

Ringshall School

Offton Road, Ringshall, Stowmarket, Suffolk IP14 2JD

Inspection dates

8–9 March 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	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Early years provision	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- In 2016, pupils in key stage 2 made significantly less progress than pupils nationally in mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who reached the combined standard in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6 in 2016 was low compared to the national average.
- The school has been through a period of senior leadership turbulence. Middle leaders have lacked the opportunity to ensure that school improvements are secure enough.
- Adults do not provide enough precise feedback to pupils in writing and mathematics in key stage 2. Pupils do not know how to improve their work as well as they should.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics varies across year groups. Too often pupils are provided with the same activities that are either too easy or too hard.
- Adults do not insist on pupils presenting their work to the very best standard. Some pupils do not demonstrate enough pride in their work.
- The teaching of phonics is not secure enough. In 2016, results in the phonics screening check were below national average.
- The early years environment requires improvement. Children are not provided with enough activities to develop their writing and mathematical skills securely.

The school has the following strengths

- The school is now improving. The interim headteacher has swiftly implemented a systematic and rigorous approach to school improvement.
- The provision in the nurture class is highly effective. Pupils develop their social and emotional skills in a calm and positive environment.
- Pupils' behaviour is good. They are polite and well mannered. They conduct themselves well in school and at playtimes.
- There is a strong sense of community. Staff work well together to create a welcoming environment in which pupils can learn.
- Pupils achieve well by the end of key stage 1. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard was above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The governing body is effective. Governors are skilled in providing strategic direction. They have ensured that there is leadership capacity to continue to improve.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes by:
 - ensuring that more pupils reach the expected standard by the end of key stage 2 in reading, writing and mathematics combined.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by:
 - making sure teachers use assessment to plan learning that meets the needs of differing groups of pupils in mathematics
 - ensuring that adults provide effective feedback and clear guidance on how pupils can improve their achievement and enjoyment of mathematics
 - developing a precise systematic approach to the teaching of phonics, so that a greater proportion securely reach the required standard by the end of Year 1
 - securing better progress of pupils in writing and mathematics in the early years
 - consistently modelling and insisting on the highest standard of presentation and handwriting.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - increasing the effectiveness of all middle leaders so they all contribute to rapid school improvement
 - improving the effective use of assessment through all areas of the school so that adults accurately measure the progress that children and pupils make.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- Since the previous inspection, the school has been through a period of leadership turbulence. During the last two academic years there have been a number of senior leadership absences and significant changes in personnel. As a result, school improvement has been too slow, especially at key stage 2. The school has not sustained the good standard of education.
- The experienced interim headteacher is starting to improve the quality of teaching and learning at a pace. He has quickly established his high expectations of staff and pupils. Staff commented that they now have a clear strategic direction, support and challenge to perform their roles well. His calm and authoritative approach has been well received by staff, parents and pupils.
- Senior leaders and governors are working closely with the local authority to hasten the pace of change at the school so pupils make the progress of which they are capable especially in key stage 2. The local authority is providing effective support to the school by training and developing leadership within the school.
- Leaders and governors use additional government funding for eligible pupils increasingly well. The use of the nurture class is effective. The pupils who access this provision develop greater confidence and self-esteem quickly and effectively. For the pupils who join the school midway through the year, there is not yet a fully systematic process to enable them to settle as quickly as possible so they can succeed academically.
- Over this academic year, staff who hold leadership positions are receiving training and development in their roles and responsibilities. Although this is in the early stages, these middle leaders are already becoming increasingly effective. They are monitoring the quality of their subject areas and have more accurate information regarding the progress pupils are making in all areas of the school. Both English and mathematics leadership have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in their subject areas.
- Staff are proud to be working at the school and there is a strong sense of community. They are committed to ensuring that each pupil receives a high-quality provision. Staff told the inspector that they appreciate the training and development they now receive. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement.
- Leadership of special educational needs is new but proving effective. Each pupil's progress is tracked and carefully monitored through a highly organised system. The new coordinator of special educational needs is identifying more precisely other pupils who potentially require support for special educational needs and/or disabilities. Leaders are working more effectively to ensure that each pupil receives a more tailored provision. Currently, pupils' work in books demonstrates that this is not yet consistently the case across the school.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced with many additional trips and after-school clubs to enhance pupils' experience. All subject areas are taught, but previously leaders have not checked that the curriculum provision is adapted well enough for the range of

abilities in a class. In some classes, pupils carry out the same activities irrespective of their starting points or individual learning needs.

- Pupils receive religious education and a varied programme of visits that support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. There is less evidence to show that leaders actively promote pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. In practice, pupils are friendly and accepting of each other and their differing views. Leaders recognise that there is more they can do to prepare pupils more effectively for life in modern Britain.
- Sports funding is used well. Pupils have the opportunity to compete with other local schools. The additional funding has resulted in increased levels of participation both in and out of school hours.

