

Ripon Cathedral Church of England Primary School

Priest Lane, Ripon, North Yorkshire HG4 1LT

Inspection dates	19–20 May 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders, staff and governors have been successful in their shared passion to drive improvement in all aspects of the school's work. They have also tackled the areas identified for improvement at the last inspection successfully.
- The quality of teaching is now good. This has had a marked impact on the progress pupils make in their learning, which is also good.
- Improved regular systems to check pupils' achievements are used well by teachers to provide activities that move pupils on briskly from their starting points in lessons.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress. Gaps between their achievement and that of other pupils are narrow or non-existent.
- Actions taken over the past two years have transformed the early years. Children make good progress and are well prepared for Year 1.
- The good curriculum is enriched by many exciting visits and projects that bring alive subjects like science, the arts, geography, history and Spanish.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are outstanding. Pupils, from the earliest ages, readily embrace the school's rules of 'be safe, be responsible and be respectful'.
- Pupils enjoy school, are safe and attend regularly. Their attitudes to learning and towards each other and adults are first-rate.
- Partnerships with parents are strong and virtually all parents are highly positive about the education and care their children receive.
- The skilled governing body holds leaders to account robustly for the impact of their work. They ensure that the school's vision of 'pursuing excellence surrounded by faith and love' is lived out day by day.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While the progress of the most able pupils has hastened since the last inspection, occasionally teachers do not plan work that is sufficiently stretching to make sure they always move on rapidly in their learning.
- The quality of teaching is not yet outstanding. Teachers do not apply the school's marking policy as consistently in mathematics as they do in English. Consequently, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do improve their work.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Drive the quality of teaching, learning and assessment to outstanding so that all pupils achieve their very best by ensuring that:
 - teachers plan activities that are always sufficiently stretching for the most able
 - teachers apply the school's marking and feedback policy in mathematics as well as they do in English.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher's and governors' resolute commitment to raise expectations of all and to drive the school forward following the last inspection has been successful. All aspects of the school's work have improved. This has resulted in improvements in the quality of teaching, the accuracy of teachers' assessment and its use in teachers' planning, and in pupils' progress across the school.
- Improvement over the past year has been particularly rapid as actions taken since the inspection have become embedded in the day-to-day work of the school. Improvements at key stage 1 in 2015 have been built upon. Previous gaps between the achievement of girls and boys and of disadvantaged pupils compared to that of others have narrowed well and virtually disappeared. Leadership, the quality of teaching, provision and children's progress in the early years have improved markedly since the last inspection.
- Pupils who have special needs or disability achieve as well as their peers because of the careful attention teachers pay to their individual needs in lessons and the additional care and support they receive when they need some guidance or help.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness, its strengths and areas that need to be improved further. Carefully crafted plans and underpinning actions have been developed to tackle weaker areas. Leaders' rigorous and regular monitoring and evaluation programme ensures that actions are checked regularly for impact.
- Along with senior leaders, subject leaders are fully involved in monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility. This represents significant improvement from the time of the last inspection. Subject leaders report how they value their increased involvement in the work of the school and how they are held to account robustly for their work. Good training and development opportunities, including visiting outstanding schools, have built teachers' understanding of what outstanding teaching looks like and of improving their own practice.
- A culture of trust, care and respect pervades the school. This contributes to the development of pupils' outstanding behaviour and personal qualities and to their excellent social, moral, spiritual and cultural development. The broad curriculum, exciting visits out of school, the interesting topics pupils study and the range of community work that they undertake promote these outstanding aspects further.
- The school's Christian ethos along with the curriculum and acts of collective worship ensure pupils are well prepared for life beyond school and in embracing the values at the heart of British society. Visits to the Houses of Parliament, and the election of school councillors and school 'ambassadors' enhance pupils' understanding of values such as community, democracy, respect for others' views and the rule of law.
- Leaders make good use of the additional government funding available. Judicious use of the pupil premium for disadvantaged pupils has led to good improvement in these pupils' progress over time. The school sports funding is very well used. Not only has the use of a specialist sports apprentice improved the skills of teachers but it has also provided an increased range of high-quality sporting opportunities for pupils. Pupils thrive on the activities available and achieve well in them.
- Local authority and Diocesan school improvement staff have provided sharper challenge to leaders. Their evaluation of the school's work is accurate and areas recommended for improvement acted on effectively. The headteacher has valued the support from leaders in the North Star Teaching Alliance highly, particularly in verifying judgements about the quality of the school's work and to learn from best practice. This support, along with support from local primary school leaders, has also provided an external check on the accuracy of the pupil assessment procedures that the school has developed.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance is strong. Governors utilise their wide range of skills to hold leaders to account well and to support them in the shared ambitions for the school. Governors have continued to hone their skills since the last inspection. They demand and receive a wide range of performance information to check that pupils are achieving as well as they should in all subjects and provide significant challenge when aspects are not as good as they should be. Governors have ensured that the arrangements for managing the performance of staff are robust and include measurable targets for staff to strive for and meet. This was a weakness at the last inspection.
 - Governors make sure that all their statutory duties are met. For example, they make sure the government's additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and sports funding are used to good effect. They also keep a careful check on the school's website to make sure information for parents is fully compliant with statutory requirements. Governors' use of pupils' and parents' views about the school is

