

Rockingham Primary School

Rockingham Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 1AJ

Inspection dates

14–15 December 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
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, supported well by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders, has transformed the school since the last inspection. Leaders have introduced robust systems to every aspect of school life. This ensures that all pupils receive a good standard of education.
- The much-changed governing body is a strength of the school. Governors discharge their duties with rigour and enthusiasm. They are well aware of the school's strengths and future areas for development.
- Despite staff changes, the quality of teaching and use of assessment are consistently good across the school. Staff receive high-quality guidance and training from senior leaders and also from the trust.
- The school has a caring ethos that values pupils and families alike. Staff know families well and pupils feel safe and secure.
- Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good. They work hard in lessons and take pride in their work. Pupils trust and respect staff and get on with each other well. However, leaders should ensure that attendance for different groups of pupils, particularly those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds, is closer to or above the national average.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups in reading, writing and mathematics. Children in the early years make particularly good progress in writing. However, in key stages 1 and 2 some pupils do not punctuate their writing as well as they should.
- The deputy headteacher has a very clear overview of the progress all pupils are making in reading, writing and mathematics. She uses this knowledge to work closely with other staff to ensure that any pupils who are falling behind are quickly given the support they need to catch up.
- Some pupils in key stage 1 are not given sufficiently challenging texts in order to extend their vocabulary and deepen their comprehension skills.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their different starting points. Effective teaching assistants make a particularly valuable contribution to the progress of these pupils.
- Parents are supportive of the improvements made at the school since the last inspection. They say that communication is good and that expectations of pupils are high.
- Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including sports clubs, musical instrument tuition, educational visits/visitors and residential visits.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning and thus raise pupils' achievement by:
 - ensuring that pupils are given more frequent opportunities to widen their vocabulary and deepen comprehension skills
 - ensuring that pupils, particularly those in key stage 1, read texts that are suitably challenging
 - ensuring that more pupils punctuate their writing more accurately.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by ensuring that staff work more closely with pupils and families to improve the attendance rates of different groups of pupils, particularly those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since the headteacher joined the school in September 2014, she has transformed Rockingham. There have been eight new teachers, a reorganised senior leadership team, a new curriculum and a new governing body, to support and challenge the work of the school.
- Well supported by senior leaders, the headteacher has implemented robust and rigorous systems to monitor and evaluate every key aspect of school life. As a result of this, the quality of teaching and assessment is much improved and pupils now make much better progress in their learning than at the time of the last inspection.
- The deputy headteacher has a strong understanding of assessment information across the school. She uses this information effectively to set targets for teachers and to ensure that any pupil who is falling behind quickly gets the support they need in order to catch up. This is particularly evident for pupils who are eligible for pupil premium funding.
- Leaders review all aspects of the school's work thoroughly and know the school very well. The school improvement plan provides an effective guide to school improvement. It concentrates on appropriate aspects and is well understood by staff and governors. The plan includes clear criteria to help leaders and governors evaluate the impact of the actions taken. Timelines are also included so that all know what will be done and when. All are clear about their responsibilities for bringing the plan to fruition. The school is well placed to continue to improve in the future.
- Subject leaders and those leaders responsible for the provision for early years and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are also effective. They are knowledgeable and passionate about their areas of responsibility, and have ensured that pupils benefit from a broad, balanced and stimulating curriculum.
- Staff members have full confidence in the leadership team and say that they are fully supported and cared for well. Training provided by the school and the trust for staff is appropriate and well received. As a result of this, staff members are up to date with key educational issues and are keen to further develop their knowledge and skills.
- Leaders have developed links with other schools within the trust. This enables them to compare the work of Rockingham with that of others and to learn from each other. This also provides good opportunities for staff to moderate pupils' work to ensure that the assessment information available to them is accurate.
- The trust has provided regular and appropriate support for the school. This has included work to support leaders, and curriculum and assessment development, as well as sporting opportunities for pupils.
- There is a robust system in place for managing the performance of teachers. Challenging targets are set that are reviewed regularly and only when the targets have been successfully achieved are pay rises awarded.
- The school is fully committed to providing equal opportunities for all and the curriculum is effectively modified to meet the pupils' needs. Pupils enjoy a good range of extra-curricular activities offered by the school and they look forward to the annual

residential visit in Year 6.