Governance of the school

- Governors are effective. They have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas of improvement. This has not always been the case. Under the careful leadership of the chair of governors, governors are now holding school leaders more stringently to account for the progress pupils make.
- Governors have clear roles and responsibilities. They check the accuracy of the information provided by school leaders through increasingly regular visits. For example, the governor responsible for safeguarding regularly checks the robustness of school systems and procedures to ensure that pupils are safe and well cared for.
- Governors focus on the priorities of school improvement increasingly well. Recently, they have changed the focus of committees so that a larger proportion of governors' time is spent reviewing the progress pupils make. Currently, it is too soon to fully assess the impact of the new committee on school improvement.
- Governors have not ensured that the website is kept up to date or that requests for updates are actioned well enough. They have not made sure that information about the spending of additional funds meets current government guidance and is reviewed often enough.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. School leaders have ensured that the school is a safe and secure place for pupils and staff. Appropriate safeguarding arrangements are in place and staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk.
- All school statutory records about the safe recruitment of staff are up to date and kept meticulously. Governors regularly check safeguarding information.
- Leaders have recently changed the reporting system to record concerns regarding child protection. This new system is effective in providing a careful, systematic approach that demonstrates how leaders are responding to concerns in a timely and thorough way.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe. The few parents who responded to the Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, had mixed views about how well leaders keep their children safe and well cared for. Inspectors found no well-founded concerns regarding

the way that school leaders and staff care for pupils. Leaders ensure that the physical environment is safe and secure.

- Pupils understand the different forms of bullying and show an appreciation of how distressing bullying can be. The school ensures that pupils are taught how to keep themselves and others safe, including when using a range of technology.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching in mathematics is inconsistent both across year groups and within classes. Often the work is too easy or too hard and expectations are not high enough, particularly in lower key stage 2. Too often, the most able pupils complete work that does not require a more complex approach or deeper thinking.
- Although adults use strong technical vocabulary and demonstrate a secure understanding of the curriculum for English, this is not the same in mathematics. Some pupils, particularly girls, do not complete work well enough because they lack confidence and secure mathematical strategies. Pupils are not as confident explaining their reasoning in mathematics as they are when they explain their understanding in English.
- Teachers do not use the information they hold regarding pupils' understanding and skills to plan learning that more closely matches individual needs and abilities. Work in pupils' workbooks demonstrates that pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are often expected to carry out the same activities as others even when the activity is too complex.
- Teachers do not provide pupils with precise enough feedback to enable them to improve their work and make progress at the pace they should. Pupils are not offered further challenge or provided with additional support and help in mathematics. In writing, where pupils have been provided with effective feedback, they edit and improve their work successfully. This is not consistent in all classes.
- In reading lessons, pupils focus well on the activities they are given. They demonstrate an enjoyment and desire to read. Pupils who read to the inspector were able to understand the unfamiliar texts easily and well.
- Adults use the correct terminology with pupils when teaching them their sounds. However, in phonics lessons seen, pupils were not provided with a systematic enough approach so they could practise their understanding of sounds quickly and securely enough. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who passed their phonics screening check was below the national average.
- In key stage 1, teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to develop their language skills. Pupils join in discussions and class activities readily and enthusiastically. In one class assembly seen, pupils quickly learned and recited a poem from a series of picture clues. Through the teacher's high expectations and clear explanations, pupils rapidly recalled the poem. They were delighted with the result.
- In subjects such as physical education lessons, pupils try hard and practise their skills well and effectively. This is because adults have planned the learning precisely to ensure that every pupil has frequent opportunity to be active and develop new skills. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils were deciding how to move safely on a beam and jump across

benches. They knew the routines and ensured that they met the teacher's high expectations well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Where activities do not match individual needs well enough, pupils lose focus and interest and do not sustain their effort in their learning. This does not help pupils develop a positive enough attitude to learning.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school mid-year is high. Although pupils are well cared for, there is not a systematic process to enable these pupils to settle into school so they can focus quickly on their learning. A few pupils receive additional and effective support through the nurture group or the forest schools provision, but pupils are not routinely supported when they start at Ringshall Primary school.
- The provision through 'Rainbow class' is highly effective. Pupils who attend this provision are provided with the care and consistency they require to support them. In one session seen, a group of boys were encouraged to develop their social skills by playing a board game together. Through the adult's effective use of good humour and a clear focus on promoting values of resilience and risk taking, the boys played patiently and calmly. 'We use our resilience and go back a step' stated one of the pupils as he moved his piece backwards.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and well mannered. Good relations and friendships with each other were evident at playtimes and lunchtimes as pupils socialised happily, often playing with friends from other year groups. Most pupils who responded to their online questionnaire agreed that teachers encourage them to be friendly with each other.
- Around the school building, most pupils show respect to each other and to adults they meet. Older pupils hold doors open and during the inspection greeted the inspector with warm smiles and 'hellos'. They were keen and eager to speak about their work and experience at school. The pupils spoken to were articulate and confident when explaining their favourite lessons.
- Attendance is in line with national averages. Groups of pupils are not disadvantaged by low attendance. School staff ensure that issues of absence and lateness are followed up well.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- In 2016, the school had its first key stage 2 results since becoming a primary school.