helping to secure improvement in areas identified by them and in improving the quality of partnerships with parents.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Staff and governors are well trained in all aspects of child protection. They have a good understanding of risks to pupils' safety and are vigilant in reporting concerns of any kind. Recruitment procedures for staff are robust, as are risk assessments for in-school activities and the many visits pupils make out of school. Strong partnerships with agencies like the police and children's social care ensure timely multi-agency support in times of need.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Previous weaknesses in teaching, identified at the last inspection, have been tackled well. For example, teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are much higher. Training, alongside visits to outstanding schools and the sharing of good practice in school, has contributed to these higher expectations and to the improvement in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. It has also led to ongoing improvements in pupils' achievements across the subjects of the national curriculum and particularly in their reading, writing, mathematics and the modern foreign language, Spanish.
- Teaching is well planned with activities that capture pupils' interest, enthusiasm and participation. Pupils' attitude to learning is exemplary across the school. This is not least due to the high-quality relationships developed between staff and pupils and the cordial relationships developed between pupils themselves.
- Teachers have secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. This, together with the use of effective probing questioning, builds pupils' skills and knowledge, challenges pupils' understanding and enables them to think things out for themselves. Effective marking and oral and written feedback on pupils' work usually enables pupils to understand what they are doing well and what they need to improve. Pupils report that they value the time provided to correct their mistakes or develop aspects of their work further. Feedback in English is stronger than that in mathematics.
- Stronger, more regular systems for assessing pupils' learning in lessons means that teachers have a good understanding of how well pupils are achieving. Teachers usually set work and activities that are pitched at the right level to move pupils on quickly from their current abilities. Occasionally, teachers miss opportunities to set activities that build on the most able pupils' previously acquired skills quickly enough. When this happens these pupils make steady rather than rapid progress in their learning.
- Once pupils are identified as at risk of falling behind, interventions and support activities are quickly put in place. These activities are time limited and leaders capture pupils' starting points and end points to make sure they are making the required difference to pupils' progress.
- The role of teaching assistants has been developed since the last inspection. Teachers usually deploy them to support learning effectively, in the classroom or in small-group activities for pupils at risk of falling behind.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. From an early age pupils develop the personal, social and moral qualities that will stand them in good stead as they move through school and as they become active participants in their local community and beyond. Pupils are highly considerate of each other's needs and feelings and are respectful of adults and visitors alike.
- Pupils develop into rounded, caring and cooperative members of the school community. Their self-confidence is developed through the nurturing atmosphere in school and the many opportunities they have to take on roles of responsibility. Science and digital leaders, youth leaders, school councillors and school ambassadors enthuse and inform others about important issues, and seek their views.
- Pupils' outstanding spiritual and cultural development is achieved through the way the school embraces the guiding principles of the Christian faith and the values inherent in modern Britain today. Pupils have a good understanding of different faiths and cultures. This is often through direct experiences of visiting places of worship, such as a Sikh temple or mosque, as well as regular work in their own local cathedral.
- Topics like 'Magnificent Mexico' and 'Incredible India' energise pupils' interest in, and understanding of, civilisations and cultures across the world. Their links with two schools and a university in Segovia, Spain, and visits and exchanges there add greatly to their understanding of Spanish children's lives. This work and the Spanish teaching from the early years also supports them in learning the Spanish language.

- Pupils are well taught about how to be safe, stay safe and be healthy. Healthy meals, science projects and the ample range of sporting activities in school and after school promote pupils' good health successfully. Pupils, their parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the way the school works to keep pupils safe, including from social media and the internet. Pupils have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying and say incidents are very rare in school because of the way they are taught to 'look after one another and be kind'. They are confident that any adult will resolve any issues like temporary falling out between friends or an unkind word here or there.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are polite and friendly. They behave impeccably in and out of the classroom. They play sensibly together on the field and yard at play times and socialise successfully and maturely with each other and with adults in the dining hall at lunchtimes.
- Pupils enjoy school. They report this to be the case in the Ofsted 'pupil survey' and it is evident through the above-average attendance rates of all pupils and groups of pupils across the school. Pupils come to school on time, smartly dressed, and wear their uniform with pride. Pupils of all ages were seen to settle quickly into their lessons without fuss and eager to learn. They maintain their composure and very positive attitudes to learning throughout the day. This means that no time is wasted in lessons so learning time is always used productively.
- Incidents of poor behaviour are very rare. Those that do occur are meticulously recorded and reported to governors and parents. Pupils report that they understand and follow the three school rules, 'be safe, be responsible and be respectful', which helps them to keep focused on making the right choices.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics has improved since the last inspection. Their progress has hastened in the last year particularly because of teachers' higher expectations of what pupils can do, the embedding of the improvements in the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment.
- Improvements seen in pupils' achievements in key stage 1 assessments in 2015 have been built upon. Observations of learning, assessment information and pupils' work in books showcase the wide curriculum studied and show that, over time, pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting points.
- Virtually all Year 2 pupils are making the progress expected in reading, writing and mathematics and over a third are exceeding age-related expectations. There is a similarly strong pattern in Year 5 and Year 6 where a much greater proportion of pupils are exceeding age-related expectations than that found in the previous year. A higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils than other pupils are exceeding expectations; this represents good improvement from the time of the last inspection. Occasionally, the most able pupils are not sufficiently stretched in lessons to ensure they make the best possible progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability are supported emotionally, personally and educationally to make similarly good progress to their peers. Work is well matched to their needs and additional support provided to help when pupils are faced with challenges in their learning.
- Pupils have many opportunities to develop their reading skills. They develop into competent and fluent readers over time. Stimulating books like *The Hobbit* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* tantalise pupils' interest in reading for pleasure and interest. Home-school reading activities supplement the range of opportunities in class and parents can see their children's progress clearly. Improvements to the way the school teaches phonics (letters and the sounds that they make) mean that pupils are able to sound out unfamiliar words successfully as they develop their competencies and skills.
- Pupils achieve well in subjects like geography, history, the arts and design technology because of the wide range of visits to exciting venues such as Whitby, Lindisfarne or Beamish and the accompanying practical work that brings each topic to life and whets their appetite for learning.

