

Rivermead Primary School

Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4BS

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils achieve well. They make good progress and reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The headteacher has built a dynamic and effective team who has helped him to improve teaching so that it is now good.
- Teachers give pupils excellent feedback on how well they have done and what they need to do next.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, as can be seen by their good attendance levels and punctuality.
- Parents have great confidence in the school and its staff. They are unanimous that their children are happy, well looked after and well behaved at school.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in a range of situations, including on the internet.
- Governors have been instrumental in supporting and challenging school leaders to improve the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. This has improved achievement in all phases, including in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- High quality training for staff and a robust system to manage their performance have helped to raise pupils' standards across the school.
- The curriculum engages pupils and equips them with the skills and knowledge for life in modern Britain.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Physical well-being is also a high priority and pupils benefit from many opportunities to take part in sporting activities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because time is not always used effectively. Not all adults use effective questions to promote children's thinking skills.
- More able pupils do not make as much progress as they could in mathematics and so fewer pupils reach the higher levels.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 16 lessons or parts of lessons, including the teaching of phonics (letter patterns and the sounds they represent), reading, writing and mathematics. Three of these observations were conducted jointly with the headteacher or deputy headteacher.
- The inspection team held meetings with staff, pupils and representatives from the governing body and the local authority. They also attended assemblies and listened to pupils reading.
- Inspectors looked closely at the work pupils were doing in lessons, as well as work they had completed over time in their books.
- The views of the 82 parents who completed the online survey, Parent View, were taken into consideration, as were comments made by parents spoken to over the course of the inspection. The responses from the 34 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including those relating to safeguarding and child protection, checks on the quality of teaching and pupils' academic performance, the school's own self-evaluation, reports from the local authority, minutes of governing body meetings, accident and behaviour logs and the school's development plans.

Inspection team

Jeanie Jovanova, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Hazel Burnie	Additional Inspector
Gordon Jackson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disabled pupils or those with special educational needs is around average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium, additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, is much lower than national.
- A larger proportion of pupils than average are from White British backgrounds. Fourteen different ethnic groups make up a quarter of the school population.
- Half the number of pupils speak English as an additional language than is the case nationally, with very few at the earliest stages of learning English.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- All the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage attend full time.
- There has been a certain amount of staff turnover since the previous inspection. The majority of middle leaders had only been in post 18 months or less at the time of this inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure more children make rapid progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - structuring whole class teaching time more effectively
 - ensuring all adults use effective questions to promote children's thinking.
- Accelerate the progress of the more able pupils in mathematics so that more of them reach higher levels, by:
 - further refining the difference between the tasks they are offered
 - ensuring all pupils have the underlying skills to tackle the tasks they are given.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has successfully built a focused, dynamic team who has supported him well to make significant improvements in all areas since the previous inspection. There is a strong sense of purpose among leaders and governors, and all are committed to making the school as effective as possible.
- All staff who completed the survey agreed that their professional development is well catered for. Leaders see this as a high priority and identify training needs accurately when they make checks on the quality of teaching. Teachers at the early stages of their career are given particularly good guidance in order to develop their practice.
- The pupil premium funding is very well used to narrow gaps in achievement between those pupils entitled to it and other groups in school. There is a leader responsible for checking how well eligible pupils are achieving, along with a nominated governor. This ensures that narrowing gaps remains a high priority and careful checks are made to ensure funding is spent as effectively as possible.
- The school uses the primary sport funding effectively. There has been an increase in the availability of affordable after-school clubs and this has seen the number of pupils attending rise. The quality of teaching in physical education lessons has also improved. There are more facilities for pupils to take part in physical activities at lunchtime. In this way, the school provides well for pupils' physical well-being.
- The school takes its safeguarding duties extremely seriously and has put in highly effective systems to ensure all pupils are kept safe. For example, the governor responsible for checking that the premises pose no health and safety hazards involves pupils in the process; this helps them learn how to spot potential risks. Far more staff have the full level of training than is a requirement because the school believes in leaving nothing to chance. The school works extremely well with outside agencies to ensure that vulnerable children are given the best possible care.
- The school is fully committed to promoting equal opportunities. This is reflected in the way leaders track the achievement of different groups carefully to ensure all make equally good progress.
- Discrimination is not tolerated. Leaders ensure that the curriculum is accessible to all and promotes an ethos of respect and tolerance.
- Subject and team leaders at both senior and middle leadership level contribute well to improving the quality of teaching. For example, the leader in charge of phonics has ensured that standards have improved and that any pupils who fail to reach the expected levels by the end of Key Stage 1 are helped to catch up.
- The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. There are opportunities to learn about life in Britain and in other countries. Trips and visits complement subjects studied and pupils learn to respect others irrespective of where they come from, what they look like or how they choose to live. This prepares pupils well for secondary school and for playing a full part in life in modern Britain.
- The school has worked increasingly effectively to gain the confidence of parents. The responses to Parent View were overwhelmingly positive and this was reflected in the discussions parents had with inspectors.
- Pupils are well prepared for moving on to secondary school because the school gives them and their families a comprehensive range of advice and support.
- The local authority has provided appropriate and effective support to the school as it improves. It has now stripped back its level of support to reflect the fact that a good school can effect its own improvements.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have significantly improved their knowledge and skills since the previous inspection. They are now able to hold senior leaders to account highly effectively for the academic performance of different groups of pupils.
 - Governors use information about how well the school compares to others nationally to ask probing questions to check that the school's actions are effective in raising standards. Governors know what the strengths and weaknesses are in the quality of teaching and support leaders to put measures into place to improve it further. They know that leaders' and teachers' annual performance targets are closely related to pupils' attainment and progress.
 - The governors fully support school leaders in awarding extra increments to high performing teachers. Equally, they know that pay rises will be withheld from those who do not meet the exacting targets set for them.

