

Reedings Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	117280
Local Authority	Hertfordshire
Inspection number	338984
Inspection dates	7–8 July 2010
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	244
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Keith Hutt
Headteacher	Ann Arrandale
Date of previous school inspection	4 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 11 lessons taught by eight different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 117 parents and carers were also considered.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how consistently pupils make progress, particularly those who are potential high attainers
- the school's evidence for the view that pupils make good, rather than satisfactory, progress
- how consistent and effective teaching is and how well staff use assessment to plan work with sufficient challenge for pupils
- how accurately school leaders, including governors, evaluate the work of the school.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized junior school which serves the town of Sawbridgeworth. The school population is predominantly White British, with a small number of pupils coming from other ethnic backgrounds. Of these, very few are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Good leadership has enabled the school to sustain and build upon the strengths recognised at its last inspection. Pupils make good progress, particularly in mathematics, leading to above average standards by the end of Year 6. There is ample evidence from lessons and pupils' work that the impact of teaching is good. A significant number of lessons are outstanding. The marking of pupils' written work is mostly good, providing pupils with clear guidance about the next steps in learning. There is some exemplary practice in Year 5. In spite of the school's efforts, however, some issues still exist with pupils' writing skills and this continues to be an area for improvement.

Parents and carers are appreciative of the school's commitment to pupils' well-being and personal development. Pupils greatly enjoy school and feel exceptionally safe.

Attendance is above average. Pupils are sociable and mature, with very positive attitudes to learning. The large majority have an excellent understanding of how to maintain healthy lifestyles and there is a very high level of participation in the many opportunities for games and physical activity which the school offers. Several are enthusiastically involved with the school's gardening activities. They have a vision for the world as they would like it to be and there is a great commitment to eco-issues.

The good curriculum enables pupils to extend their good basic skills in literacy and numeracy. Pupils have good skills in information and communication technology, although these are not applied consistently in other subjects. Excellent extra-curricular and enrichment provision contributes very well to pupils' good personal development. The school amasses a great deal of assessment data and teachers use this information well to evaluate the progress of individual pupils. However, the school does not always see the bigger picture in terms of the trajectory of progress across the school, between year groups and classes and within subjects. Governors are very committed to the school and monitor many aspects of its work well. Some teachers make use of individual targets in writing and mathematics, but these have less impact in writing than in mathematics. Academically gifted pupils are mainly supported through specific planning in lessons, although regular, if infrequent, enrichment activities are offered by the school.

The school's engagement with partner institutions, mainly with a specialist secondary school and with multi-agency staff, is good. The governing body understands its role and increasingly holds school leaders to account. It is not as focused on pupils' learning and progress as on other aspects of provision and outcomes. The school has good capacity for improvement because good outcomes have been sustained, particularly in pupils' personal development, the leadership team has been strengthened, the teaching team is skilled and committed and self-evaluation is realistic, with clear priorities.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing through:
 - more rigorous monitoring of standards from the time children enter Year 3, particularly in handwriting
 - more effective use of individual writing targets
 - providing more frequent opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to write independently and at length.
- Ensure that school leaders analyse available data more rigorously, so that they have a clear view of the rate and extent of the progress pupils make within subjects and year groups.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Year on year, the school has successfully sustained above-average standards at the end of Year 6, although they dipped slightly in 2010 when compared with those from 2009. Writing is a slightly weaker element, mainly because of relatively poor handwriting and missed opportunities to write extensively and independently in a range of subjects. Evidence from lessons and written work clearly indicates that pupils make good progress across the curriculum. High staff expectations mean that pupils acquire knowledge in depth across the expected range of subjects, as well as in literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities mostly make good progress because their needs are appropriately planned for and teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support their learning.

Given the strength of the teaching, pupils' learning is seldom less than good. Quite often it is better than that. Outstanding learning was evident, for example, in a very successful Year 5 literacy lesson where pupils were developing their skills in critically evaluating cinematic production techniques, such as the use of music, the effect of the vibrancy of colour and the use of symbols, to achieve particular effects in film. The lesson had pace and provided a high level of challenge. Excellent questioning required pupils to reflect and to express their feelings. More able pupils work alongside others, leading to some very productive collaboration. In an outstanding Year 4 literacy lesson, pupils were exploring the challenges and constraints of converting a story, Red Riding Hood, into a play. There was a high level of pupil involvement through role play and pupils were required to be creative in their reinvention of the text, using technical terms confidently. The teaching encouraged pupils to take risks in their presentations and to push their learning still further. In these respects, the lesson was highly successful.

