

# Rivermead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109894
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	356649
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Andrew Saunders

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	284
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kate Aley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sharon Finn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Loddon Bridge Road Reading RG5 4BS
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9540770
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<b>Email address</b>	admin@rivermead.wokingham.sch.uk

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 11 teachers and saw 13 lessons. They held meetings with senior leaders, groups of pupils, staff and governors, and spoke to parents and carers informally. They looked at pupils' work, the school's tracking of pupils' progress, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning, the school development plan, and the questionnaires received from 82 parents and carers, as well as responses from staff and pupils.

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

- The performance of pupils in recent national tests at Key Stage 2, and the teacher assessments of pupils at Key Stage 1.
- The impact of recent strategies to improve teaching and learning, and how effectively teachers provide tasks and guidance so that pupils know what they need to do to improve.
- The effectiveness of improvements in the Early Years Foundation Stage and how well the outdoor area is used.
- The effectiveness of leadership at all levels in accurately identifying key issues and implementing strategies to bring about sustainable improvements.

## Information about the school

This is an average-sized school that takes most of its pupils from the local community. Classes contain mixed-year groups for Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a single Reception class, although this will increase to two classes with a second intake in January. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The very large majority of pupils are from a White British background. A very small minority of pupils speak English as an additional language; a very few of these pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. Most of these pupils have specific learning difficulties, and a very few with autistic spectrum disorder, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, or physical disabilities. The school includes a breakfast club and after-school club which were inspected as part of this inspection.

At the time of the inspection, interim headteachers had been leading the school for 3 terms. A new headteacher has been appointed from January 2011. The post of deputy headteacher was vacant awaiting appointment.

**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**

**3**

## Main findings

Rivermead Primary School provides its pupils with a satisfactory standard of education. Since the last inspection, the school has undergone a period of turbulence in leadership. The interim headteacher knows the school well and has proved effective in addressing some of the key issues facing the school and bringing about significant improvements. There is now more stability in the staffing structure, planning for lessons has improved and the data collected on how well pupils are doing are used with increasing effectiveness. Pupils continue to reach standards which are above average at the end of Year 6 in national tests. Together with the recent appointment of a permanent headteacher from January 2011, the development of the role of middle leaders and the growing confidence of the governing body, these factors mean that the school has satisfactory capacity to sustain improvement.

Teachers care a great deal about the pupils and put considerable effort into ensuring that they enjoy being part of the school and take pride in their community. As a result, attendance has improved and is now above average. Parents and carers appreciate the changes which have been brought about. One parent echoed the views of many in the comment, 'The school has a very vibrant, positive atmosphere within which my child feels an important part. The temporary headteachers have done their best to keep the school moving forward.'

Some parents and carers expressed concerns over the management of behaviour, specifically of a very few pupils who find it particularly difficult to remain within the school's expectations. The school has made changes to tackle this, which are proving effective in ensuring that all pupils have good opportunities to continue learning. Where this has been challenging to bring about, the school has made full use of the support available.

During the Early Years Foundation Stage, children develop helpful basic skills, although they are not always fully stretched because too many of their activities are led by the adults and not sufficiently fine-tuned to their needs. While pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1, progress increases rapidly as they go through Key Stage 2. In the best lessons, work is closely matched to the needs of pupils and provides ample challenge, particularly for pupils who find learning easier. However, this does not happen often enough and pupils get restless when the work is too easy or the pace of the lesson is too slow. This is particularly evident in Key Stage 1, especially in mathematics lessons. Teachers work well to put learning into realistic contexts and this means that pupils do enjoy being at school. The use of targets has been introduced in English and is being developed further, although this is at an early stage and is not yet fully effective in helping pupils to make the progress they should. The breakfast club helps those who attend to have a positive, calm start to their day, and helps them to be healthy. The after-school

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club is similarly very popular and gives pupils opportunities to relax or take up activities they enjoy. The adults leading these clubs are well informed and provide good care for the pupils.

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

- Increase the rate of progress of pupils to raise attainment at Key Stage 1, particularly in mathematics, by increasing the pace of lessons, by July 2011.
- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good, within a year, by:
  - increasing the level of challenge for all pupils
  - providing pupils with more specific targets about what they need to do next to improve.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by July 2011, by:
  - developing opportunities for children to become more independent in exploring all the areas of learning
  - making better use of data about children's progress to inform planning.

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

**3**

In the lessons observed during the inspection, pupils made mostly satisfactory progress and standards reflected the results of the most recent national tests and assessments. In Key Stage 1, attainment is broadly average, although mathematics remains a relative weakness. By Year 6, attainment is above average because of the increase in the rate of progress that pupils make as they get older, particularly in their final year at the school. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported as individuals. However, the strategies used to help them make up lost ground have not been consistently implemented and their impact has not been evaluated, and so the progress of these pupils is no better than satisfactory. Other groups of pupils all make similar progress to their peers.

Comments from pupils (and their parents and carers) indicate that they thoroughly enjoy being at school. They particularly enjoy learning where tasks are more challenging, although some admitted that work is too easy at times. The behaviour of almost all pupils is good most of the time, but they can become restless when not sufficiently challenged. They are responding well to strategies to manage behaviour, such as the zone boards and opportunities for time out, although these do not always work with pupils whose behaviour is particularly challenging. As a result, some pupils do not feel as safe as they might do. Pupils know what they can do to lead healthy lifestyles and choose to take up opportunities to do so, such as the cycling proficiency scheme. They have some opportunities to take on responsibilities, although these are not as frequent as they have been previously. The school provides good opportunities to reflect on spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues, and pupils respond very well to these, demonstrating good tolerance and understanding of each other's different views and beliefs.