- Leaders make good use of pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, in a variety of ways. The most successful approach for the school has been after-school 'one-to-one sessions' in reading, writing or mathematics. This has resulted in diminishing differences in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and the attainment of other pupils nationally.
- Additional primary school sports funding has been used successfully to employ a specialist to train staff, and to allow over 90 pupils to participate in a range of inter-school competitions, through the 'Trust Summer and Winter Cups'. These competitions include football, hockey, swimming and athletics. The funding has also been spent appropriately on new equipment, storage and playground markings so that more sport can be played on site.
- Leaders have ensured that there is a curriculum in place that promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils are therefore aware of British values and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- Governance is effective.
- Governors are passionate, knowledgeable and keen for the school to succeed.
- Governors audit aspects of their work, arrange relevant training and visit the school regularly to check how well it is performing. Recent visits include meetings with the leaders responsible for the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, the early years provision and attendance.
- Governors have an accurate and comprehensive view of the school. They receive high-quality reports from the headteacher on key aspects of the school's work. They ask relevant and perceptive questions during meetings and now provide effective support and challenge to the school.
- Governors are fully involved in checking a range of school-improvement activities, especially in checking that the actions in the school improvement plan are carried out as they should be.
- The headteacher and governors together effectively track the impact of the additional funding the school receives. This includes the pupil premium, primary sport funding and funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- There are well-established, robust systems in place to ensure that pupils are kept safe.
- Staff receive regular training and regular reviews are carried out to check that this remains the case. As a result, all staff and governors understand and follow the school's procedures rigorously.
- Safeguarding is given high priority by leaders and staff create a secure and safe environment where pupils' welfare is important. Consequently, parents know their

children are kept safe and pupils feel safe and secure in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment has improved since the last inspection, and is now typically good across the school.
- Teachers use the school's assessment and tracking system well to ensure that most of the work in reading, writing and mathematics is sufficiently challenging. They closely monitor individual pupils and are quick to offer extra support should any fall behind. Groups of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and/or have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are tracked particularly carefully.
- Pupils take pride in their work and present it well. Pupils talk readily about 'every piece of work being a proud piece'.
- Pupils work hard in a range of subjects and are keen to learn. This is because teachers plan lessons carefully to motivate, interest and challenge pupils in a wide range of subjects. For example, in a Year 5/6 mathematics lesson, pupils were enthusiastically working together when solving problems, using a range of graphs and charts.
- Pupils respond well to the feedback they are given about how to improve their work. As a result, pupils are clear as to what their targets are and what they should do next in order to progress further.
- Pupils enjoy working together in groups. This was particularly evident in a Year 4 science lesson, where groups of pupils were encouraged to predict which materials were conductors and insulators in electrical circuits. The teacher then skilfully challenged the pupils to explain their thinking before allowing the groups to test out their predictions.
- Phonics is taught well. Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and this helps the pupils to make good progress. Different groups of pupils enjoy and achieve well during these sessions.
- Teachers ensure that the most able pupils are suitably challenged. As a result, these pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects.
- Homework activities are set regularly and cover a range of subjects. Pupils typically enjoy these activities and they are seen as valuable experiences, which the vast majority of pupils complete.
- Teachers do not always correct basic punctuation errors in their pupils' writing. As a result, some pupils repeatedly make basic errors, for example capital letters are missed for names and places, as are full stops at the end of sentences.
- Teachers do not consistently ensure that pupils in key stage 1 have sufficiently challenging texts to read. Consequently, a small minority of pupils are not able to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills as well as they should.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Staff know pupils and their families well. The family attendance leader has good links with those families who may, from time to time, require extra support. Parents engage well with workshops on topics, such as 'helping your child at home', and careers advice for those parents seeking employment. Pupils undoubtedly benefit from this support.
- Pupils overwhelmingly say that they feel safe and happy in school. In its curriculum and teaching methods, the school gives appropriate emphasis to a wide range of health and safety issues, including road safety and safety online.
- Pupils are adamant that there is no bullying in their school and they show a good understanding of the various forms that bullying can take. The recent introduction of the 'restorative justice' system is well understood by the pupils and they report that it is working well. This approach enables those who have been harmed to convey the impact of the harm to those responsible, and for those responsible to acknowledge this impact and take steps to put it right.
- Pupils are self-confident and have a good understanding of how to be successful learners. They say that the level of challenge in their work is 'just about right' and they also enjoy the challenge of being able to choose to complete harder work using the 'Step 1,2,3' approach adopted by the school. This positive attitude to learning has a good impact on the progress they make.
- The curriculum has been reviewed to help pupils develop a better understanding of British values. For example, in Year 5, pupils spoke knowledgably and enthusiastically about democracy and the rule of law.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school encourages pupils to raise money for charities through its 'Champions for change' programme, the most recent example of this being the Poppy Appeal.
- All pupils look smart in their school uniform and are punctual at the start of the day.
- The school runs a well-resourced and popular breakfast club that is enjoyed by many pupils including those from the early years. This enables the pupils to begin the day with a safe and healthy start.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils and their parents say that behaviour in the school is consistently good and good relationships are evident throughout the school.
- Pupils understand the school's expectations of behaviour and value the rewards they are given for good behaviour and hard work. Behaviour in classrooms, assemblies, around school and on the playground is typically good. There are very rare minor disruptions to learning and when these do occur they are dealt with very well by teachers and teaching assistants.

