

# The Ryde School

Pleasant Rise, Hatfield, AL9 5DR

## Inspection dates

14–15 January 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- All groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects, including reading, writing and mathematics. They make particularly good progress in Key Stage 2.
- Leaders have responded quickly and effectively to the issues identified at the previous inspection so that there is now consistently good teaching across all subjects and year groups.
- The provision for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is well planned, appropriate to their needs and helps them to make good progress.
- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils and staff work together to create a caring and calm environment.
- Pupils' attendance is above average. They enjoy school and feel safe.
- The headteacher provides clear leadership. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors.
- The school's self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders take decisive actions that ensure continuous improvement to the quality of teaching, behaviour, and achievement.
- Governors provide a good level of challenge and support to the school. They are ambitious for high standards of attainment and progress for all pupils.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Marking in other subjects does not reflect the good practice in English. Teachers do not show pupils clearly enough how they can improve their work, or ensure that they act on the comments they make.
- Learning activities do not always interest pupils, extend their learning and deepen understanding so that they make good progress in the lesson
- There are insufficient opportunities across a range of subjects for pupils to write at length and practise their writing skills.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 15 lessons. Four of these observations were completed jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed the breakfast club, breaks, lunchtimes and attended registration and assemblies.
- Discussions were held with parents, pupils, staff, governors, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 92 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took account of 23 responses to staff questionnaires.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including: samples of pupils' work, information about pupils' progress, the school's development plan and self-evaluation, governors' reports, reports from the local authority, records of any poor behaviour, and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and observed reading lessons, including the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters represent).

## Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British. There are above-average proportions of pupils from ethnic minorities and of pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional funding for pupils in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school works in partnership with other Hertfordshire primary schools.
- The school organises cover for all teachers to plan and prepare lessons on Tuesday each week. This took place during the first day of the inspection.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more lessons are outstanding and pupils make better progress by:
  - ensuring that marking reflects the good practice that supports achievement in English, so that teachers show pupils what they need to do to improve their work and check that their comments are followed up
  - ensuring that in all lessons, activities interest pupils, extend their learning and deepen understanding so that they all make good progress
  - providing opportunities for pupils to write at length and practise their writing skills in a range of subjects to support the development of writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery with skills and abilities below those typical for their age. Good provision, including teaching, means children make good progress and join the Reception class with skills and abilities closer to those usual for their age.
- Teaching in the Reception class prepares children well for entry to Year 1. Consistently good teaching in Key Stage 1 supports pupils' good progress so that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Further good teaching in Key Stage 2 ensures that pupils achieve above-average results in English and mathematics in Year 6.
- In 2013, pupils' good grasp of phonics enabled a high proportion to achieve the required standard in the national phonics check in Year 1.
- Across all year groups and subjects, pupils make good progress. The school's data tracking progress, shows that pupils make expected progress, with many making better-than-expected progress in English and mathematics. The current Year 6 pupils are on course to have made similar levels of progress to last year's group by the time they leave.
- Across the school, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. In 2013, these pupils achieved better results than similar pupils nationally.
- Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress, which is at least as good as that of other pupils in the school.
- In 2013, pupils for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium were about a year behind their peers in writing and mathematics. The gap between the attainment of pupils in this group and other pupils is closing. Current pupils in this group are progressing at least as well as their classmates.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good and some is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons carefully, making good use of their subject knowledge and understanding of how pupils learn to create lessons that are interesting and enjoyable. In most lessons, pupils benefit from activities that have been carefully designed to cater for their different abilities. They make good progress as a result.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work in close partnership and the well-targeted professional development programme for staff means that they now have good skills and understanding in the teaching of phonics. As a result, reading is taught well and attainment in reading is now well above the national average for all groups of pupils.
- Teachers and teaching assistants set high expectations of what pupils should achieve. They work well together to plan in-class support and individual tuition to ensure that pupils gain knowledge and skills appropriate to their age. The activities organised for the pupils engage their interest and support the achievement of the aims of the lesson. Pupils' progress is rigorously monitored each term so that those requiring additional support are identified and provided for.
- Pupils acquire knowledge and develop skills quickly across a wide range of subjects. For

example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils gained good appreciation of narrative poetry. They used discussion and role play to develop empathy and understanding of the characters in the poem. Subsequently, they wrote high-quality responses using empathy and emotive language. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, pupils created labels and captions for a box and demonstrated a great deal of understanding, recall, creativity and enjoyment.

