

Riddings Junior School

Church Street, Riddings, Alferton, Derbyshire DE55 4BW

Inspection dates

2–3 May 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has nurtured and inspired his staff to successfully address the issues from the last inspection. The governing body effectively supports and challenges leaders.
- Middle leaders are now fully involved in ensuring that teaching and pupils' outcomes are improving throughout the school. Good teaching is enabling pupils to make strong progress.
- Standards in writing have improved. Pupils work hard and take pride in the presentation of their work. However, pupils do not always check their work thoroughly and correct their mistakes.
- Standards in reading fell in 2017. Leaders analysed the reasons for this and made changes. The teaching of reading is increasingly a strength of the school, and pupils' attitudes to reading are very positive. Leaders recognise the need to further develop pupils' vocabulary.
- Pupils enjoy many opportunities to explain their thinking in lessons. Most teachers have high expectations of the quality of pupils' answers and address any misconceptions that arise.
- In most lessons, teachers question and challenge the most able pupils effectively. Leaders are sharing this good practice among staff to ensure that these pupils consistently achieve as well as they should.
- Pupils enjoy school and are very keen to learn. They behave well in lessons and around the school. Levels of persistent absence have reduced, and overall attendance is just above the national average.
- This is a highly inclusive school, where everyone feels safe, respected and valued. The progress of pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is strong. Teaching assistants are very effective at encouraging pupils to think for themselves.
- Work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is highly effective. Pupils gain a good understanding of fundamental British values.
- Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum. Their learning is enhanced by a range of sporting, musical and cultural activities. These are much appreciated by pupils and parents.
- Leaders with responsibility for the foundation subjects have begun to take a greater role in checking the quality of teaching and outcomes in their subjects. This development is in its early stages.
- Leaders have made recent changes to the way that they use the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. This is helping these pupils to make faster progress, particularly in reading.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that all is consistently good or better, and more is outstanding, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - are adept at recognising and addressing pupils’ misconceptions as they arise
 - have a greater understanding of what pupils need to do to reach the higher standards so they can consistently challenge the most able pupils
 - regularly expose pupils to a rich and wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to tackle complex texts more successfully
 - have consistently high expectations of pupils’ spoken answers particularly when they are explaining their thinking
 - provide pupils with a range of ways to check their work and so eliminate unnecessary mistakes.
- Further improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - extending the skills of foundation subject leaders so that they take a greater role in checking the quality of teaching in their area of responsibility and use this information to improve standards further
 - embedding and refining recently introduced changes to the way that teachers offer additional support so that outcomes for disadvantaged pupils continue to improve.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher has successfully led improvements to the school since the last inspection. He and other leaders responded rapidly to the subsequent monitoring visits and developed well-focused improvement plans. During this time, there has also been a major building programme to improve the school's facilities.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for development. There is a strong culture of reflection across the school. Senior and middle leaders support and challenge each other effectively. Teachers are confident to ask for help and advice as they seek to improve their practice.
- There is a real team spirit at the school. Staff responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire indicate that they feel well supported and are proud to work at the school. One commented, 'All staff are listened to and their opinions valued.' Effective professional development, often delivered in innovative ways, is well tailored to individual and whole-school needs. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment have improved strongly and are now good overall.
- The school works closely with a teaching school alliance and a group of local schools. These collaborations provide valuable support to leaders and other staff. For example, teachers get together to check each other's assessments. Opportunities to visit other schools enable leaders and teachers to seek out effective practice and use it to inform improvements at the school. Leaders of the foundation subjects have just begun to develop their roles in checking the quality of teaching and using this information to improve standards.
- Leaders make very effective use of the physical education and sport premium funding to employ a sports coach and to provide extra opportunities. The school has been very successful in local competitions. Pupils enjoy the range of sporting and musical activities, such as drumming, on offer.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well; it is a strength of the school. Pupils play and learn happily together. Displays around the school reflect the range of curricular opportunities provided for pupils. Pupils learn to celebrate and respect differences between them and show a good understanding of different faiths and beliefs. There are close links with the local church. Equality and diversity are promoted well.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of fundamental British values. They show their understanding of democracy as they vote on important issues in school, such as the choice of the new school sign. Year 6 pupils consider individual liberty and the rule of law as they discuss the issue of refugees in their topic on Prejudice and Persecution. Pupils take great pride in the fact that their classes are each named after a local soldier who lost his life in the First World War.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well spent. The provision for these pupils is strong because the leader is rigorous in tracking its effectiveness and making changes where necessary. Pupils make strong and improving progress, not only in their academic learning but in their self-confidence and ability to

work alongside other pupils. Any barriers to their learning are being addressed.

