

Ravensdale Junior School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	112760
Local authority	Derby City
Inspection number	378554
Inspection dates	21–22 May 2012
Lead inspector	Angela Kirk

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	282
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Annette Wheway
Headteacher	Paula Martin
Date of previous school inspection	9 March 2010
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Kirk Additional Inspector

Maxine Clewlow Additional Inspector

Andrew Lagden Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors visited 17 lessons taught by 10 teachers and made a number of shorter observations. They also listened to pupils reading. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, staff, the Chair of the Governing Body and representatives of the local authority. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work and looked at a range of documentation including pupils' books, monitoring and assessment information and teachers' planning. Minutes of meetings and notes following monitoring undertaken by the governing body were also reviewed. Inspectors analysed inspection questionnaires completed by staff and pupils, as well as 108 received from parents and carers.

Information about the school

Ravensdale is larger than the average-sized junior school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Most pupils come from White British backgrounds with a small minority from a number of different minority ethnic heritages. The proportion of pupils supported by School Action or with a statement of special educational needs is similar to that in most schools. The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	4

Key findings

- In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- The school is not satisfactory because leaders have not taken effective steps to accelerate progress and improve teaching quickly enough. Progress in writing and mathematics is inadequate and the targets set are not challenging enough to raise attainment.
- Pupils’ achievement and their progress from above-average starting points is inadequate in writing and mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment in English and mathematics is only in line with national averages. Therefore, there is considerable underachievement.
- Teaching is improving, but it has been inadequate over time and it is still not good enough to enable pupils to catch up on lost ground. Remaining weaknesses in teaching include teachers’ low expectations, insufficient challenge for all pupils and the slow pace of some lessons.
- The behaviour and safety of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils are courteous and readily work on tasks set for them. The focus and concentration of a few pupils drops when the pace of lessons is not brisk.
- Leaders and managers have not been effective in accelerating progress. While there is extensive monitoring of pupils’ books, the analysis of assessment data is weak. Some senior and middle leaders have too few opportunities to undertake lesson observations and do not have the skills to analyse assessment information to help them evaluate their areas of responsibility effectively. The impact of the school’s monitoring has been limited because there is insufficient

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rigour in following up points identified for improvement. Leaders have an overly positive view of the school's effectiveness and the governing body has not had sufficient information to enable it to effectively support the school or to challenge senior leaders. Weaknesses in the leadership of teaching and performance management mean teachers are not held to account for the progress pupils make.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise attainment in writing and mathematics so that pupils make consistently good progress throughout their time at school by:
 - using pupils' current assessment information to plan lessons
 - matching work to pupils' differing abilities
 - maintaining a brisk pace in lessons
 - extending pupils' opportunities to write for longer periods across a range of subjects.

- Develop robust and effective management systems by:
 - incorporating measurable targets into the school development plan, including milestones to check progress, against which the senior management team and the governing body can gauge the school's progress
 - using pupils' assessment information effectively to evaluate the achievement of all groups of pupils and to target priorities
 - train senior and middle leaders to undertake a wider range of monitoring activities and to rigorously follow up points for development identified by them, particularly from lesson observations and data analysis
 - ensure that the governing body is given information about pupils' achievement which enables it to support and challenge the school, and link its monitoring to the school's main priorities.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Pupil's achievement overall is inadequate. From above-average starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. Attainment in reading has improved and is currently above average for the oldest pupils. However, they make inadequate progress in writing and mathematics and their attainment dips to average levels in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. Evidence seen in books, lessons and assessments of pupils' work show that learning and progress is inconsistent between year groups. The school can show that progress over the last term has begun to accelerate, but the staff's actions have not been sufficient to overcome previous underachievement or to ensure that progress since the last inspection for all pupils is at least satisfactory.

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During the inspection, inspectors observed lessons that were too easy for all but the least able in the class. It is this lack of challenge and pace in lessons that leads to pupils making slow progress in writing and mathematics. For example, in mathematics in Year 3, inspectors found that too much time had been spent in the first part of the autumn term on learning basic mathematical skills and the lessons were not well adapted to the differing needs of the pupils. Inspectors also found that in writing lessons, a similar task is too often given to all pupils with no focused teaching or guidance for more-able pupils to help them attain the higher levels.

The school is not evaluating the achievement of different groups of pupils effectively enough. Staff have not evaluated the impact of interventions used to support pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs, neither have they checked whether there is any difference in the achievement of boys and girls or of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. In January of this year, staff began to provide support that was better targeted to pupils' individual needs and inspectors found that this is starting to help pupils to make better progress. Pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs make variable progress, and there are examples of individual pupils who have not made progress since September 2011.

