

# Ravensdale Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	112760
<b>Local Authority</b>	Derby City
<b>Inspection number</b>	344394
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 March 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judith Matharu HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills (HMCI) the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	271
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs A Wheway
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs P Martin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 October 2008
<b>School address</b>	Devonshire Drive Mickleover Derby
<b>Telephone number</b>	01332 512373
<b>Fax number</b>	01332 512373
<b>Email address</b>	head@ravensdalej.derby.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Most of the available time was spent looking at learning. Inspectors visited 16 lessons, ensuring that all teachers were seen. Meetings were held with members of the leadership team, governors and three groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at pupils' work and a range of school documentation including test results, pupils' progress data, attendance figures, school policies, self-evaluation and improvement planning. They also scrutinised statutory policies and procedures for pupils' safety and well-being. The lead inspector conducted two joint lesson observations with the headteacher and a learning walk around the school, visiting every class.

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

- the progress being made by all pupils
- the quality of teaching and whether this is sufficiently challenging and effective enough to promote improvements in attainment and progress of all pupils
- the systems in place to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in driving school improvement.

## Information about the school

Ravensdale Junior is an average sized school. Most pupils are of White British origin, with the proportion from minority ethnic groups around the national average. A small proportion of pupils are learning to speak English as an additional language; these pupils are mainly Japanese. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average but, of these, an above average number has a statement of special educational needs. The school has Health Promoting Schools and Eco Schools Status, holds the Activemark award, and the International Schools Award. Since the last inspection, a new deputy headteacher has been appointed and there has been one appointment to the teaching staff. The headteacher joined the school in September 2008. When the school was last inspected, it was made subject to special measures.

**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?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The main reasons why the school's overall effectiveness is now satisfactory, and why it provides satisfactory value for money are:

- teaching has improved significantly and is now suitably challenging pupils of all abilities
- learning is more active; pupils are engaged well and enthusiastic about their involvement in lessons
- pupils' progress and achievement has improved due to better teaching and closer monitoring and tracking of their progress by class teachers and senior leaders
- the leadership of the school has strengthened significantly at all levels in securing many improvements evident in the school's work.

A number of key strengths are now evident in the school's work, including:

- consistently good teaching that stretches pupils and inspires their interest
- the good use made of the pupil voice and extensive opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, particularly through the roles of school councillors, eco leaders or mini-leaders
- good quality support and guidance for all pupils, particularly those who are more vulnerable to enable them to succeed and achieve their best. The range of interventions implemented and support provided for vulnerable individuals and groups is highly effective.
- an imaginative curriculum that includes a range of interesting and creative activities; these enable pupils to link topics and join up aspects of their learning in order to reinforce understanding.
- the capacity of the leadership team to drive and sustain improvement is now good. This is due to accurate self-evaluation and robust tackling of the issues arising from the last inspection to good effect. This arises through strong and purposeful leadership from the headteacher and leadership team, including governors.

Overall, the improvements made since the last inspection are considerable. In particular, the attention paid to improving attainment and progress has paid dividends in English, with good progress evident across all year groups. However, results have been slower to improve in mathematics and science. Both subjects are receiving greater scrutiny from school leaders and in mathematics, in particular, a range of improvement activities has been successfully introduced. During this inspection, learning in both of these subjects was good and it is clear that improved teaching is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' progress, although there is still some way to go to achieve consistently good

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progress in both mathematics and science.

Despite the improvements evident in teaching, the marking of pupils' work remains inconsistent. Despite some good practice, in some instances this does not provide sharp or clear enough guidance for individuals and is not followed up sufficiently in order to have maximum impact on learning.

The quality of leadership across the school is impressive. However, several curriculum leaders have new responsibilities and are in the early stages of establishing their roles in monitoring and evaluating pupils' work and progress.