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

## How effective is the provision?

The change to mixed-year group classes has been undertaken with careful consideration of the needs of the pupils. This is at an early stage and teachers are developing their confidence with the different ways of planning and approaches to ensure pupils get the work they need to make good progress. The school has begun to share best practice more widely and teachers are gaining confidence in using the new tracking systems to identify pupils who need more support or challenge. In some classes, this now leads to helpful targets for pupils so that they know what they can do to reach the next stage of their learning, but in others, the level of challenge and the expectations of what pupils can achieve remain too low. The school has started the development of a more creative, topic-based curriculum that is often focused around real-life situations. More recently, the range of trips and visitors has been extended and this supports the development of learning that is highly practical, although it is too early to see the full impact, and some inconsistencies have not yet been resolved. The pastoral care for pupils is particularly strong and it is evident that all the adults care a great deal about them. Pupils with particular challenges in their lives are given every support to help them overcome any issues, and the school actively seeks appropriate partners who can support these pupils.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The interim headteacher has provided strong leadership to help the school remain focused on improving the quality of learning opportunities for all pupils, despite the lack of a deputy headteacher to support her. Uncertainty over the future leadership of the school has caused parents and carers concern, but the situation is now stable and the interim headteacher is working with the incoming headteacher to ensure continuity in the vision for the development of the school. There has been a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and the use of information about how pupils are doing to bring about more consistency in progress across the school. This is at an early stage, but middle leaders are increasingly confident in bringing about effective changes and implementing improvements because they have been supported to develop their roles.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory. It has also been through a turbulent time and many of its members are relatively new to the role. They have been very supportive of the headteacher and the school, and are developing their confidence in understanding performance data and providing the challenge the school needs. They ensure that safeguarding requirements are met; all required procedures were in place at the time of the inspection. The school has worked hard to improve communication with parents and carers, for example through the governors' clinics. The development of community cohesion is good at a local level and there are some appropriate initiatives to increase this at a national and global level, so that pupils have a greater understanding of the beliefs and lifestyles of others who live elsewhere. The school works well with other partners to support pupils who may need particular help, although the changes in leadership have meant that, in the past, these links have not always been sufficiently well focused.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</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>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The routines and care of the Reception staff mean that children quickly settle in and make a good start at becoming active learners. Teachers make useful observations of children's learning. However, tracking and analysis of this information are at an early stage and do not yet inform planning with sufficient accuracy. The provision of activities and opportunities is satisfactory and the level of challenge is sufficient to engage and interest the children, but activities do not always adequately reflect all the areas of learning or children's differing ability levels, and do not include enough activities to encourage independent learning skills. As a result, while children do well in some respects, their overall progress is no better than satisfactory. The environment is well maintained and engaging, although children's views and input are not given enough emphasis. Adults are skilled at promoting positive attitudes to learning and work well together. Values such as fairness, equality of opportunity and respect for others are well promoted.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

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## **Views of parents and carers**

The questionnaires returned by parents and carers and informal discussions with them show that they have remained largely positive about the work of the school, and particularly appreciate the recent changes that have been implemented. A significant minority do not feel that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors looked closely at the strategies used to manage behaviour during this inspection and found that the recent changes to the way behaviour is managed are proving effective, and pupils agree that generally behaviour has improved. There remain some pupils who find it difficult to remain within the expectations of the school, and the school has worked very well with other partners to tackle this so that learning is able to continue without disruption. Some comments also expressed concerns over the length of time it has taken to appoint a headteacher, while many indicated appreciation of the work of the current interim headteacher.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rivermead Primary 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 82 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 284 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	50	39	48	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	37	36	44	13	16	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	15	18	41	50	20	24	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	21	34	41	25	30	3	4
The teaching is good at this school	17	21	51	62	10	12	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	16	20	38	43	23	28	3	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	27	50	61	4	5	2	2
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)	19	23	36	44	13	16	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	22	48	59	10	12	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	9	11	25	30	18	22	20	24
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	17	34	41	16	20	6	7
The school is led and managed effectively	15	18	31	38	22	27	7	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	26	44	54	12	15	1	1

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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><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 pupils' 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.**



7 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Rivermead Primary School, Woodley, RG5 4BS**

Thank you for chatting to us and helping us find our way around the school when we visited. We enjoyed looking at the work you are doing and hearing about the things you like about your school. Many of you told us that you enjoy being at your school. We have found that your school gives you a satisfactory education. This means that it does some things well, but there are a few things it could do better.

These are some of the things your school does well.

- By the end of Year 6, your attainment is above average.
- The temporary headteacher and the teachers have made some helpful changes and know what needs to be done to make sure things continue to improve.
- The teachers know you well and look after you so that you enjoy being at school and are kept safe.
- You know what you can do to develop a healthy lifestyle and you make good choices to help this happen.
- In some subjects, you have targets to help you know what you need to do to reach the next level of your learning.
- The topics you study are related to real-world examples and this helps you to see why you need to learn.
- You have a good understanding of what is right and wrong and appreciate that others may be different from you, but deserve the same consideration.

I know that the new headteacher is looking forward to being at the school. Here are some of the things we have asked your school to improve in the meantime.

- Raise attainment in Key Stage 1 and help you to make faster progress, particularly in mathematics, by ensuring that lessons always keep you on your toes.
- Make sure that teaching improves, by giving you challenging work to do, and giving you targets so you know how to reach the next level of learning. All of you can help by listening carefully and working hard to do the best you can.
- Improve the opportunities for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage by making better use of the information about how well you are doing to help you become more independent in your learning.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Saunders

Lead inspector

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