

# Race Leys Junior School

Barton Road, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 8HG

## Inspection dates

5–6 February 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The school is rapidly improving since the appointment of the headteacher, other senior leaders and the establishment of an experienced and highly knowledgeable improvement board.
- School leaders and the trust have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have taken effective action to remove previous weak teaching and strengthen leadership.
- Leaders are highly aspirational, promoting many opportunities through numerous extra-curricular activities to widen pupils' horizons.
- Middle leaders are developing well in their roles, contributing to developing a rich curriculum in their areas of subject responsibility and in the monitoring of teaching.
- Current pupils are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics as a result of strong teaching.
- Additional funding is deployed well to ensure that disadvantaged pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are also doing well. Teachers plan appropriately for their needs and deploy additional support effectively.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values very well through lessons and assemblies.
- Attendance is improving following a concerted focus by leaders on tackling persistent absence.
- Pupils said that they feel safe in school. This view was confirmed by parents.
- Middle leaders are not yet sufficiently familiar with the assessment tool developed by leaders to track pupils' progress.
- Most teaching is effective in setting work that takes account of pupils' different starting points and providing stretch and challenge, including for the most able.
- Teaching is not consistently good in all classes. Where, for example, all pupils have the same level of spelling challenge, it is too hard for some and too easy for others.
- There are times when teachers' expectations for the presentation of written work are not consistent enough.
- Most pupils behave well and take responsibility for their personal conduct. However, the behaviour of pupils in one year group is not as good as elsewhere.
- A minority of parents expressed well-founded concerns about how consistently behaviour is managed in this year group.
- A few parents said that communication was not as good as it could be and that the school does not take sufficient account of their concerns.

## Full report

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and learning by ensuring that:
  - it is consistently good in each year group and matches that of the best teaching
  - teachers ensure that challenges, such as spelling tests, are appropriate to the pupils' abilities and starting points
  - teachers' expectations of pupils' writing are consistently high.
- Improve behaviour by ensuring that:
  - teachers have consistent expectations of behaviour in each year group
  - incidents of low-level disruptive behaviour are reduced by ensuring that pupils are consistently engaged in challenging activities appropriate for their starting points
  - where pupils have received more than one fixed-term exclusion for a similar offence, leaders pursue alternative strategies to address their behaviour issues.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - the school's safeguarding policy fully complies with the Department for Education's (DfE) most recent guidance
  - designated staff are up to date with their training on use of reasonable force and physical restraint
  - middle leaders take a greater responsibility for monitoring progress, especially in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics
  - communication with parents is strengthened, so that a higher proportion feel that their concerns are listened to and acted upon
  - a higher proportion of pupils can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave Year 6.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- Since the appointment of the headteacher, followed by the appointment of other senior leaders, there have been significant improvements in teaching and in the progress made by pupils currently in the school. Soon after the last inspection, outcomes for pupils, based on attainment and the progress they made in reading, writing and mathematics, fell into rapid decline, culminating in below national average progress in the most recently published tests and assessments in 2018.
- The trust has taken swift action to reverse the decline. In addition to strengthening the senior leadership team through recruiting new leaders, they replaced the governing body with a school improvement board, which is comprised of members with considerable educational expertise to support and challenge leaders. This has enhanced the capacity of the school to improve further.
- Leaders and members of the improvement board are united in their commitment to 'the three pillars' of the school – 'proud traditions', 'wide horizons' and 'high achievement', the last two of which have had an enhanced focus since the appointment of the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The roles of middle leaders have been enhanced in a short space of time so that they regularly monitor teaching and review work in pupils' books. They take responsibility for the curriculum and planning of the skills and knowledge required for pupils to learn in each subject area. Middle leaders are not yet sufficiently familiar with the tool that senior leaders use to monitor pupil progress. Assessment in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics is at an early stage of development.
- A comprehensive programme of training and monitoring is in place to provide support and challenge for teachers. Leaders have been quick to eradicate weak teaching and, where leaders have provided support, this is leading to improvements.
- The curriculum is rooted in literacy and exposes pupils to a broad and balanced range of different subjects. For example, extended writing is encouraged through topics linked to history and science. Pupils are encouraged to read widely on topics promoting pupils' understanding of the wider world, including Greece, the United States of America (USA) and 'The Orient'.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide variety of extra-curricular and cross-curricular links, for example a Year 5 stage performance of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet and a trip to a Greek restaurant to support pupils' study of Greek food. In Year 6, pupils have used home-study time to plan and design high-quality models of famous USA landmarks, such as the Golden Gate Bridge and Mount Rushmore. There are many clubs linked to the curriculum, including choir, drama and computing.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and British values very well through the curriculum and wider activities, such as assemblies. A board in the entrance foyer displays the 101 experiences all pupils should have before they leave at the end of Year 6, including visiting a museum and learning a modern

