

The Reddings Primary School

Bennetts End Road, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire HP3 8DX

Inspection dates

1–2 February 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Staffing turbulence and the rapid growth of the school in recent years have resulted in some inconsistency in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, standards have not been maintained consistently since the previous inspection.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard or above in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6 in 2016 was below the national average from pupils' individual starting points.
- Not enough pupils are attaining the higher standards by the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- The quality of teaching and learning, teacher's feedback to pupils, and the pride pupils take in their work, throughout the school, vary from year group to year group. This slows the rate of pupils' progress.
- While leaders accurately identify key areas where teachers need to improve, leaders' overall evaluation of the quality of teaching is overly positive. Leaders do not use their monitoring consistently enough to check that the improvements made, and the standards that they expect, have been achieved.
- Teachers do not use assessment information consistently enough to plan work that offers the correct provision, and right level of challenge for pupils. This slows learning, particularly for the most able pupils, and those who have the potential to achieve more.
- Governors are supportive of the school. However, they do not routinely check and challenge some aspects of the school's work, particularly leaders' monitoring of the quality of teaching, and the rate of pupils' progress over time.

The school has the following strengths

- Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good. Leaders make pupils' well-being a priority. Pastoral support for pupils is highly effective.
- Leaders and staff nurture positive and trusting relationships with parents. As a result, there are high levels of parental satisfaction with the school's work.
- Provision in the Nursery and Reception years are good. As a result, children have a good start to their primary education.
- There are some stronger examples of teaching, learning and assessment in the school, notably in key stage 2.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - securing high-quality teaching, learning and assessment for pupils over time, in each year group
 - monitoring teaching, learning and assessment more accurately so that they greater account is taken of the progress that pupils are achieving when making judgements about the quality of provision
 - ensuring that governors use their visits and assessment information more precisely to challenge leaders over the quality of provision in the school, and that they routinely review leaders' progress in improving standards.
- Improve teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - securing consistently good teaching and learning across the whole school, but particularly in key stage 1
 - ensuring that teachers use assessment information accurately to plan learning and activities which meet the needs of pupils, including the most able, so that they can attain the higher standards
 - making sure that pupils have frequent opportunities for extended writing, and applying their writing skills in different curriculum subjects, so that pupils' progress is more rapid
 - insisting that teachers use the school's agreed feedback policy consistently, and well, to support pupils to learn from their mistakes effectively in order to make more rapid progress
 - raising teachers' expectations of the presentation of pupils' work, so that pupils take greater pride in their work.
- Improve outcomes by:
 - raising standards of reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 and 2
 - continuing to quicken the progress that pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics, so that most pupils make good progress from their individual starting points
 - ensuring that more pupils achieve the expected standard in the phonics screening check by the end of year 1, so that these results are at least in line with the national average.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The resilient headteacher, over the last two years, in addition to managing the growth of the school, has spent a great deal of time resolving significant recruitment issues and has secured greater stability in staffing. Despite her ambition and commitment to providing professional development and support for new staff, this instability has resulted in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Consequently, this has led to a decline in the school's effectiveness. Pupils' outcomes have not been good enough. Pupils are not making good progress in all year groups.
- Experienced leaders are supporting new middle leaders to help them develop the skills they need to check pupils' learning and progress. They have established regular checks of teaching and learning, which are starting to make a difference to the quality of teaching. However, leaders do not yet focus enough on those aspects that will quicken pupils' progress so that they catch up and attain the standards that they should in reading, writing and mathematics. This is limiting the pace of improvement.
- Leaders' judgements of the overall quality of teaching across the school are overly positive. They have not been thorough enough in their checking, nor taken into account a wider view of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and the work in pupils' books. Leaders' feedback to teachers is not always followed up vigilantly to ensure that advice, and expectations, have been acted upon.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to enhance disadvantaged pupils' learning experiences. Support is put in place to overcome specific barriers to disadvantaged pupils' learning, specifically to support their pastoral, social and emotional needs. This is helping disadvantaged pupils to access their day-to-day work successfully. Consequently, disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress.
- The school provides pupils with a creative curriculum that is enhanced by aspects such as an Egyptian day, democracy day, young enterprise week and regular opportunities for parents to join their children in class during open days. The deputy headteacher's overhaul of the curriculum ensures good coverage of subjects. This also includes the chance for pupils to extend their understanding of British values so that they know what it means to be a good citizen in modern Britain. Despite the potential for the pupils to explore a variety of exciting topics through different curriculum subjects, pupils are not encouraged to use their writing skills in different contexts consistently enough.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is effectively used to ensure that pupils have access to a wide range of sporting activities, both in school and through extra-curricular clubs. Pupils say that they enjoy the additional clubs, including multi-sports, football and tag rugby. The teaching of physical education (PE) is a strength of the school. Additional funding has secured expertise that is helping to develop teachers' skills and helping them to provide effective PE teaching and learning.
- Funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is mostly used effectively to provide targeted individualised support and many interventions to support pupils' learning. Although support for these pupils does meet some of the identified, specific learning needs, leaders do not monitor the provision precisely enough to

assess the difference that all the support makes to increasing pupils' progress.