- Teachers use questioning effectively to check pupils' learning and encourage reflection. Most pupils are attentive and respond eagerly, showing good recall and prior learning. Teachers plan lessons so that they build well on what has gone before.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematical skills are taught well but pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to write at length and practise their writing across a range of subjects to develop their writing skills further.
- Teachers work well with parents and operate an 'open door' policy so that parents can readily speak to them about their child's progress. Training for parents in phonics has boosted the good partnership between home and school. Parents are more confident and better able to support their children with reading at home.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but the quality of marking is only consistently good in English, where pupils are shown how to improve their work and given opportunities to respond to teachers' comments. This boosts their progress. Marking is not as detailed in other subjects, so progress there is not as good pupils do not have as clear a picture of what they need to do to improve. Where teachers write comments as part of their marking in other subjects, they do not check that pupils have taken note of the comments and acted on them.
- Teachers and other adults work well with pupils to ensure that classrooms are spaces where good-quality learning takes place because relationships are good. Classroom management skills are effective and there is a high level of respect between adults and pupils. In almost all lessons, activities engage and challenge pupils, and increase their understanding. In a very few instances, work is too easy, so pupils lose interest and do not make the progress they should.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Their attitude to learning in all key stages is good. Pupils demonstrate a high level of courtesy and respect. They are polite to visitors and confidently engage in conversation about themselves and their work. In lessons, pupils listen to teachers and follow instructions and requests quickly and sensibly.
- Pupils are keen to learn. They successfully engage in independent, group or whole class activities. The use of 'talk-partners' in most lessons, where pupils discuss their ideas together, helps to develop pupils' communication and collaborative skills.
- The school values each pupil and promotes excellence in academic, personal and social development. Through the house system, school council, eco committee and play-leader roles, pupils develop leadership skills and take on responsibility. The school has strong links with the local community and pupils benefit from its good support for a range of projects like the garden, and contributions to assemblies and lessons.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Pupils said that they feel safe, enjoy coming to school and are happy. This is reflected in the improvement in attendance by all groups of pupils. Pupils talked excitedly about the support they receive from visitors to the

school on a range of topics including cycling proficiency, e-safety, fire safety and the environment. They understand how to keep themselves safe.

- Pupils have good awareness of different forms of bullying, including racist, physical and homophobic bullying. Bullying is uncommon in the school and pupils are confident that when it occurs, teachers will quickly deal with it. Pupils are successfully encouraged to try to resolve minor conflicts by themselves in the first instance. This is helping to build confidence and communication skills.
- The school manages behaviour consistently well. Good procedures and processes are in place to record, report and correct poor behaviour. Pupils with initially challenging behaviour improve because they are supported over time to develop good self-management. Effective links with external agencies ensure that pupils and their parents are provided with good support.
- Attendance is above average. Improvement in attendance is the direct result of the school's refusal to authorise any holiday absence. Staff investigate all absences. This improved attendance is contributing to raised attainment and progress. The pupil premium is used well to promote good attendance among eligible pupils.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school has made good progress with all of the key issues raised at the previous inspection. It is well led, and the headteacher communicates high ambition to staff for better teaching and achievement. She has a clear plan for improving the quality of teaching and raising pupils' attainment as a result of careful school self-evaluation. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, staff, governors and parents.
- The local authority has provided strong support for school leaders and governors. The good collaboration between the school and local authority has resulted in training for governors and leaders to address key points mentioned in the previous report. Governors now have a better appreciation of how to challenge the school, and school leaders judge the quality of teaching with greater consistency.
- Regular and accurate monitoring of the quality of teaching, together with constructive feedback, are at the basis of improvement. There is a culture in the school where staff discuss and share approaches to teaching and learning, which improves their practice.
- The school promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural and social development of pupils through lessons and the additional activities pupils participate in during their time in the school. Pupils develop positive values, care for others and demonstrate understanding and tolerance. During the inspection, pupils showed great respect and care for the senior citizens that attended the weekly luncheon club.
- The school makes effective use of sports funding to provide expert coaching for pupils and staff. Teachers are better able to teach physical education, and pupils are exposed to a wide variety of new sports which enrich their learning. Opportunities to train with the Saracens or visit Lord's Cricket Ground provide memorable experiences.
- School leaders ensure that there is good-quality specialist teaching in sport and music for pupils when teachers are released from classroom teaching to plan and prepare lessons.

- Well thought-through policies underpin the school's work so that pupils make good progress in all subjects, but particularly in English and mathematics. The school's equality policy supports the achievement of all groups of pupils.
- Pupils follow a broad and balanced range of subjects. A good range of trips support classroom learning. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm of their trips to Hartham Common, the *Guardian* newspaper, and Hatfield House. Further enrichment activities are provided through a range of sporting, technical, artistic and cultural experiences. The annual residential trip to York contributes to pupils' personal development. The school is developing plans to make more use of information and communication technology and to introduce a creative curriculum that links subjects together through themes and topics. The school is developing an international focus to learning by establishing links with schools in Rwanda and India.
- Pupil premium funding has been used to employ additional staff to deliver one-to-one and small-group tuition in English and mathematics to eligible pupils, as well as enabling them to take part in swimming lessons, trips and enrichment activities. These actions have helped to secure good progress for these pupils.
- The school works well with parents. School leaders and class teachers are approachable and available to parents on a daily basis. Training for parents in phonics and activities mornings help parents to become more familiar with the work of the school. The school is looking to extend training for parents to cover other subjects.
- The school's arrangement for safeguarding meets statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since the previous inspection, the governing body has been strengthened by three new governors. The governing body is committed to the school and is ambitious for high standards in attainment and progress for all pupils. Governors have an accurate understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the school because they visit the school regularly, consult parents and have good links with staff and subject coordinators. They play an active role in school improvement and contribute to the development of school improvement plans. Governors oversee how teachers' performance is managed and ensure that the process is followed correctly. The headteacher's performance is managed well and no member of staff receives pay progression unless they meet performance management targets, including delivering good teaching. Governors ensure that the school's income is spent sensibly on staffing and resources that promote pupils' good learning and progress.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	117313
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	432149

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Eric Mclaughlin
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Thompson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 September 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01707 267333
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