

# Riders Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115908
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312102
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Grove

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>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	227
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Emmonds
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Dean
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 October 2003
<b>School address</b>	Kingsclere Avenue Leigh Park Havant PO9 4RY
<b>Telephone number</b>	02392 475342
<b>Fax number</b>	02392 481139

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average-sized primary school is situated in a large estate north of Portsmouth, in an area of high social and economic deprivation. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is high. Almost nine in every ten pupils are of White British heritage. The parents of most other pupils prefer not to state their ethnic background. No pupils have English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very high, and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. The school has been awarded status as a Healthy School (Enhanced Level).

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Riders Junior is a good school with significant strengths. It has a strong ethos based on excellent levels of pastoral care for pupils and excellent relationships, which support good academic achievement. The headteacher has a convincing vision for the school. He has set a very clear direction, which is shared by staff and governors.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils are pleased to talk about how much they enjoy school. 'Learning is fun, and teachers give you the confidence to learn' explained one. Their very positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute significantly to their learning, and to the quality of lessons. As a result, their enjoyment of school is outstanding. The school's caring atmosphere fosters pupils' personal development very well. Attendance is below average, but has improved. The school is working for improvement on this issue.

Pupils achieve well. When they enter the school, their attainment is well below the national average. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress, so that their standards are higher, although they remain below average. Results for pupils in Year 6 in 2007 showed higher standards than in the previous year. Pupils' attainment improved in English, mathematics and science, as a result of good teaching. The excellent assessment and tracking system enables the school to identify any pupils who are not making good progress, and to take effective action. For example, any pupils who make limited progress because of their low attainment are quickly identified and provided with additional support.

Pupils' learning is very well supported by their relationships with teachers and support staff, and by the good quality of the teaching and the curriculum. Pupils display very positive attitudes to work, because teachers make learning interesting. On occasions, however, more capable pupils could be set more demanding tasks. The school makes many good adaptations to the curriculum for particular groups of pupils. However, there are not enough opportunities to apply writing skills in other subjects. The care, guidance and support offered to pupils are good. Pastoral care is excellent. Ensuring pupils' enjoyment, self-confidence and security is a principle which underpins the school. The personal support and guidance offered to pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, are very good. Pupils are clear about their targets in English and mathematics. However, the school does not give pupils consistent opportunities to assess their own progress towards those targets.

With the able support of the deputy headteacher, and the other two members of the senior management team, the headteacher provides good leadership. The school's partnership with outside agencies, feeder schools, local businesses and with parents is outstanding. This is well illustrated by the parent who wrote: 'Riders School takes into account the whole family and not just the child - it goes the extra mile'. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection through better use of assessment information and a more developed role for subject managers. The capacity to make further improvements is therefore good.

### What the school should do to improve further

In order to raise standards further in English, mathematics and science, the school should:

- extend pupils' opportunities for writing in different subjects
- set tasks which are more challenging for able pupils

- improve the effectiveness of target-setting arrangements for individual pupils to give them more opportunities to assess their own progress
- improve pupils' rates of attendance

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' achievement is good. On entry to the school, pupils' attainment is well below average, and this is consistent year by year. In recent years, the standards which pupils reach in national tests by the time they leave the school have been significantly below average. However, over that period, there has been a gently rising trend in pupils' results. Thus attainment at Year 6 has improved to below average, and this indicates that pupils make good progress. There was a more marked improvement in 2007, with a higher proportion of pupils reaching average standards in each of English, maths and science, and a greater percentage attaining the high Level 5 standard. The school is aware that girls did not perform as well as boys in mathematics and science in 2006, and checked that the same pattern was not occurring in 2007. Given the low starting points of many pupils on arrival, they make good progress during their time at the school. The very high proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities make the same good progress as other pupils.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is consistently good. Attendance is improving, but it is still below the national average despite the school's relentless efforts to reverse the situation. Action includes an annual incentive for good attendance in the form of two bicycles presented by one of the school's business sponsors. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe and stay healthy. They make a significant contribution to their school and the wider community through their musical performances, their involvement in caring for the environment and various fund-raising activities. The very active school council has already made changes to playtime activities, and helped to introduce healthy options in the 'tuck shop'. The good opportunities which pupils have to develop different work habits and self-confidence, alongside their good achievement in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills, prepare them well for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