language.

- Leaders promote careers development very well through a programme of visits to the school from role models in different professions, including medicine, the army and music.
- Additional adults are deployed effectively by leaders to support those with additional learning, emotional and behavioural needs. This has been enhanced with the recent appointment of a learning mentor. Strong leadership of SEND has ensured that leaders use funding well to ensure that pupils receive effective support, which enables most of them to make good progress.
- There has also been a significant improvement in the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Leaders have ensured that additional funding is targeted more effectively to improve the rate of progress these pupils, currently in school, are making. As a result, leaders have ensured that teachers have a clear focus on disadvantaged pupils in their lesson planning and are held rigorously to account by leaders for their progress through regular pupil progress meetings between senior leaders and class teachers.
- The physical education (PE) and sport premium funding is used effectively to promote healthy lifestyles. There is an extensive list of clubs, competitions, competitive events and tournaments. Leaders monitor uptake closely and have introduced new opportunities, such as football for girls. Teachers have been trained by sports leaders, to enhance their confidence in teaching PE. However, less than half of pupils who left Year 6 last year could swim 25 metres or more. At present, pupils only receive swimming lessons in Year 3 and there is insufficient follow-up for those who still cannot swim sufficiently well at the end of these lessons. This practice is now under review by leaders.
- Most parents who spoke to inspectors, or responded to Parent View free-text, commended the head and senior leaders for the improvements they have seen. The majority responding to Parent View said that they would recommend the school to another parent. However, a minority had well-founded concerns about the quality of teaching and behaviour of some pupils in one year group. Leaders have put in place measures to address these concerns. There is now greater stability of teaching after a turnover of staff that affected one particular year group adversely.
- The school communicates with parents through regular newsletters, texts and phone messages and progress reports, which set out clearly how their children are doing and their attitude to learning. There are open mornings and workshops on reading and internet safety, which parents are invited to attend. Staff are at the door in the morning to discuss any concerns parents may have. Most parents said that they receive valuable information from the school, but a minority said communication could be improved. About a third of responses on Parent View and Parent View free-text and of those speaking to inspectors disagreed that the school responds well to their concerns. Leaders and members of the trust recognise that not all parents are happy with the direction the school is now taking to raise expectations.

## **Governance of the school**

- The improvement board, set up to replace the previous governing body, has been diligent since its inception. The board, which includes headteachers of other schools in the trust and school improvement partners, has ensured that it has a wealth of experience to provide support and challenge to the headteacher. It is in turn answerable to a separate trust board. Members of the board have an accurate and detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This includes teaching and outcomes for pupils.
- Members hold leaders to account for additional spending for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND. They receive detailed information from the headteacher and other leaders on the current progress of pupils, as well as detailed analysis of trends in behaviour and attendance. Members of the board are regularly in the school, including observing teaching and learning and lunchtime provision. They have commissioned reports from external school improvement leaders for an objective evaluation of the school.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders are well trained to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities. They are highly committed to ensuring that the ethos of the school promotes a safe environment for pupils. There is an open culture for staff to raise and discuss any issues of concern. Training for all staff is up to date concerning all the latest advice and guidance from the DfE.
- Staff spoken to during the inspection knew what to do if a safeguarding incident were to be disclosed to them. They knew who they should speak to in order to report it and take the matter further. Staff were able to explain procedures for recording information. Any reported incidents are followed up immediately, with external agencies contacted if necessary. Reporting is detailed and thorough and records are held securely.
- The personal, social, health and economic education programme of lessons, assemblies and special events teaches pupils to keep themselves safe, for example by using the internet and social media safely.
- Leaders and members of the improvement board were not aware that at the time of the inspection the safeguarding policy, which is a trust policy implemented in all trust schools, did not fully comply with all of the requirements in the latest DfE guidance on keeping children safe in education. The trust addressed this during the inspection.
- Some staff are not fully up to date with their training on the use of reasonable force and physical restraint.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- As a result of rapidly improving teaching, current pupils are making good progress. Typically, teachers plan lessons that provide stretch and challenge for most-able pupils to extend their learning. The new curriculum approach to mastery is enabling a higher proportion of pupils than previously to work at a higher standard or in greater depth in

