

Ripley Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112611
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	378520
Inspection dates	11–12 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Richard Marsden

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	252
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mike Missett
Headteacher	Clifford Hadley
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 September 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 15 lessons taught by 11 different teachers. They spoke with parents and carers and held meetings with staff, pupils and members of the governing body. They observed the school's work, and looked at safeguarding documentation, attendance records, information on pupils' attainment and progress, the curriculum, the school's self-evaluation and planning, as well as responses to questionnaires from 104 parents and carers, 14 staff and 100 pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How accurately does the school understand and record pupils' levels of attainment?
- How securely do teachers record pupils' progress and how effectively do they use this information to set challenging targets?
- How well are pupils being prepared to take their place in a culturally diverse society?

Information about the school

The school is similar in size to the average junior school. Most pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion from minority ethnic groups and the proportion who are learning English as an additional language are well below national levels. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, is average. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national figure.

The school holds the Activemark award and the Eco Schools Gold award, and has attained National Healthy Schools Gold status and an Anti-Bullying Excellence award.

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

This school provides a satisfactory standard of education for all its pupils. Pupils join the school with attainment in English and mathematics that is in line with the national average. They make satisfactory progress through the school so that by the end of Year 6 their attainment is in line with national norms.

The school has established systems to ensure that pupils' attainment is accurately recorded when they first join the school, and meticulously tracked as they move up it. This enables leaders to identify clearly any whose progress gives cause for concern. As a result achievement is satisfactory. However, teaching is not consistently good enough to accelerate progress further. In some lessons seen pupils' progress was rapid because their tasks were interesting and work was pitched well to meet their needs. In occasional lessons the pace was too slow because pupils were not keenly challenged. Sometimes they were too passive and were required to sit and listen to the teacher for too long when they were ready to be getting on actively with their own tasks. In some lessons teaching assistants offered good support and challenge so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities also made good progress. In other lessons pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities did not make good progress because work was too easy or too demanding for them.

The quality of feedback that pupils receive from teachers is also variable. Some pupils, when questioned, could tell inspectors very clearly the levels at which they were working and what they needed to do next to improve. Others were less clear. When teachers mark pupils' work they give encouragement and praise but do not consistently show pupils what to do next in order to improve their work.

Pupils readily say that they feel safe in school and can explain what they do to ensure that they stay fit and healthy. The school community is harmonious and well ordered, and pupils willingly take on jobs and responsibilities within it. However, their awareness of communities beyond the immediate locality is underdeveloped.

The school's self-evaluation gives it a clear view of its own strengths and areas for improvement. Teaching is monitored regularly, but points for improvement are not always followed through with enough rigour to lead to rapid change. However, the differences in pupils' attainment in mathematics and English, which were noted at the last inspection, have been eradicated, and teachers now have much more detailed information about pupils' progress than was the case at the last inspection.

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The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good or better by:
 - ensuring that teachers and teaching assistants match work more closely to pupils' needs so that pupils engage more eagerly in their learning
 - making sure pupils do not sit as a class for too long when they could be learning more actively
 - sharpening marking, so it shows pupils clearly what to do next to improve
 - more rigorously following up points for improvement identified through the monitoring of teaching.

- Strengthen the school's contribution to community cohesion and promotion of pupils' cultural awareness by creating opportunities for pupils to have first hand interaction with people from contrasting communities within the United Kingdom and further afield.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Both boys and girls make satisfactory progress, as do pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and the small number from minority ethnic groups.

Although satisfactory overall, there are inconsistencies in pupils' rates of progress in lessons. In a good English lesson pupils were highly motivated by a topic on the Second World War. Both boys and girls became engrossed in their work because it was well matched to their interests and challenged them well. They discussed it eagerly in pairs and groups before setting about the task of compiling a radio report from the perspective of a foreign reporter. In some other lessons pupils' progress slowed when they were required to listen for too long to the teacher's explanations before setting about their own tasks.

In another English lesson pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoyed a 'hands-on' game, led by the teaching assistant, using cards to promote reading skills. They made good progress because this activity interested them and challenged them well. In some other lessons the level of challenge for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities was too high or too low and, as a result, their progress was only satisfactory.

Pupils were proud to tell inspectors how safe they feel at school. They say

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confidently that they do not fear bullying or harassment, and that teachers deal with such things very effectively if they do occur. They show an understanding of such things as road safety, and safety on the internet. They explained how exercise and a healthy diet are important to them in helping them to adopt a healthy lifestyle. All do two hours of physical education each week in school and many also take part in after school sporting activities.

Pupils take on a good range of jobs and responsibilities within school. The school council, for example, can point to things that have come about as a result of their work, and the Eco-committee is active in promoting care for the environment. Older pupils serve as buddies for younger ones, or as Junior Leaders with responsibility for play equipment. Pupils sing in the local community at Christmas and support overseas charities but otherwise their contribution to the community beyond the school is underdeveloped.