- While the inclusion leader ensures that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported diligently, there are too often occasions where pupils are not given an opportunity to exhibit what they have learned themselves. Teaching assistants are knowledgeable and supportive. However, they are not regularly guided well enough by teachers, and do not take enough opportunities to check pupils' ability to perform tasks for themselves, and this creates an over-reliance by pupils on the adult help.
- The school's relationship with parents is positive. Parents appreciate staff taking the time to get to know their children well. Parents believe that the school is well led, and that their children make progress. A parent said, 'Our children are happy at Reddings and love attending school. They are taught well, and we are happy with how the school is managed.' Another summarised others' views, saying, 'This is what you look for when you move to a new area – a friendly, inclusive school.'
- The local authority has provided an increased level of effective leadership support, and subject advisor help for the school. This has been used by the school to inform leaders, and develop the leaders' knowledge and understanding. However, the local authority monitoring of the school's overall performance has not been as successful in challenging and checking the school's inaccurate self-evaluation, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching and learning, and, consequently, pupils' progress.
- Leaders have carried out an analysis of the 2016 outcomes. They have identified the issues that had a negative impact on pupils' performance, as well as more long-standing concerns about pupils' rates of progress. They have put together an improvement plan that focuses on these issues so that gaps in pupils' learning are known by teachers. In key stage 2, some work in pupils' books, and the school's assessments of the progress pupils have made this academic year, indicate that these actions are starting to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Governance of the school

- The governing body are relatively new. They are supportive of the school and know and understand the complexities of the community it serves. They broadly understand the school's priorities, and the plans for improvement. However, they have an overly positive view of pupils' current progress and the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. They do not yet provide sufficient challenge to leaders.
- Governors visit the school regularly and use these visits to gain an insight into the workings of the school. However, governors accept vague responses from leaders, and provide little challenge to ensure that their questions are answered by leaders with rigour and sound evidence. As a result, governors' evaluation of the school's performance is inaccurate.
- Governors receive regular updates about pupils' progress and have a developing understanding of pupil performance data. This is enabling the governing body to monitor the spending of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. Governors identify that, although there has been some recent improvement in the progress of disadvantaged pupils, in some classes differences remain between disadvantaged pupils' achievement and that of other pupils nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders, including governors, are aware of their responsibility to keep pupils safe and secure. Along with the site manager, they carry out regular safety and statutory checks of the school site, paying particular regard to all aspects of health and safety.
- School leaders ensure that safeguarding is given a high priority. Staff and governors all receive regular training to ensure that their knowledge is up to date, and this training is regularly repeated so that any new or previously absent staff are able to participate and complete the appropriate statutory training. As a result, all staff have a clear understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. Records show that any concerns raised are meticulously recorded on the school's chosen electronic system, and followed up quickly to secure the best care for all pupils.
- All staff responsible for safeguarding, including the trained safeguarding leads and the pastoral support leader, work closely and effectively with external agencies to ensure that all pupils, particularly more vulnerable pupils, are well supported, looked after and cared for. Consequently, the school has an embedded safeguarding culture that pervades the school.
- Parents and pupils confirm that the school is a safe place to be. The school posts a wealth of up-to-date information about safeguarding on their website. Parents say that this helps them to understand the potential risks to their children when using the internet, mobile devices and technology. Pupils talk about feeling very safe, and say, 'All the adults are very supportive, we can trust them, and know they are always here for us.'

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are not yet good. This results in uneven levels of achievement between key stages and within year groups. Although senior leaders have now secured more stability, staffing turnover over time has contributed to this mixed picture of the quality of teaching and, consequently, pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not have a shared understanding of what pupils should achieve in English and mathematics in each year group. This leads to variability in the level of challenge given to the most able pupils in some classes and in the amount of support that pupils receive when they need to catch up quickly.
- There is inconsistency in how teachers use assessment information to plan activities at the right level for different groups of pupils. These inconsistencies lead to progress not being rapid enough for pupils to attain the age-related levels that they should be capable of.
- Pupils are not always clear enough about what, precisely, they need to do to improve their work. Speaking to inspectors, pupils say, 'Although some teachers help us get better, when we read what the teacher writes, it does not help us know what to improve.' Additionally, one pupil said, 'You do not get told what to improve; we find it ourselves, but sometimes I can't find what is wrong, so I do not know how to do it'

better.' Consequently, teachers miss opportunities to deepen and embed pupils' knowledge and skills.

- Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve by the end of lessons. Pupils who are not supported by an additional adult do not always complete as much as they could. They also do not take enough pride in the presentation of their work, and therefore do not fully acquire the relevant skills and knowledge to achieve well.
- Although phonics is taught well in the early years, phonics teaching in key stage 1 is less effective. There is inconsistency between the two phases, which limits the continuity and deepening of pupils' phonics knowledge and understanding. As pupils move through the school, progress in phonics and reading is still not consistently effective in all classes to secure better achievement in reading at the end of key stages 1 and 2.
- Writing is not taught consistently well, especially in key stage 1. Some teachers do not check pupils' progress in writing regularly and ensure that pupils build on and develop their writing skills quickly enough. Pupils do not achieve as well as they should in writing because they are not given ample opportunity to apply their skills in spelling, punctuation and grammar often enough to their writing. Pupils do not often get the chance to use their writing skills in subject areas other than English.
- Pupils' work shows variations in the attention that staff give to helping pupils correct errors and misconceptions in mathematics work. Consequently, the progress that pupils make is not consistently rapid enough for pupils to catch up and move on to deepening their knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils are not achieving the expected, or higher, standards that they are capable of.
- Teachers do not have consistently high expectations of pupils' presentation of work. Despite there being clear guidelines and non-negotiables stuck into the front of all books, some teachers still accept untidy work, and do not challenge basic errors. Teachers do not consistently address, for example, the incorrect use of capital letters or basic spellings which pupils get wrong. Where teachers do highlight these errors, they do not follow up rigorously and, as a result, pupils often continue to make the same mistakes throughout their work.
- There has been a whole-school focus and training on effective questioning to elicit pupils' understanding, which is starting to make a difference to pupils' learning. For example, further explanation was sought in the Year 3 class when the teacher responded to an answer given by a pupil with, 'What do others think? Where is the evidence in the book to support what you are saying?' This questioning is starting to support pupils to develop their understanding more quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils reported to inspectors that they are happy at school and are taught well about how to keep safe. They know that there is always someone in school to help them if

they are worried about something, and are confident that they have key adults they can trust and talk to about anything.

- Pupils understand about how to minimise risks when using the internet. Pupils knowledgeably talk about knowing not to share personal information online. They are aware of strategies to keep safe if invited to participate online with strangers. The school further reinforces pupils' understanding with, for example, their 'staying safe/well-being'-focused week.
- Leaders and staff provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths and traditions through their religious education (RE) curriculum, assemblies and focus themed weeks such as 'cultural week'. Through these aspects, the school is successful in promoting pupils' empathy, tolerance and commitment equality, which prepares them for life in modern Britain.
- The pastoral support leader is effective in supporting vulnerable pupils, both in the classroom and when they require nurturing care or just a listening ear. There are effective systems in place for staff to record concerns about an individual pupil. Staff know these are followed up quickly by senior staff so that any pupil at risk of harm or who may be worried about something has an adult they know they can trust. Consequently, all pupils are well cared for and looked after.
- A number of pupils do not take enough pride in their work. Although there is evidence of pupils having positive attitudes towards their learning, some pupils do not regularly enough try their best to use their skills to present their work appropriately.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Staff with responsibility for managing pupils' behaviour, as well as class teachers and support staff, keep detailed records and logs of incidents of any poorer behaviour, racism or bullying. These incidents are rare, and any reported are followed up well to avoid any reoccurrence.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the school's behaviour management system. They adhere to the expectations and follow the golden rules. Consequently, pupils are rarely distracted from their work by each other.
- Leaders and staff keep precisely written records of behaviour. They analyse any patterns in behaviour and put in appropriate plans to support pupils to make the correct choices when in class and during breaktimes. As a result, inappropriate behaviour is not frequent, and pupils confirm this, saying that they are never worried about attending school.
- The headteacher works effectively with parents to encourage pupils to attend school regularly and be on time. The headteacher offers guidance to ensure that pupils attend well, and when they are unable, they are monitored closely and support is given. As a result, attendance is consistently in line with the national average, and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils, which was lower than national average, is improving.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes since the previous inspection reflect the inconsistencies in teaching, learning and assessment across the school over time. Although improving, pupils are not making consistently good progress in reading, writing and mathematics, over time, in all year groups. As a result, some pupils have not been prepared well enough for the next stage of their education.
- In key stage 1, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics declined in 2015. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics in key stage 1 was below the national average. In key stage 2, too few pupils reached age-related standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In response to these outcomes, training and additional teacher support is being deployed to help pupils catch up quickly. Although it is too early to see all the results of this intensive input, there are positive indicators, and the school's own information shows that pupils are starting to make quicker progress. This is particularly the case in key stage 2.
- Following results in the year 1 phonics screening check, leaders have implemented improvements in the quality of teaching to raise the standards achieved by pupils. Although the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard in Year 1 is still below national average, by the end of Year 2, the number of pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics is in line with the national average. Current school information predicts improving outcomes for current Year 1 pupils.
- The teaching of reading, writing and mathematics is starting to address differences between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and that of those who are not disadvantaged, but there is still more to be done. In particular, in key stage 2 the additional support and focus on pupils who need to catch up is working, and many are starting to make more rapid progress. However, there is still more to be achieved to close these differences in key stage 1 so that teachers and support staff build on the good start made by children in the early years.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make better progress than other pupils in the school. This is because the inclusion leader knows the pupils well and assesses their needs accurately. These pupils go on to receive effective support. The programmes prepared for them are well coordinated and based upon accurate assessments of their additional learning needs.