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

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They are extremely pleasant and courteous in their dealings with each other and with the adults around them because the school promotes positive relationships very well. For example, pupils say 'please' and 'thank you' even when asking to borrow a rubber.
- Playtimes are harmonious affairs where pupils from different backgrounds play together well. Pupils take full advantage of the wide range of activities available and this enhances their physical well-being.
- Pupils move around the school sensibly and safely and follow instructions well. Older pupils look after younger ones, some are specially trained as mediators and settle minor disputes incredibly effectively.
- There is an effective behaviour management system in place. Pupils know the 'golden rules' and are keen to follow them. Support for any pupils experiencing difficulties that affect their behaviour is well targeted. As a result, there are rarely any exclusions.
- Behaviour is not yet outstanding because, in a few lessons, such as when time is not well used, some pupils lose focus.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding procedures are extremely robust. Parents are unanimous in their view that their children feel safe at school.
- Pupils know how to stay safe in a wide range of situations. They enjoy the regular road safety talks by local police officers and remember the content because it is clear and well presented. Pupils are highly knowledgeable about internet safety and have helped create the reminders to be found around the school.
- Pupils are very clear what constitutes bullying. For example, they understand that ignoring someone or spreading nasty rumours is bullying if it happens repeatedly. They say that on the very rare occasions that it does occur it is dealt with well by adults.
- Pupils are safe from all types of name calling, discrimination and prejudice in school because leaders have established an ethos of inclusion and respect for all.

The quality of teaching is good

- Since the previous inspection, the quality of the feedback teachers give pupils about their work has improved significantly. This has had a profound impact on the progress pupils make because they understand clearly what it is they have done well and what they need to do work on next.
- Teaching has been refined so that it meets the needs of all pupils well. There is always a range of activities available and pupils are increasingly involved in choosing the right level of activity for themselves.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' work during lessons. This enables them to either move pupils on to a harder activity or to explain more clearly so that pupils can successfully complete the task they are on.
- The teaching of reading has improved. Teachers plan questions that will challenge pupils' thinking and enable pupils to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of the texts they read.
- There has been a strong focus on teaching writing effectively. Teachers have high expectations as to the standard and type of vocabulary to use and teach grammatical rules very clearly. This has supported pupils of all abilities to improve their writing.
- Although the teaching of mathematics has improved, it is still relatively weaker than that of reading and writing. This is because the tasks the more able pupils are offered, although clearly far more challenging than those of other groups, need further refining to meet their needs fully. On occasion too, pupils do not necessarily have the underlying knowledge with which to complete tasks. For example, a task relating to using line graphs contained negative numbers which some pupils had great difficulty understanding how to calculate.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils from different groups have all benefited from the improvements in teaching and now achieve well. By the end of Year 6, they reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because teaching assistants have received training in meeting a range of needs and are well deployed to maximise this knowledge and