- Leaders use the pupil premium funding increasingly well to support the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This year, class teachers have taken on a greater role in providing additional teaching for some of these pupils. As a result, teachers have a much greater understanding of each pupil and so are better able to meet their learning needs. This has supported improved progress in reading. Some strategies have only been in place for a short period of time and so it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness.
- Leaders regularly seek the views of parents. They use these to make further improvements. The vast majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and those who spoke to an inspector before the start of the school day are very pleased with the work of the school. Several commented on the warm and friendly welcome they receive from staff and on how much their child enjoy school.
- The local authority knows the school well and has provided appropriate support since the last inspection. This includes staff and governor training and regular visits to monitor progress.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is enthusiastic and highly ambitious for the school and its pupils. Governors know the school and the community very well. They are very aware of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve further.
- Governors are rigorous in the challenge they offer to leaders. They ask insightful questions during meetings and during their many visits to school. They check the impact of the school's actions by attending staff meetings and pupil progress meetings and observing senior leaders at work. As a result, they hold leaders to account well for the ways in which the funding for SEN, pupil premium, and physical education and sport is spent.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that the school offers pupils rich and interesting opportunities, such as a recent visit to the theatre. They also have high expectations of pupils' academic achievements.
- Governors fulfil all statutory duties effectively. They have ensured that all the appropriate checks are carried out when recruiting staff.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Keeping pupils safe has a very high priority at Riddings Junior School. Referral and recording systems are robust and known to all adults who work with pupils. Staff know pupils and their families very well. This helps them to be vigilant for any signs which might cause them concern.
- Leaders are proactive in their work with external agencies, and the headteacher is relentless in his determination to ensure that pupils are kept safe and that their families

receive the support they need.

- Staff and governors receive frequent and appropriate training in all aspects of safeguarding. They have a good understanding of the signs of radicalisation and extremism.
- All pupils spoken to during the inspection, and those who responded to the online questionnaire, said that they feel safe in school. They know they will be listened to if they have any concerns.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils make good progress because they are increasingly well taught. Teachers are fully committed to doing their very best for the pupils they teach. Extremely positive relationships underpin teaching and learning in this school.
- Most teaching is now good and, in some classes, it is very strong. Lesson observations, work in books and assessment information indicate that teaching and learning are effective over time. Teachers are skilful at recognising when pupils need additional support and most use probing questioning to tease out and address pupils' misconceptions as they arise.
- Since the previous inspection, teachers have become more confident in teaching writing. They have significantly raised their expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils now write at length in a range of subjects and take great pride in the presentation of their work. Thus, standards have improved.
- The school's approach to the teaching of reading is used consistently across the school. Pupils are shown how to 'repair' the 'breakdowns' that they find in texts by using prior knowledge, for example. These 'roadblocks' often arise because pupils do not know specific words. Teachers are developing ways of ensuring that pupils are exposed to a rich and wide range of vocabulary so that they can tackle more complex texts with greater success.
- Teachers make increasingly good use of practical resources to ensure that pupils develop a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking. Most staff have very high expectations of the quality of pupils' responses; they demand precision and clarity. Pupils respond well to these expectations, and this is contributing to their good progress.
- Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in the accuracy of their assessments of pupils' work in the core subjects. They collaborate within school and with others in the local cluster of schools to develop their skills in this area. Regular pupil progress meetings enable teachers and leaders to review how well pupils are learning and to identify clear next steps for individuals, groups and the class as a whole. Leaders recognise that some teachers are not yet as confident in deciding whether pupils are working at the higher standard. This sometimes limits the challenges they present to the most able pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to the good progress they make. They support and challenge pupils in equal measure. Pupils work independently and do not rely heavily on adults for help. There is still some variability in the quality of teaching. Leaders are aware of