Early years provision

is good

- Provision in the early years has improved significantly over the past two years due to improvements in leadership, the quality of teaching and the creation of an integrated early years setting instead of separate Nursery and Reception provision. Staff work closely together to plan and provide a rich array of experiences that entices children to take an enthusiastic and full part in their learning and play.
- Children make good progress from their starting points in all areas of learning. Previous weaknesses in

boys' skills are being tackled well by ensuring activities are interesting and engaging for them. Children enter the Nursery with broadly typical knowledge and skills. The proportion who reach a good level of development has improved significantly and is above that found nationally. Current assessments indicate that nearly 80% of children are currently working at or above age-related expectations.

- Good-quality teaching and teachers' higher expectations of what children can do is driving improvement in children's learning and development effectively. Regular checks on how well children are achieving helps staff to alter provision when things are not quite as good as they should be. For example, recent assessments have shown that children's understanding of space, shape and measures is not as well developed as their reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. Carefully planned activities are now moving children on well.
- Improvements in the way that reading is taught mean that children now get a good grounding in understanding sounds and letters and this has helped their early reading and writing skills.
- Children are challenged to think for themselves and develop a curiosity and thirst for knowledge and understanding. The question book provides a space to ask those difficult questions that are hard to answer and children, staff and families delight in trying to find the solutions.
- Staff are well trained and vigilant in keeping children safe. Routines and safety indoors and out are secure and welfare requirements met.
- High-quality, trusting relationships developed between staff and children ensure that children's emotional and personal needs are understood and well met. Children develop into happy, confident and assured young people who are willing to 'have a go' and concentrate on chosen or teacher-directed tasks successfully. This was seen in the way a group of Nursery children tackled their money problems with diligence and enthusiasm, and with great success.
- Partnerships with parents are strong; a warm welcome awaits them when they bring their children to school. Parents are active supporters of their children's learning through the home-school reading programme. A 'learning wall' at the entrance and children's learning journals showcase the broad range of activities their children initiate or take part in and capture the good progress they are making.
- Children develop the personal qualities, very good attitudes to learning and positive behaviours that sustain them well as they move through the school. Pupils are friendly, cooperative, take turns, are persistent in their approach to tackling activities and achieve well. They are well prepared for their steps into Year 1.

School details

Unique reference number	121581
Local authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	10011996

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	193
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Steve Hatcher
Headteacher	Darren Dudman
Telephone number	01765 602 355
Website	www.riponcathedralschool.org.uk
Email address	admin@riponcathedral.n-yorks.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 March 2014

Information about this school

- Ripon Cathedral Church of England Primary School is a slightly below average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is below that found nationally (this is additional government funding for pupils entitled to free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority).
- A below average proportion of pupils has been identified as having special educational needs or disability that requires additional school support. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is similar to that found nationally.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school's website is compliant with the Department for Education's statutory requirements.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 12 lessons or part lessons, three of which were observed jointly with the headteacher. While in classrooms inspectors talked to pupils, heard pupils read and looked at pupils' work books.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, a local authority school adviser and eight members of the governing body. Telephone discussions were held with the Diocesan school improvement partner and with the leader of the early years, who was in Spain with a group of pupils. They also spoke formally to two groups of pupils on the second day of the inspection.
- The views of 70 parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account. The 52 written comments made by parents were also reviewed. The findings from 14 staff questionnaires and 49 pupil questionnaires were also considered. Discussions were held with a number of parents when they brought their children into school.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation including information on pupils' progress, school improvement plans and the minutes of governing body meetings as well as records of their monitoring activities. Key documents regarding the safeguarding of pupils were checked including risk assessments, recruitment files and the school's safeguarding policy.

Inspection team

Margaret Farrow, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Mary Lanovy-Taylor

Ofsted Inspector

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