistakes. Pupils take a pride in their success and work hard to achieve it.
- There are many pupils in the school who sometimes have trouble in conforming to the adults' high expectations of behaviour. A wide range of support is in place to help these pupils cope when there are problems, and skilled extra adults often intervene sensitively but firmly so that disruption to the learning of others is minimised. Over time, there is clear evidence that the behaviour of such pupils improves and they are able to take a full part in lessons and make good progress in their learning.
- Good behaviour continues in the school's popular breakfast club. A variety of engaging activities draws pupils in, as does the prospect of breakfast. This is having a positive impact on the attendance of some pupils. A good level of skilled supervision helps maintain a calm atmosphere, and support for those pupils who sometimes struggle to conform ensures a positive social occasion and a happy start to the day.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- The progress of pupils is good, including in reading, writing and mathematics. This has grown steadily since the last inspection, and was consistent over most classes last year, and remains so throughout the school in this academic year to date. Overall standards remain below average, because of pupils' overall low starting points, but attainment is improving. This good progress is evident in the increasing complexity and sophistication shown in pupils' writing and in their reasoning in mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils, a majority in the school, make the same good progress as others, and often make better progress because of the good support they get. Their attainment still lags behind that of others, but the gap is closing. A large number of disadvantaged pupils in the school have special educational needs or disability. Those disadvantaged pupils who do not have special educational needs or disability reach the same standards as other pupils who do not have special educational needs or disability.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability make good progress. The school is careful to tailor tasks carefully to their abilities and provides support that is well matched to their particular needs. Skilled extra adults contribute positively to their good progress, both through the extra help and challenge they provide in class, and in the specific, 'bespoke' support they provide to individuals or small groups outside the classroom.
- The most-able pupils make good progress because they are challenged by more difficult work, and they are keen to make the most of their abilities.
- Pupils' progress in English and mathematics and, to some extent, in other subjects, is slowed by a number of factors. Standards of presentation are weak and, even by Year 6, many pupils still do not join their handwriting. Pupils have relatively weak spelling skills, but also make too many careless mistakes. In mathematics, the setting out of calculations is not consistent between classes, and slapdash setting-out can lead to unnecessary mistakes. Teachers do not always insist on the same high standards in these aspects of pupils' work as they do elsewhere.

School details

Unique reference number	115908
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10012265

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	231
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Carolyn Owens
Headteacher	Lisa Dunning
Telephone number	02392 475 342
Website	www.ridersschools.co.uk
Email address	adminoffice@riders-jun.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	30–31 January 2014

Information about this school

- This junior school is of an average size for a primary school. It is in the process of expanding to take in three forms of entry, and current classes are relatively small as numbers are growing.
- The school is in a 'hard' federation with the adjoining infant school, and they share an executive headteacher, a governing body, office staff and some other members of staff.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- Almost all pupils are White British, with a very small number from other ethnic heritages. Hardly any speak English as an additional language.
- About a third of the pupils have special educational needs or disability, a very high proportion.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is very high, at around two thirds of the number on roll. The pupil premium is extra government funding to help the education of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, or children who are looked after by the local authority.
- A major building programme has been completed recently, preparing the school for three-form entry. There have been considerable changes in staffing, with a new executive headteacher in place since the previous inspection, and several other new staff appointed.
- There is a pre-school provision on the site, which is managed privately. This is inspected and reported upon separately.
- The school and its federation partner run a breakfast club for their own pupils.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in most classes. They also observed pupils around the school, in assembly and at break times.
- The team analysed pupils' work in their books and on display. Several pupils were heard to read.
- Discussions were held with staff, representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils. An inspector discussed the school's work with a representative of the local authority.
- The team considered the views of 32 parents who contributed to the online survey, Parent View, including some written comments. Inspectors also checked the school's own recent survey of parental opinion, and replies to the Ofsted staff questionnaire.
- A variety of documentation was examined, including that relating to safeguarding, as well as the school's evaluation of its own effectiveness, and records of pupils' progress.

Inspection team

Steven Hill, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Deirdre Crutchley

Ofsted Inspector

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Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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