reading, writing and mathematics.

- Teachers provide additional structure and support for those who need more help with their learning. Most deploy additional adults well to support pupils with SEND or others who need additional support with their learning. They have also clearly identified in their planning disadvantaged pupils, so that their needs are met. This is evident in pupils' books.
- Leaders have ensured that teachers now assess more accurately through regular checks internally and, externally, with other schools. A baseline assessment at the start of Year 3 ensures that teachers have a secure understanding of pupils' starting points. In Year 6, teachers obtain an accurate view of how well pupils perform under test conditions in reading and mathematics, to supplement their own ongoing assessments. Assessment in subjects other than reading, writing and mathematics is at an early stage of development.
- Teachers are skilled at incorporating literacy skills and developing subject knowledge at the same time. As a result, pupils in Year 5, for example, can write using their enhanced literacy skills but are also knowledgeable about the events surrounding Shackleton's expedition in the early 20th century. Pupils have the opportunity to write in a number of different styles and genres, including letters, newspaper reports, stories and diaries.
- Teachers set regular homework opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside of school, including an expectation to read five times a week. About a third of the parents who communicated with inspectors thought pupils now have too much homework. This view was not supported by pupils spoken to who were universally positive about the homework they receive.
- Teachers manage behaviour well for the most part but in one year group the extent to which this is done as effectively is less consistent. Most of the few, low-level, disruptive incidents in the school occur in one year group where, at times, the work does not sufficiently engage a few learners who find the work either too easy or too hard.
- The teaching of spelling is not consistent. Pupils have regular weekly spelling tests but, where pupils struggle to get many of the words right, there are not enough opportunities to practise their spellings.
- Some teachers are not consistent in setting high standards for the way pupils set out their written work. The best examples are on display in classrooms and around the school, but in books the quality of written work from some pupils varies from week to week.
- At times boys, who are in the majority in every class, dominate whole-class discussions, for example in some class assemblies on internet safety.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils spoken to by inspectors said that they enjoy coming to school and most of their

lessons. This was confirmed by the large majority of parents responding to Parent View who said their children are happy in school.

- Pupils said that they feel safe in school. The large majority of parents responding to Parent View agreed with this. Pupils reported that they were confident in reporting any bullying incidents to adults should they arise.
- Pupils knew the definition of bullying when asked and the different forms it can take, including cyber bullying. They were confident in raising their concerns with adults, including the headteacher. Pupils devised the school's anti-bullying strategy themselves.
- Pupils on the school council, chaired by the headteacher, are confident in raising any issues or complaints they have with her directly. There are other opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibilities, such as being 'playmakers' at lunchtime.
- Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating and exercise. They all have the challenge set to walk a mile a day and some have taken over responsibility for the 'snack shack' promoting healthy food.
- The recent appointment of a learning mentor provides pupils with an opportunity to talk about their feelings and develop their self-esteem.
- Values, such as respect and love, are promoted through assemblies where pupils are taught to be considerate towards others.
- Some pupils do not consistently take pride in their written work.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- In most lessons, pupils conduct themselves well, with only a few instances of low-level, disruptive behaviour. They respond well when teachers ask for attention. Most are resilient and stay on task. They are, for the most part, polite and considerate with each other and to adults.
- During the inspection, inspectors saw no poor behaviour in the dining hall or on the playground at lunchtimes. There was a calm, orderly environment around the school. Pupils conducted themselves well before, during and after the whole-school assembly.
- The rate of attendance, which was previously below the national average, has now improved to be above the national average. Likewise, the proportion of persistent absences was, until last year, high but is now lower than the national average. Leaders have worked hard and with success to improve attendance, including for disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, by engaging with parents to elicit their support. There is regular contact with parents, where there are concerns about regular absences. Rewards to promote regular attendance are popular with pupils
- The school has not permanently excluded a pupil for several years. There has been a rise in the number of fixed-term exclusions and repeat exclusions for the same offence. This is attributed by leaders to their heightened expectations of behaviour in school. However, pupils reported that some more serious incidents still do occur occasionally, in one year group in particular.