- There has been a sharp decrease in the incidence of poor behaviour over the last three years. The leader with responsibility for overseeing behaviour keeps comprehensive records of any incidents and analyses them closely for any patterns that may occur. As a result of this work, any potential repeats of misbehaviour are quickly identified and subsequently eradicated.
- Pupils respond well to adults' instructions and are polite and helpful. One pupil told an inspector that 'everyone helps everyone at Rockingham'. Pupils act in a mature fashion and are articulate and confident when talking to visitors.
- The good work the school carries out to improve pupils' attendance is starting to make a positive impact. At the time of the inspection, attendance rates were above the national average. However, they have been just below the average for the last three years. Leaders understand the need to ensure that they work effectively with all pupils, including those from non-disadvantaged backgrounds, to drive the attendance of different groups of pupils to above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The school's comprehensive, accurate assessment records, work in pupils' books and in lessons indicate that pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their various starting points in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result of this good progress, pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education.
- All pupils' achievement is tracked rigorously to ensure that they make the progress expected of them. Any pupils who fall behind, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are quickly identified and given the help they need in order to catch up.
- Pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, read regularly and typically make good progress in reading. Pupils demonstrated a passion for reading and talked to inspectors enthusiastically about their class novels, for example 'The Railway Children' in Year 4. However, some pupils in key stage 1 do not have sufficiently challenging texts to read. Consequently, they do not develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills as well as they could.
- Pupils' current progress in writing and mathematics is also good. The most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, are appropriately challenged to ensure they make the progress of which they are capable. However, some pupils do not punctuate their writing as well as they should.
- In 2016, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made less progress by the end of key stage 2 than they should in reading, writing and mathematics. However, this is untypical because previous years' results showed pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, made good progress in these subjects. Furthermore, current assessment information and work in pupils' books indicate that current progress is strong across the school, in a broad range of subjects.
- Leaders regularly moderate their assessments of pupils' achievement, in reading,

writing and mathematics, with other schools from the trust. This robust system ensures that the assessments are an accurate reflection of pupils' abilities and, therefore, the next steps in pupils' learning can be carefully planned for by teachers. Consequently, pupils, including the most able pupils make the progress they should.

- Pupils' outcomes in the early years and in the Year 1 phonics test have risen sharply over the last three years. Consequently, Rockingham pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, are now achieving better than other pupils nationally.
- Work in pupils' books indicates good progress is being made in a wide range of subjects. For example, in Year 6 pupils' books show particularly good progress in science.

Early years provision

Good

- Children enter the early years with a wide range of knowledge and skills. The links with local nurseries are improving and leaders have introduced a 'transition project', which is helping to ensure that the majority of children settle quickly and make rapid progress in the first half term.
- Attainment has improved sharply over the last three years with higher proportions of children, including disadvantaged children, achieving a good level of development compared to other pupils nationally in 2016.
- Staff have a clear and detailed knowledge of the learning of each individual. Assessments are carried out regularly and as a result, teachers and teaching assistants are clear as to what the next steps are in a child's learning. Parents regularly contribute to the assessment process and this helps staff to maintain up-to-date knowledge about each child.
- Children's progress in writing is good. For example, children who were able to write simple marks at the start of term now form letters correctly and some of the most able children write simple sentences. There are good opportunities for children to practise their writing. During the inspection, for example, a Post Office had been created in one of the classrooms and many children were practising and developing their writing skills.
- Leaders have ensured that children have a good range of appropriate learning activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The behaviour of children while completing these activities is good. This is because the activities are interesting and stimulating and the highly competent staff ask skilful questions in order to deepen children's knowledge and understanding.
- The quality of teaching provided by teachers and teaching assistants is consistently good and prepares children well for Year 1.
- Children work and play happily together. They enjoy school and develop positive attitudes to learning. They are very proud of their work and like to show it to others. For example, a group of children were very keen to show the inspectors Christmas trees they had drawn, using triangles and rectangles. Children learn to sit well and listen carefully when adults are talking with them.

- Adults work in a consistent way with the children. Safeguarding is effective and children are kept safe and secure in school. The quality of personal care is good. Parents are equally enthusiastic about provision in the early years as they are about provision in the rest of the school.

School details

Unique reference number	139805
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10023093

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	276
Appropriate authority	Academy trust
Chair	Christine Homer
Headteacher	Rebecca Steed
Telephone number	01536 203806
Website	www.rockinghamprimary.co.uk/
Email address	bursar@rockingham.northants-ecl.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 February 2015

Information about this school

- Rockingham Primary School is an academy school sponsored by the David Ross Education Trust.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish online.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- Children start the early years in a full-time Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five years old.
- The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those pupils who speak English as an additional language are broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed lessons in all year groups and examined a wide variety of pupils' books from a range of subjects. They were sometimes accompanied by senior leaders.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, subject and other leaders, a group of governors, and a representative from the trust. They spoke with pupils in groups, in lessons, around the school and listened to them read.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including minutes of governing body meetings, current assessment information provided by the school, the school development plan, plans written by the reading, writing and mathematics subject leaders and records relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors talked with parents before school, examined the results of 20 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and took into account a recent parental survey carried out by the school.

Inspection team

Peter Stonier, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Pete Strauss	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Green	Ofsted Inspector

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