Behaviour is good overall. In the best lessons it is exemplary. Pupils say that bullying is very rare. There are few exclusions. School councillors are keen to influence what happens in school. Older pupils take responsibility for those who are younger, including roles as buddies and playleaders. Pupils' excellent social skills, mature attitudes and strong basic skills ensure that they are well prepared for later life. Their spiritual, moral and cultural development is excellent. They undertake some excellent work on

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eco-issues. Moral debates and discussions form the bedrock of pupils' personal, social and health education. An excellent assembly provided some superb opportunities for reflection and a strong message about coping with change at the end of the school year.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The key driver of the good progress pupils make is the quality of the teaching. Most teaching is at least good, with a significant proportion of outstanding practice, and this is reflected in the good progress pupils make over time. Pupils' recorded work indicates a thorough approach across the curriculum. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and pupils' behaviour is efficiently managed. Teachers recognise the range of ability in each class and lessons generally provide appropriate challenge. Occasionally, however, planning does not fully extend the most able pupils and pace is sometimes slow, especially when teachers talk for longer than is necessary. Marking is generally good, with developmental comments to enable pupils to improve their work, and is exemplary in one Year 5 class. Individual targets are not used consistently enough to ensure that pupils make more rapid progress in writing.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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In most respects, the curriculum supports the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills well. Pupils' recorded work indicates that science, history and geography are taught thoroughly and regularly. The curriculum successfully meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. A satisfactory start has been made on supporting academically gifted pupils beyond the normal provision in lessons. The school is committed to covering all expected subjects as fully as it can - and largely does so - although it is still working to identify links across the curriculum, so ensuring that learning is efficient. Effective links with a partner school enhance provision in physical education and French. Good personal, social, health and citizenship education promotes pupils' personal development well. There is an excellent range of visits and visitors and many well-supported extra-curricular activities.

Staff care for pupils well. Transition arrangements are good. The school works closely with support agencies, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. There is much good practice in the support for the health, social, behavioural and transition needs of all pupils, in particular those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Systems to promote good attendance are effective.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The school's success is driven by strong teamwork and the effective sharing of best practice. The senior leadership team has been significantly strengthened this year by the appointment of a new deputy headteacher. School leaders have been particularly successful in their leadership and management of pastoral care and pupils' personal development. They are also committed to ensuring that pupils make better progress and this is supported by effective monitoring of teaching with feedback to support improvement. This has led to a high proportion of teaching being good or outstanding. Rigorous systems exist for tracking individual pupils' progress. The school's analysis and evaluation of assessment data does not extend to the progress of different subjects, classes and groups. Consequently, the school is not sufficiently aware of potential variations in progress between these groups.

The governing body is committed to helping shape the direction of the school. Governors understand the school's strengths and are closely involved in shaping its future. They have good general monitoring systems, and have a rigorous approach to the evaluation of pupils' learning and progress through the use of the school's analysis

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of assessment data. The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils, and ensures that roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined. Governors give a high priority to ensuring pupils' safety and well-being. The school is strongly committed to tackling discrimination and all pupils have access to the same opportunities. This is evident in the school's good efforts to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are included fully. The school makes good efforts to reach out to parents. The school promotes community cohesion well. There are good links with the local community. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about the immediate local area in lessons and to visit the places of worship of other faith groups. Global links are well developed, with several active links, and there is some provision in relation to engaging with more diverse communities within the United Kingdom.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the school and what it does for their children. One said, 'A great school. I am pleased with the learning and behaviour.' A small number of concerns were raised, some of which related to the level of challenge in lessons and the progress pupils make, and others about communication and to the leadership of the school. The inspection team judges that, overall, pupils make good progress. In writing, particularly, the team felt that pupils could make even faster progress by greater use of individual targets by teachers. The school feels that communication is good. The leadership team has been

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strengthened and school leaders are confident that this will significantly improve the capacity of the team.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Reedings Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 117 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 244 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	41	63	54	5	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	60	51	51	44	5	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	41	35	64	55	9	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	37	58	50	15	13	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	33	62	53	11	9	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	38	32	60	51	14	12	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	45	38	66	56	5	4	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	41	35	66	56	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	29	67	57	9	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	19	68	58	11	9	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	11	76	65	12	10	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	22	19	71	61	12	10	4	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	33	28	68	58	11	9	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Reedings Junior School, Sawbridgeworth CM21 9DD

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you and spending time in your lessons. We found that yours is a good school, which continues to improve.

Our main findings are these:

- you generally work hard and behave well
- you are making good progress across the school and standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- you undertake lots of jobs and make a good contribution to the school.
- teaching and learning are mostly good and quite often outstanding, and you feel that teachers make lessons enjoyable and support you well
- you attend school as often as you can, feel extremely safe and have an excellent awareness of the importance of eating healthily and staying fit, with a high proportion of you taking part in sport and physical activities at school
- you study all the subjects you should and have the opportunity to experience a good variety of clubs and out-of-school activities
- those of you who find learning difficult get good support
- school leaders work hard to ensure that you are well looked after.

We are asking the school to make the following changes so that you can do even better:

- raise standards in writing from the time pupils enter the school, focusing on improving your handwriting and giving you more opportunities to write extensively and independently in a range of subjects
- make more use of data about your progress in different classes, subjects and other groups.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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