Pupils have a secure knowledge of right and wrong. They enjoy some opportunities for reflection, in assembly for example. They work well together when given the opportunity. Their awareness of the diversity of modern society is limited, however, and they show comparatively little insight into the beliefs and lifestyles of people whose cultural background is different from their own.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Where teaching is good teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and a good

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

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awareness of what pupils can already do. Teachers use this awareness to plan lessons that are interesting and challenging for pupils so that the pace of learning is rapid. Teaching assistants are well used to ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully and purposefully engaged throughout the lesson. Where teaching has weaknesses these are primarily because teachers' planning does not fully take into account the range of pupils' needs and interests and so the level of challenge is less well matched to their capabilities. Pupils said that work was sometimes too easy. In the best lessons teachers give high quality feedback that shows pupils very clearly what to do next in order to improve, and pupils work towards specific targets. In other lessons the feedback is less effective in promoting progress and pupils are less clear about where they are heading.

The curriculum supports satisfactory outcomes. It has been thoroughly overhauled since the last inspection so that there are now closer links between subjects and there is provision for literacy and numeracy across all subjects. Opportunities for pupils to use computers in their learning are underdeveloped, although at the time of the inspection the provision for information and communication technology was being upgraded. The school offers a range of musical and sporting activities for pupils, some of them in conjunction with other schools. Pupils enjoy a range of visits, including a residential visit where they undertake adventurous, confidence building activities.

Care, guidance and support are also satisfactory. Pupils are supported well when they first join the school so that they settle in quickly, and older pupils are given adequate support and guidance as they prepare to move to secondary school. The school offers satisfactory support to vulnerable children and their families to help them engage with education.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders have an ambitious agenda for improvement. Some staff are very keen to seek ways to improve their teaching and enhance outcomes for pupils. Leaders have identified clear and appropriate priorities, but have been less successful in engaging all staff with a sense of urgency about the direction for improvement. Nevertheless, the results of monitoring of teaching and learning are carefully tracked and appropriate training is given to staff to help them improve. The school satisfactorily promotes equality of opportunity. No groups are disadvantaged

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compared to others, and achievement and personal development are satisfactory for all. The school takes effective steps to ensure that no pupil misses out on what it has to offer. It takes its responsibilities for safeguarding children very seriously. This aspect of its work is rigorously and regularly monitored. Swift and decisive action is taken when any areas for improvement are found.

The governing body is appropriately organised, well informed, and in close touch with parents and carers. Members can point to ways in which they have offered challenge to the school in order to shape its direction. Governors and senior leaders are aware that the promotion of community cohesion is strongest within the school itself, although within the school there is little variety in ethnic background. There are no opportunities as yet for pupils to interact directly with children or adults from different communities either within the United Kingdom or overseas.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

The responses from the inspection questionnaires reveal a high level of satisfaction with the school. Some parents and carers added very positive comments such as 'There are many effective strategies in place and my son feels safe, secure and proud that he is able to achieve so well.' Most agree that their child enjoys school. Parents and carers express satisfaction with the way in which the school keeps their child safe and promotes healthy lifestyles. They are less pleased with the ways in which the school keeps them informed about their child's progress or helps them support their child's learning. These views and a summary of the few other negative comments were fed back to the school to inform improvements. Inspectors found the school provides regular reports and newsletters for parents and carers, and it welcomes parents and carers in if they have concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

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

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 104 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 252 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	40	38	59	57	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	58	56	43	41	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	33	32	55	53	10	10	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	29	56	54	7	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	37	36	56	54	4	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	36	35	52	50	15	14	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	38	59	57	2	2	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	22	21	68	65	5	5	2	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	27	26	66	63	4	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	30	59	57	7	7	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	23	59	57	6	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	30	29	66	63	3	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	42	40	53	51	5	5	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

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

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



13 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ripley Junior School, Ripley, DE5 3PN

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to everyone for the welcome you gave to us when we visited your school. We came to find out what your school does well and how it might be improved. This is what we found.

- Your school is satisfactory. You make satisfactory progress and by the end of Year 6, the standard of your work in English and mathematics is in line with what is found in most schools in England.
- You told us that you feel very safe in school. You also have a good understanding of how to keep yourselves fit and healthy.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory. It plays an important part in helping people get along together and learn effectively.
- Your parents and carers are pleased with your school. They say that you enjoy coming here.

We found that some of you would like to have harder work, to have more active tasks to do in lessons, and to make faster progress, so we have asked your teachers and the school's leaders to make sure that this happens. When they mark your work we have asked teachers to give you a clearer idea of how you can improve your work, so that you reach higher standards. We have also suggested that your teachers set up links with other schools in different places so that you can learn from each other about how different people live.

It was good to visit your school. You can all play your part in helping it to improve by working hard and by behaving well at all times.

I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Richard Marsden
Lead inspector

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