those aspects which need further development and are providing high-quality support from other teachers in the school and from within the local family of schools.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Warm and caring relationships are the bedrock of Riddings Junior School. The school's ethos of PRIDE – Progress, Respect, Independence, Determination and Excellence - drives all aspects of the school's work. Pupils thrive because they are taught how to meet each of these five elements every day.
- Pupils are friendly and open. They greet visitors warmly and politely and are keen to talk about themselves and their learning. Pupils sought out members of the inspection team to share their pride in their achievements.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe within and beyond the school gates. This includes online safety.
- Pupils understand what constitutes bullying and said that it does not happen very often. They are confident that, when it does happen, all members of staff will deal with it quickly and effectively.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils behave well in classrooms and as they move around the school. They listen well to teachers and to each other, showing consideration and care. Their focus during a class drumming lesson was unwavering and enabled them to make excellent progress in the skills being taught.
- The rewards and consequences system is well understood by pupils, parents and staff. Pupils respect the rules in place and know they are there to keep everyone safe and happy. They enjoy their playtimes, which are sociable and orderly. Pupils are particularly excited about the new forest playground.
- Attendance levels are now just above the national average and show an improving trend. This reflects the importance that school leaders have placed on this with pupils and parents. Persistent absence levels have fallen this year and are in line with the national average. A few pupils are absent due to unauthorised holidays.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. They are conscientious and curious and thoroughly enjoy learning.
- Pupils who are currently in the school are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics because of high-quality teaching, learning and assessment. Visits to

classrooms, scrutiny of pupils' work and the school's assessment information indicate that standards are improving throughout the school.

- Standards and progress in writing have improved since the last inspection. In 2017, Year 6 pupils reached standards which were above those found nationally. Evidence in pupils' workbooks indicates that these standards will be maintained this year. Pupils write well and at length in a range of subjects. They use an appropriate range of grammatical structures with increasing accuracy. They develop a neat handwriting style and take great pride in their presentation. At times, pupils do not check their work thoroughly enough and so they do not spot the mistakes they have made.
- At the end of key stage 2 in 2017, standards in reading fell, particularly for disadvantaged pupils. Both attainment and progress were below the national average. Test results were much lower than the school's own assessments. Leaders reflected on this disparity and took swift and appropriate action to address the issues that they identified. They recognise that, at times, pupils' comprehension is hampered by a lack of vocabulary and have introduced strategies to improve this. Evidence from the inspection indicates that these strategies are having a positive impact.
- Leaders have effectively established a strong culture of reading in the school. Pupils read fluently and with expression. They appreciate the range of new books that are available in the library. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are also benefiting from an online reading programme. All of the pupils spoken to during the inspection said they enjoy reading. One said, 'It's in my blood.'
- An increasing proportion of pupils is working at the higher standard in English and mathematics. Pupils are given extra support and tasks to help them achieve this, particularly in Year 6. However, not all teachers are confident enough in their assessments to consistently plan challenges which extend the learning of the most able pupils.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress. This is due to well-targeted support in lessons and the effective work of the SEN team. The leader is highly skilled at identifying pupils' needs and putting the right extra help into place. She checks frequently that this support is having the required impact. Pupils are encouraged to think hard and to complete tasks without relying heavily on adult support.
- In 2017, disadvantaged pupils at the end of key stage 2 made better progress than other pupils nationally in writing. Their progress in mathematics was broadly average. Progress in both subjects was better than it was in 2016. Pupils are making increasingly good progress as a result of improved teaching and the effective additional support funded by the pupil premium.

School details

Unique reference number	112497
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10047989

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	225
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Housden
Headteacher	Dave Cates
Telephone number	01773 528492
Website	www.riddingsjuniorschool.org.uk
Email address	info@riddings-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 April 2016

Information about this school

- Riddings Junior School is smaller than the average-sized primary school. The number on roll is increasing. The school has two classes in each year group.
- Most pupils come from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above that seen nationally. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is also above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils' learning throughout the school. Several observations were carried out jointly with the headteacher.
- The inspectors heard pupils in Year 6 read. Together with the deputy headteacher, the inspectors looked at pupils' work in their English and topic books.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, other leaders, five members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including minutes of a range of meetings, assessment information, records of the school's monitoring activities, the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness, improvement plans and behaviour, attendance and safeguarding records.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of children and observed them at break and lunchtimes. The 47 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered. The inspectors took into account 34 text comments provided by parents through Parent View, and an inspector spoke with parents on the playground before the school day started. The inspection team also considered 24 responses from staff and 25 responses from pupils to the online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Cruickshank	Ofsted Inspector

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