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

- – Improve the progress made by pupils to good levels overall by:
  - supporting professional development activities in mathematics to boost teachers' confidence and expertise
  - ensuring all teachers consistently use and reinforce the school's revised calculations policy
  - developing the investigative mathematics approaches being used successfully by some teachers
  - developing investigative and practical work in science in order to inspire pupils' interest and imagination.
- Ensure that the school's marking policy is consistently completed across the school and matches the best practice evident by:
  - providing guidance to pupils through small steps on how to improve, of a personalised rather than generic nature
  - paying attention to pupils' follow-up work after marking advice.
- Build the confidence and expertise of all curriculum leaders in monitoring and evaluating work and progress in their areas.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**3**

Significantly improved teaching and rigorous tracking of pupils' progress have resulted in improved outcomes in learning across the school for all pupils. Attainment in English has improved and is now in line with expectations, with pupils of all abilities making consistently good progress in this subject. This was seen in literacy lessons, with higher attaining pupils, for example, now more consistently challenged in order to achieve Level 5.

Although over time, results in mathematics have been slower to improve, the school's current tracking and lesson observations indicate that, due to improvements in teaching, pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall. However, several teachers do not

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yet have full confidence in applying the school's new numeracy policies and approaches, and these require further consolidation. In the last two years, results in science have not been as high as might be expected. The extended period of absence of the curriculum leader has hindered the development of a suitably inspiring science curriculum; an aspect of the school's work that is currently in a period of transition and development. However, in the inspection, pupils were judged to be making improved progress in this subject, particularly in Year 6, where exciting, practical science lessons were observed. The progress of pupils with a wide range of special educational needs is good. This results from a combination of specialist support and carefully planned, effective interventions by teaching assistants and the good individual support provided by the school's learning mentor. The school's inclusive approach supports those with acute learning difficulties or disabilities well; there are several children who are now succeeding having been unsuccessful in other schools.

Pupils are happy, eager and confident learners. Most of them enjoy school, and feel safe and well supported. Their relationships with adults in school are good. During the lessons observed, pupils participated in activities with enthusiasm and good concentration. They behave well, both in lessons and around the school. A large number of pupils take up the many opportunities provided for responsibility with delight and demonstrate pride in their achievements. They were keen to tell inspectors about the work of the school council in organising lunchtime clubs and a tuck shop selling fruit and fair trade goods. They also talked enthusiastically about their responsibilities as eco-councillors and those undertaken as mini-leaders or helpers at the infant school. The school community is a close-knit and supportive one, where every individual's strengths are known and celebrated.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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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<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b> Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	<b>3</b>
	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Lively, interesting lessons were observed. The features of the consistently good teaching seen were:

- detailed lesson planning that identifies different learning activities for pupils of varying abilities
- the use of a range of interesting activities to ensure that pupils are active, have the opportunity to work in pairs and groups, and take responsibility at appropriate times
- effective use of information and communication technology to stimulate learning
- planned opportunities for a variety of assessment activities to determine whether pupils understand their work and are ready to move on.

In an outstanding literacy lesson, pupils were challenged to think about how we deduce more about a character than is actually written. Well-chosen examples were projected on the board and then personalised as pupils thought of other examples. The teacher acknowledged pupils' efforts and sensitive responses but did not hesitate to elaborate or show how these might be improved. The film clip that followed was in Japanese, which meant that the majority of pupils had to deduce information from clues other than language. Pupils' responses were highly imaginative; they used good vocabulary to reveal deep insights and made excellent progress in their learning as a result of the carefully structured lesson and well-chosen materials.

In many of the lessons observed, after a lively teacher input or starter activity, pupils were required to work in pairs or groups in collaborative learning to extend their thinking. Their speaking and listening skills were reinforced well by reporting back on their findings and evaluating each other's contributions. This approach is building confident, independent learners who work well with others and are developing good inter-personal skills.

Teachers have a clear view of the progress that their pupils are making. This is because the school's system for tracking pupil progress is consistently applied and rigorously followed up. Half-termly pupil review meetings with senior leaders are useful in identifying any emerging concerns and enabling interventions to be targeted. While the tracking of progress is now good, the consistency of marking remains variable and is not always as helpful as it could be in guiding improvement.

While there has been concentration on developing the key skills of literacy and numeracy, in recent months attention has turned to developing a varied and interesting curriculum. Liaison work with the feeder infant school and partner secondary school has

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increased and is improving transitions between phases. While more can be done to develop the cross-curricular dimensions that are emerging, the current curriculum provides a rich programme of interesting learning activities that contribute well to pupils' development and well-being. It is enriched by a wealth of additional experiences such as the inclusion of visitors into classrooms, visiting speakers in assemblies and a full range of trips and visits, including a residential trip to France for Year 6 pupils. Provision is adjusted effectively to meet the needs of particular groups and pupils with highly specific needs. A growing range of clubs and extra-curricular sports interest pupils, who take these up with pleasure.