give appropriate support to pupils.

- Pupils from different ethnic groups all make equally good progress because the school checks their progress carefully as part of its commitment to equality of opportunity.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress too because there is a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar.
- A focus of the pupil premium funding was on improving writing; consequently, gaps have been completely eliminated in this subject. Results in national tests at the end of Year 6 in summer 2014 showed that eligible pupils were a few weeks ahead of other pupils in school and in line with other pupils nationally. In reading, eligible pupils were only a term behind other pupils in school but nearly two terms behind other pupils nationally. Mathematics fared least well because the school's results dipped for all pupils. Here the gap against national was well over four terms. The gap within school was slightly less at just two terms. However, gaps in other year groups have been successfully closed. For example, when the current Year 3 left Year 2, the attainment of eligible pupils was well above that of both their classmates and other pupils nationally in all three subjects. Pupils eligible for the pupil premium in current Year 6 have already made far better progress across Key Stage 2 than in any other Year 6 to date.
- The most able do as well as, and sometimes better than, other groups in school, especially in reading and writing. For example, they did better, relative to the same groups nationally, in the Year 6 grammar test in summer 2014 than pupils of other abilities. Too few most able pupils made enough rapid progress to reach higher levels in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 last year. Leaders have put plans in place to address this and the school's own figures show that this is likely to be much improved this year.
- Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 have risen rapidly in all subjects since the previous inspection and, in 2014, were well above national, an all time high for the school.

The early years provision

is good

- As with the rest of the school, early years provision has improved since the previous inspection. Assessments staff make of children's skills are increasingly accurate and well used to provide interesting and challenging activities. Consequently, proportions of children making good and better progress from their varying starting points are rising year on year.
- The systems to keep children safe are strong. Safeguarding training is of a very high standard and involves all staff. Children are well behaved and respond well to adults.
- Robust measures are in place to identify children who are in danger of falling behind as early as possible. Provision for them is highly effective and they make rapid progress to catch up with their peers. In this way, high numbers of children are ready to start Year 1 with the skills they need to access learning.
- Staff use both the indoor and outdoor areas effectively to promote learning. For example, children honed their skills of observation and enhanced their vocabulary going on a 'bear hunt' outside, after having read a popular book as a stimulus.
- Staff regularly record what children can do and share these observations with parents. Parents contribute to this by letting the school know what children enjoy at home. This helps the school build a full picture of each child and plan interesting, engaging and relevant activities.
- Early years staff work closely with parents and pre-school settings to get children ready for school. Any children who might have trouble settling are given individual programmes of, for example, extra visits. This ensures a positive and enjoyable start to school for everyone.
- Leaders have an accurate view of the strengths of the early years practice. For example, they know that all children make at least good progress and that those in danger of falling behind catch up quickly.
- Leaders understand what still needs to be done to improve early years provision further. They recognise that they need to work on ensuring that more children who start with typical levels of development have a chance to make rapid progress.
- Some time is lost during whole class teaching sessions for a range of reasons. For example, time is not well used towards the end of the day as there is a gap between coming in from outside play and getting ready to go home. The activities planned for that time do not engage all children sufficiently well to elicit accelerated progress.
- Not all adults ask equally effective questions. As a result children's thinking skills are not developed as fully as possible.

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

Unique reference number	109894
Local authority	Wokingham
Inspection number	448976

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	366
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paula Montie
Headteacher	Brian Prebble
Date of previous school inspection	21–22 November 2012
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