- Most parents spoken to said that behaviour has improved overall, although some still had well-founded concerns about the behaviour of a small number of individuals in one year group. This was confirmed in lesson observations, during the inspection and by the scrutiny of leaders' analysis of behaviour incidents over time.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Current pupils are making strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics from their starting points at the end of Year 2. This is as a result of good teaching and effective additional support. Work seen in pupils' books indicates that all pupil groups, including most-able pupils, disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND, have made similarly strong progress.
- Work in books supports the school's own assessment information about the progress that different groups of pupils have made in each year group. Leaders' analysis for pupils in Years 5 and 6 indicates that the strong progress pupils have made over the last four terms is considerably above the rates of progress they were making previously.
- The progress pupils made in reading, writing and mathematics from the end of key stage 1 to the end of key stage 2 in 2017 and 2018 was below the national average. This included for middle- and high-attaining pupils and disadvantaged pupils. This is because of previous inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. In 2018, none of the Year 6 pupils had previously been identified as low attaining in the infant school.
- In the most recent tests and assessments in 2018, attainment at the end of Year 6 was below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- The progress pupils are currently making in one year group is not as good as it is in all other year groups. This is as a result of some disruption to teacher staffing and inconsistency in the quality of teaching.



## School details

Unique reference number	138431
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10085747

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	232
Appropriate authority	Griffin Schools Trust
Chair	Anne Powell
Headteacher	Suzanne Edwards
Telephone number	02476 490 644
Website	<a href="http://www.raceleys-gst.org">www.raceleys-gst.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:admin2615@welearn365.com">admin2615@welearn365.com</a>
Date of previous inspection	17-18 June 2014

## Information about this school

- Race Leys junior school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The school is in the lowest 20% of all schools for the proportion of girls on roll.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND is below the national average but rising over time.
- The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- The school is part of The Griffin Schools Trust.
- The trust disbanded the governing body in March 2018 and replaced it with an

improvement board, overseen by an executive trust board. The current chair of the improvement board is also the chief executive officer of the Griffin Trust.

- The headteacher and other senior leaders have all been appointed since the school was last inspected.
- Assessment information from the infant school indicates that attainment is higher than is typical for their age when pupils join the junior school. In last year's Year 6 cohort of 60 pupils, none had been identified as low attaining when they left the infant school four years previously.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 11 lessons or parts of lessons, of which all were jointly observed with the headteacher or another senior leader. In addition, inspectors made other short visits to lessons and other activities.
- Inspectors observed a whole-school assembly on the theme of 'all you need is love' and parts of four class assemblies on internet safety.
- Inspectors heard pupils read during lessons and scrutinised their written work in English, mathematics and other subjects.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, other leaders and members of staff, and spoke to a group of pupils.
- Inspectors met five members of the improvement board, including the chair, who is also the chief executive officer of the trust, and the trust's head of school improvement.
- Inspectors took account of 28 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View and 23 responses to the Parent View free-text service. Inspectors also spoke to 11 parents at the school gate. There were no responses to the staff survey nor to the pupil survey.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including those relating to the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans and the school's information on pupils' recent attainment and progress.
- Inspectors considered behaviour and attendance information, and policies and procedures relating to SEND, pupil premium funding, the PE and sport premium, safeguarding and child protection.

## Inspection team

Mark Sims, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Michael Appleby

Ofsted Inspector

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