In their planning, teachers set clear objectives for learning. In class, teachers show high expectations of pupils. The very good pace of lessons and good organisation of activities maintain pupils' concentration well. The interactive whiteboards are well used to create interest. An outstanding lesson on how to write descriptively provided a good instance of how teachers build on their trusting relationships with pupils. The teacher first gave pupils an imaginative experience through drama and other speaking and listening activities. This prepared pupils very well for the subsequent writing task of describing feelings of suspense, so that they made good progress. Tasks are mostly well matched to pupils' differing attainment, but more capable pupils are sometimes given work that is not sufficiently demanding. Learning support assistants provide particularly well for the many pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' written

work is regularly marked with positive comments, but these are not always linked to targets or to the next steps in learning.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The low starting points for many pupils mean that the school has rightly focused on literacy and numeracy skills. This has helped to raise achievement. The school offers carefully planned enrichment activities for particular pupils, for example through the 'Excellence and Enjoyment' project. This, along with well conceived individual programmes, is helping pupils of all abilities to reach their full potential. Pupils' understanding of how to stay healthy and safe is reinforced through the personal, social and health education programme and through visitors such as the school nurse. There are good links between different subjects, for example 'pyramid mathematics' in Year 5 connects with the history project on Egypt. However, the school acknowledges that not enough is done to extend pupils' writing through different subjects. Music is a strength, and pupils are proud that most of them can play an instrument. The school offers French lessons to all year groups. The curriculum is enhanced by special events, such as Science Week, and by an array of clubs, visits and sporting activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Special provision such as the emotional literacy programme and the nurture group is helping pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties to take an active role in school life. The outstanding partnerships with others also help pupils to develop their personal skills alongside their academic achievement. Pupils feel confident to move on to the next stage in their education as a result of the good impact of the home/school link worker. The procedures to protect and safeguard pupils meet statutory requirements, and are clearly understood by all staff. There are thorough risk assessments for school trips and regular health and safety checks of the school building. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is strong. The excellent strategies to assess pupils' progress lead where necessary to additional support, resulting in good achievement. The marking of pupils' work provides them with positive feedback. However, pupils' involvement in assessing how far they are reaching their targets varies between classes.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a major focus on nurturing staff and developing their professional skills, with the result that teaching is improving. Challenging targets are set in the determination to raise performance, and some of these have been exceeded. The system for assessing pupils and tracking their progress is very well managed and is highly effective, and the school makes good use of this assessment information. Feedback to class teachers about weaknesses in pupils' performance leads to additional support for those identified. There is also effective management of provision for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Information from the monitoring of teaching and of the curriculum, and from self-evaluation, is well used to improve the quality of learning in the school. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and provides good challenge to improve through playing the role of 'critical friend'. Parents warmly acknowledge the school's strengths.

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## Inspection judgements

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

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

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

<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>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

19 October 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Riders Junior School, Havant, PO9 4RY

We would like to thank all of you, and your teachers, for your help during the inspection. We enjoyed seeing you at work in your classrooms and talking to you at playtimes and lunchtimes. We think Riders Junior is a good school and a happy place for pupils. One of you said to us that 'Learning is fun, and teachers give you the confidence to learn'. This sums up your school very well.

These are the things we most liked:

- you greatly enjoy school, and you behave well indoors and outdoors
- you have excellent relationships with the teachers and other adults in your school. They take excellent care of you, and that helps you to learn well
- your headteacher and the other school leaders are good at their jobs. They know what is good about your school and they want to make it even better
- you get good teaching and as a result most of you are making good progress
- you are getting a good chance to do things like music, French and school clubs as well as literacy and numeracy
- more of you are getting better results in the Year 6 tests in English, mathematics and science
- your mums and dads are very pleased with the school
- your school has excellent relationships with your parents, the infant and secondary schools and the people they ask to come in to help you

We have asked your school to help all of you to go on getting better at English, mathematics and science by:

- giving you more chances to practise writing in other subjects
- setting harder work for clever pupils
- giving all of you better chances to see how well you are achieving your targets in English and mathematics
- helping more pupils to come to school every day of the school year

We wish you all every success in the future. Thank you again.

Yours faithfully

Chris Grove Lead Inspector