Early years provision

Good

- Children join the school in both the Nursery and Reception class with skills and abilities that are below those typical for their age. Assessments show that by the end of Reception, children reach a good level of development. Overall, the proportion of children attaining a good level of development is in line with the national average and their progress is good from their individual starting points. Children make good all-round progress in all areas of learning.
- The early years leader is ensuring that the high quality of provision in both the Nursery and Reception class has been maintained since the previous inspection. She is precise and accurate when making regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning

across the early years because she rigorously checks records of children's progress.

- Behaviour of children in early years is good. Staff have high expectations and embed clear routines so that all children know what is expected of them. Children are kind to each other and learn quickly how to listen to one another and share with each other. Staff also help children to build their independence when choosing activities to develop their skills. As a result, children are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children have many opportunities to use their basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics in the activities that staff plan for them. Children enthusiastically 'mark-make' in all tasks, and identify numbers accurately. Skilful adult intervention secures good progress because children are individually moved on from their starting points.
- Phonics is taught well in early years. Adults encourage children's participation in reading through the chosen approach of structured activities linked to a book. Children are enthusiastic when participating in reading tasks. For example, Nursery children clearly enjoyed reading 'Dear Zoo' together aloud and predicting confidently what was going to happen next based on prompts and pictures in the story. Consequently, children develop a love of reading.
- All staff have a well-developed knowledge of the early years assessment requirements. There are effective systems in place for staff to check on the progress made by children. The children's learning journeys, pictorial and written records, and observations of their work and progress are detailed individually for each child. They are very well presented, and provide a secure, accurate, 'whole-child' snapshot of the children's progress over time. These are readily available for parents so they can see their children's work and progress first hand.
- Parents speak very highly of the early years provision and the progress that their children are making in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents value the strong partnership between home and school, and say that they feel fully involved in their children's education.

School details

Unique reference number	117234
Local authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	10023389

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	214
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kirsten Beaven
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Tracy Prickett
Telephone number	01442 406500
Website	www.reddings.herts.sch.uk
Email address	head@reddings.herts.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- A larger proportion of pupils than the national average are from minority ethnic groups.
- The proportion of pupils whose first language is not or is believed not to be English is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils reported to have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average.
- The number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is also above average.
- The school hosts an additional special needs resource base which provides emotional

and social support for pupils. This is overseen and led by the local authority. The pupils who attend the provision are not on the school's roll.

- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was initially a section 8 one-day inspection that converted to a section 5 two-day inspection.
- All inspectors carried out lesson observations, some undertaken jointly with the headteacher. Inspectors also spoke to pupils during lessons about their work and progress and looked at work in their books.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including leaders' and governors' own evaluations of the school's effectiveness; the school's development plan; information about pupils' achievement, progress and performance; and documents and information related to governance, teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, the assistant headteacher (who is also the early years leader) and the teachers responsible for leading English and mathematics, as well as the inclusion leader.
- The lead inspector met with two governors, including the chair of the governing body. She also met with a local authority representative, and had an additional meeting with a local authority representative during the second day of the inspection. The lead inspector also met with the pastoral leader, who works closely with families and monitors pupils' welfare.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents and carers to seek their views about the school. Inspectors also considered the 13 responses from parents to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, as well as the 12 views of parents who sent their comments by text. The inspectors also considered the views expressed by parents from the results of the school's own survey in autumn 2016.
- There were no responses to the staff questionnaire or the pupil questionnaire. However, inspectors took account of the school's recent surveys and spoke to staff and pupils throughout the inspection to ascertain their views.

Inspection team

Tracy Fielding, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Edel Gillespie	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Rogan	Ofsted Inspector

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