Results were below the government's floor standards for pupils of their age. Pupils did not make as much progress in writing and significantly less progress than other pupils nationally in mathematics.

- Due to the very small numbers in each cohort in upper key stage 2, national data about pupils' attainment is not always reliable and can fluctuate widely from year to year depending on the individual needs of each year group. The very small numbers of pupils currently in Year 6 are making better individual progress this year, but school assessment information shows that attainment is low, particularly in mathematics.
- Pupil numbers fluctuate. This is because the school admits a significant proportion of its pupils mid-year. Equally, many pupils do not complete their time at the school and leave after key stage 1. This regular fluctuation in pupil numbers affects the overall achievement information and makes comparisons challenging. However, previously leaders have not tracked an individual's progress as well as they could from starting points.
- In 2016, the proportion of pupils who reached the required standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check was well below the national average and significantly different to previous years. Inspection evidence showed that although this proportion is rising, adults are not ensuring that pupils currently make swift enough progress early in their school life to reach the standard required.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make varied progress. Where they receive additional one-to-one or group support through the nurture provision, pupils make good personal and social progress. In class, however, the quality of provision varies. This is because some pupils are not provided with enough work that accurately matches their needs. As a result, some pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities do not make as much progress as they could.
- Pupils who are eligible for additional government funding make mixed progress. The school tracks the progress pupils make but currently does not have a specific enough induction process so that pupils who join mid-year settle rapidly and start to learn quickly so they can excel.
- Pupils who read to the inspector demonstrated an enjoyment of reading and pride in their reading skills. The school has a well-equipped library so that pupils develop their love of reading. In 2016, by the end of key stage 1, the proportion of pupils who reached both the national standard and greater depth in reading was above that found nationally.
- Pupils in key stage 1 continue to achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics. The proportions of pupils who reached the required standard in 2016 was at least in line with national averages. Pupils who worked at greater depth in reading and mathematics was above national averages in 2016. From their starting points in Reception, this achievement represents good progress for many pupils.
- In subjects such as science, pupils achieved in line with national averages at the end of key stage 1 in 2016. From work in their books, pupils are set to continue this achievement. In lower key stage 2, pupils are not consistently provided with enough stimulating and challenging activities in other subjects so they can excel.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Early years leadership has changed during this academic year. Currently, leaders have accurately identified the strengths and areas for improvement within the provision, particularly ensuring that there is a balance of activities both adult led and where children choose for themselves, especially where children are developing their numerical and literacy skills.
- The new early years leader has started to analyse the information regarding children's learning and the progress they make from their individual starting points. Record-keeping is becoming more regular and more accurate regarding the progress children make from their starting points.
- Children start at Ringshall Primary School with individual skills and abilities that are broadly typical for their age. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who left with a good level of development was above that found nationally. However, most-able children are not yet demonstrating their capabilities. This is because all children complete the same activities without sufficient opportunity for the most able to excel. This is particularly the case in writing.
- The outdoor area requires improvement. Adults do not always ensure that the area is well cared for and children's learning needs are fully catered for. There are not enough activities available outside that routinely develop children's writing and sense of number. Consequently, some children choose not to play outside during child-initiated activities.
- Children listen well to adults and visitors to their class. During the inspection, the children asked interesting questions of a paramedic who came to speak about their role in helping people. The children showed their knowledge and expertise by reciting the number to call an ambulance or the fire brigade. Later, a group of children played in the role play area; they used the correct vocabulary and ensured that they spoke clearly and well when contacting the emergency services as part of their imaginary game.

School details

Unique reference number	124604
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10003176

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	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Nick Pugh
Interim headteacher	Ian Page
Telephone number	01473658307
Website	www.ringshallschool.co.uk/
Email address	admin@ringshall.suffolk.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 June 2012

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about how additional government funds are effectively used to reduce barriers for eligible pupils.
- This is a much smaller than average primary school. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes in key stage 2.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and a few are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils who leave or join the school partway through their primary education is much higher than in most schools nationally.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is higher than average. Those who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is in line with national averages.

- In 2016, the school had its first year of published information for Year 6 since becoming a primary school.
- The school is currently led by an interim headteacher.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. This included observing learning in all classes, some of which were jointly seen with the interim headteacher.
- The inspector spoke with pupils formally and informally. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' workbooks from a wide range of subjects, to take account of the work that has been done and the progress that groups of pupils make over time.
- The teaching of phonics was observed and a number of pupils read to the inspector from Year 1.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, subject leaders, the chair of the governing body and other members of the governing body.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors examined a range of documentation around child protection and scrutinised the recruitment checks made by school leaders when employing staff.
- Parental views were considered from the 22 online responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire together with comments provided on the free text service.
- The inspectors spoke to staff formally and took account of their views. There were three responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for staff.

Inspection team

Kim Hall, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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