

# Riverview Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	118454
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	291138
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21–22 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Alexander Paul Baxter

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	318
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Robin Friday
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Suggitt
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2001
<b>School address</b>	Cimba Wood Gravesend DA12 4SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01474 566484
<b>Fax number</b>	01474 331401

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<b>Age group</b>	4–7
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This infant school is above average in size and attracts pupils from a wide area. Children's attainment on entry varies from year to year, but broadly matches that expected for their age. However an increasingly large proportion of pupils are entering with delayed communication skills. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average, and increasing. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average although no pupils require support for English as an additional language.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding, very caring school. Under the astute leadership of the headteacher, dedicated staff work extremely effectively as a team to meet pupils' differing needs. Pupils develop outstanding personal qualities and achieve extremely well academically. Their behaviour and relationships are first class. Pupils are enthusiastic environmentalists and adopt safe, healthy lifestyles very diligently and knowledgeably. The school engenders a high level of confidence in the parents and this contributes in no small measure to the pupils' excellent attitudes to learning. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also excellent. A joy of learning underpins day-to-day activity throughout the school.

Teaching is excellent. Well prepared, knowledgeable staff promote pupils' learning through an excellent range of very stimulating curricular opportunities. Teaching is typified by its consistently good and better quality and the way pupils are fully engaged in their learning. Teachers and their assistants question the pupils perceptively. They are also skilled at encouraging pupils to think and to explain their answers. These strategies develop pupils' understanding very well and promote excellent achievement. Links with outside agencies and others have a very beneficial impact on the pupils' well-being and support the outstanding quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils. This enables all pupils to flourish both academically and personally.

Children have a very successful start in Reception, especially in developing the personal and communication skills needed to succeed in a learning community. They have very good opportunities to learn through play in the classrooms, but not all classes have easy access to the outdoor play area and this inhibits their ability to choose to learn outdoors on occasion. All pupils, including pupils with learning difficulties and higher attainers, achieve extremely well as they move through the school. Standards are above average by Year 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils also make very good progress in speaking and listening to achieve above average skills.

Leadership and management are outstanding. All senior managers, including governors, are fully involved in evaluating the impact of their work on pupils' academic and personal progress. Although at times modest in how it sees itself, the school uses self-evaluation in a very effective way to ensure that aspects needing improvement are identified and strengthened. Leaders and managers monitor and have improved teaching and learning very effectively. This is seen in the consistently high quality of teaching in all classes. The higher standards and ongoing improvement, in pupils' writing, for example, also clearly demonstrate this. The school is extremely well placed to continue future improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve access to outdoor learning facilities for children in some Reception classes so they can exercise more choice about when to learn outside.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 1

By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2 their standards are above average. Many make outstanding progress. Attainment is broadly average when children start school. This can vary from year-to-year as increasing numbers of children enter with speech and language difficulties

and delays. Children make very good progress overall in Reception. Many children make outstanding achievements in their personal, social and emotional development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Many also do very well in mathematics. By the time they enter Year 1 most achieve, and several exceed the expected learning goals. Progress is excellent in Years 1 and 2, in response to the pupils' enthusiasm as learners and consistently very effective teaching. Most pupils reach the challenging targets set for them. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, mathematics, science and speaking and listening. Although not yet as high, standards in writing are slightly above average and continue to rise throughout the school. This stems from a successful whole school emphasis, which includes giving pupils more opportunities to write.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Throughout the school pupils' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Pupils are nurtured most effectively from the moment they enter school. They quickly become considerate members of a very caring community and make excellent contributions to the school and wider community. The vast majority of pupils are extremely well behaved, well motivated and interested in their learning. A very small number of pupils with behavioural and emotional needs respond well to very effective support. Pupils are very enthusiastic learners and really enjoy school and this is seen in their good attendance. Pupils say, 'We love coming to this school because there are lovely children and lovely teachers.'

Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with staff. These encourage pupils to share ideas and work co-operatively in and out of lessons. Pupils undertake responsibilities diligently, for example as members of the school council. This is also seen at playtimes when 'Eco Workers' pick up litter and live up to their promise to 'look after our school environment and make it a nice place to be'. This commitment by the pupils contributed to the 'Tidy School' and 'Kent's Greenest School' awards in 2006. The pupils' environmental and social awareness also supports their knowledgeable and wholehearted adoption of healthy, safe living. The pupils' social and academic skills, including in information and communication technology (ICT), prepare them extremely well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teaching has a cumulative and very positive impact on pupils' achievement. It is lively and interesting and is seen in the pupils' high levels of enjoyment in learning. Teachers make sure that pupils are presented with stimulating experiences. They use ICT very skilfully, for example interactive whiteboards, which give a visual image to reinforce the pupils' understanding of a concept and show more clearly how something works. Pupils respond enthusiastically to the many practical activities, especially in mathematics and science. Occasionally introductions are too long and the pace of learning slows. All teachers challenge pupils' thinking by using perceptive questioning and press for responses. When working at solving problems teachers often encourage pupils to explain the strategies they use in coming to a solution. This is successful and consolidates new learning. Teachers and their assistants use assessment effectively to meet pupils' individual learning needs and to set challenging targets for their improvement.

## Curriculum and other activities

### Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is extremely well matched to all pupils' needs and interests, ensuring that children and pupils enjoy their work and achieve well. There is an excellent range of stimulating, practical learning activities with an accurate balance of independent and co-operative learning opportunities. These enable pupils to develop their personal and social skills extremely well. Literacy and numeracy now receive a very strong emphasis. The school places a strong focus on environmental issues. This promotes the pupils' awareness of these issues, and of healthy, safe living, most effectively. Partnerships with parents and the community also extend the learning opportunities provided for the pupils. All children in Reception enjoy stimulating learning indoors and outdoors. However, some children do not have immediate access to the designated well equipped outdoor play area, limiting their chosen activities at times. The curriculum is enriched highly effectively by visits to places of interest, visitors to school and opportunities to participate in a very good range of clubs. These add considerably to the pupils' enjoyment.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are exceptional and promote pupils' personal development and well-being extremely effectively. The high quality of the pastoral support provides an ethos, and a school environment in which pupils flourish both socially and academically. Teachers give very effective academic guidance to the pupils. As a result, pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do next to improve. Most pupils meet and some exceed their challenging targets. The pupils also receive outstanding pastoral care and this promotes their personal development and well-being extremely effectively. In the words of one child, 'I like this school because if you are upset there is always someone there to help you.' Pupils' well-being is fully secured by established procedures for child protection, safeguarding children and risk assessment. These are understood and implemented rigorously by staff. The school works very effectively with outside agencies to support pupils with learning and behavioural needs.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She is extremely well supported by senior managers, including governors. Together they set, monitor and proceed along a clear pathway of continuous improvement. Staff at every level are fully involved and contribute to the success of the school. This highly effective team approach nurtures the pupils' outstanding personal development, secures their well-being and promotes good academic achievement. Diligent leadership ensures that the pastoral support given to the pupils is exemplary. Parents are consulted regularly and their views are valued and acted upon. Even though the school is too modest about its effectiveness, it has an excellent approach to evaluating performance. This is very evident in its proven ability to address any identified areas for development. For example, teaching and learning are monitored very carefully. Information is shared with colleagues to embed consistently good and better practice throughout the school. Leadership and management are clearly highly effective in meeting pupils' needs. This tangible track record of bringing about improvement, more recently the

improvement in pupils' writing, shows that the school has a very good capacity to continue this into the future.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. It was a real pleasure to see how you learn and play and to hear what you had to say about your school. We agree with you and with many of your parents who feel that Riverview Infants is an outstanding school. These are the main things we found out about your school:

- You make excellent progress and the standards you reach in Year 2 are better than in many schools. Quite a few of you do even better in reading and mathematics.
- The effort you put into your learning, your behaviour and the way you care and respect each other are outstanding.
- You are given an excellent range of learning activities and it was uplifting to see how much you enjoy being at school.
- Your headteacher and senior managers lead and manage the school very successfully.
- All the adults in the school care for you exceedingly well. They show you how to live healthy, safe lives and you show that you are learning to do this very well indeed.
- Teaching is excellent. The teachers and their assistants know you very well and are always encouraging you to do even better.

To help the school to improve we have asked the headteacher and governors to make it easier for children in some Reception classes to choose to and go outside to learn and play.

Please continue to look after each other and keep your enthusiasm for learning. Thank you once again and good luck in the future.