There are good arrangements in place to provide pastoral and academic guidance and support for all pupils. There is clear evidence of the school's support procedures having a positive effect on the development of vulnerable pupils and helping many to overcome barriers to learning. Effective liaison with partner agencies plays an important part in this work.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

Improved leadership and management at all levels is a significant feature of the school's continuing improvement. Many positive features were evident at inspection.

The vision, energy and determination of the headteacher has been a key driving force in securing ongoing improvement. She has engaged and motivated staff in tackling the issues identified at the last inspection while retaining their commitment and support.

The capacity of the leadership team to drive and sustain improvement has strengthened considerably through the appointment of a deputy headteacher and the strengths evident in the work and effectiveness of governors. Governors are led confidently by an energetic Chair, and are well trained, clear about their role and remit, and achieve a good balance in suitably challenging and supporting the school.

Self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate, informed by close monitoring of the quality of teaching and careful tracking of pupils' progress at regular intervals. Underachievement is tackled vigorously to ensure that all pupils have an equal chance to succeed and any gaps evident between different groups can be closed.

Curriculum leaders have a growing understanding of their role and importance in sharing leadership and raising achievement.

Since the last inspection, effective work has been undertaken in engaging parents and



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carers; numerous consultations have taken place about aspects of school policy and practice. Feedback from these consultations indicates that relationships with parents are mostly positive.

Careful and thorough attention is paid to matters of child protection, pupils' safety and well-being. All safeguarding requirements are met and consistent efforts made to advise pupils about how to keep themselves safe.

Inspiring leadership and relentless attention to detail has created a determined, collaborative team approach. These have been the cornerstones of this improvement. Consequently, staff confidence in their ability to drive improvement and implement change has been raised. However, there is still work to do here, in order to ensure that new curriculum leaders have greater impact. One of the important outcomes of the work undertaken to enhance pupils' personal development and well-being is the fostering of an integrated and cohesive school community. Promising plans are in place to extend this further in partnership with the local community. However, at present this has not made significant impact in developing pupils' understanding of communities beyond their own.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Views of parents and carers**

During the inspection, the lead inspector spoke informally with a number of parents. These parents were positive about the many improvements evident in the school's work. They appreciate the consultations about various aspects of school life and feel that their children are well supported and happy in school. Several of these parents praised the

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work of the headteacher in promoting a wide range of improvements. Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for monitoring inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

## **Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire**

Parental questionnaires are not normally distributed for inspections conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005, unless inspectors have specific reasons to request that the school does so.

# 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.**



13 March 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravensdale Junior School, Derby DE3 9EY

I am writing to you about the recent inspection of your school. Thank you for your friendly welcome and the way you discussed school matters with inspectors. I am pleased to tell you that we found many aspects of your school have improved and we decided that your school no longer requires 'special measures'. This is due to the continued hard work of everyone in school, including the good work we saw from you in your lessons. Well done everyone!

Ravensdale School is a place to be proud of, as many of you told us. The teaching you receive is consistently good and, as a result, you are now making better progress with your learning. Your lessons are lively and interesting and the curriculum has improved to include many interesting activities that many of you are enjoying, judging by the happy, smiling faces we saw throughout the inspection!

We were impressed with your good behaviour and your personal skills. Many of you are confident children who love getting involved in everything offered and enjoy your time in school. We particularly noticed how well you work together in groups, support each other in activities and have fun in learning. Most of you are very considerate of the needs of others.

Mrs Martin, your teachers and governors have done a great job in improving Ravensdale and of course, they want the school to get even better! Therefore, we have asked your school staff to continue working hard at improving your results and progress in maths so that these match those in English. We have also suggested that the exciting work we saw Year 6 doing in science should be developed across the school. We feel that some of the marking of your work could be better, so that you are clear what to do to improve and suggested that your teachers should go back to this regularly to see if you have followed their advice. You can help here by taking notice of their comments and trying to act upon these.

We wish you every success in the future and look forward to hearing how well you are doing at Ravensdale.

Yours sincerely

Judith Matharu

Her Majesty's Inspector

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