Inspection evidence does not support the perception of most parents and carers that their children make good progress.

Quality of teaching

While the inspectors saw some examples of satisfactory and good teaching, pupils' work in books and the school's own assessment information indicate that the quality of teaching is inadequate overall. The work in pupils' books shows that too often pupils of differing abilities are given very similar or identical tasks resulting in a lack of challenge for many. Pupils are given opportunities to write short accounts which often show their ability to use interesting vocabulary. However, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to write extended pieces of work for different purposes and audiences and this hampers their achievement.

There have been improvements recently in teaching and the most recent assessments, covering just one term, indicate that pupils have begun to make better progress. However, teaching across the school has not been strong enough to have a significant impact on improving pupils' progress in writing and mathematics. Where teaching is better, it is enabling pupils to move forward with their learning. For example, good teaching in a Year 6 mathematics lesson enabled pupils to practise their problem-solving and reasoning skills. The activity required pupils to design a theme park, with appropriate costing for each ride. This enabled pupils to discuss their ideas and to check their accounting. Teaching across the school has some relative strengths. Pupils are given good opportunities to work collaboratively in class and teachers' use of verbal and written feedback is usually well focused to help pupils know where they have been successful and where they need to improve.

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Many strategies are still not consistently applied across the school and some teachers do not use prior assessment information sufficiently to plan their lessons. As a result, expectations are too low and progress is limited. At times, the pace of lessons is too slow and this frustrates some of the more-able pupils. Teaching assistants are often used by teachers to provide additional support for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, but the work is not always at the right level to challenge the pupils.

Teaching promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development appropriately. Good relationships between adults and pupils are evident in lessons. In a whole-school assembly, pupils were given the opportunity to think about their own behaviour and how a moral from a shared story was reflected in their own lives.

Teaching is inadequate and inspection findings do not support the positive views expressed by the majority of parents and carers.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Pupils' positive behaviour contributes to a safe and orderly school environment. Pupils generally display good manners and are polite and friendly to adults and to each other. However, pupils' engagement with their learning sometimes wanes when the pace of lessons is unnecessarily slow. Some disruption to learning occurs when the needs of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties are not well met. Parents and carers were generally in agreement that behaviour is good, but a few wrote comments about their concern over disruption to lessons. Inspectors found that staff applied the school's systems for managing behaviour consistently well and that disruption to learning was uncommon.

In lessons, pupils show good cooperation when working in pairs and small groups. Pupils, in their questionnaires and discussions with inspectors, said they feel safe at school and are helped to keep themselves safe in and out of school. They have received appropriate guidance through assemblies and in lessons about prejudice and how to keep themselves safe from cyber-bullying. Pupils agree that bullying is rare. They said that if concerns are raised, adults respond promptly. In the inspection survey, almost all parents and carers indicated that their children felt safe at school. Attendance is above average and punctuality good.

Leadership and management

The capacity for further improvement is inadequate because current leaders and managers, including the governing body, have been ineffective in securing essential improvements since the last inspection. In particular, improvement in mathematics has been insufficient and there is also now underachievement in writing. Curriculum leaders do not have the confidence or expertise to monitor or evaluate the work and progress in their areas. Some areas, such as improving the school's marking policy and revising the school's calculations policy, have been addressed. However, despite

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remedying a few small areas of weakness, improvement is too slow.

Leaders and managers have not been sufficiently effective in identifying and tackling weaknesses in teaching. While leaders and the governing body undertake a range of monitoring and evaluation activities, the impact of these is limited. This is because data analysis is not robust enough to help identify any inadequate progress of groups of pupils in particular classes, so cannot be used as supporting evidence to hold teachers to account for their performance. Self-evaluation is overly positive and based on limited monitoring information. There is little evaluation of the actions outlined in the school development plan and targets for improvement lack measureable targets and milestones to help monitor progress. Senior and middle leaders have not received effective training, so they lack the skills required to evaluate effectively.

The governing body has reorganised its structure and members now meet more regularly. They also undertake monitoring visits, which have an agreed format. However, the monitoring carried out is not focused on the most important priorities for the school. Only very limited information about the achievement of pupils across the school has been received by the governing body. As a result, it does not have the information required to enable it to support and challenge senior leaders effectively. Safeguarding requirements are met.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It has been recently revised and delivers a range of skills through cross-curricular opportunities. Appropriate provision is in place for more exciting elements, such as visits and clubs, which pupils enjoy. However, the curriculum does not ensure that pupils have sufficient opportunities to write for longer periods of time and in different subjects. Opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are satisfactory. Pupils have the chance to reflect on moral issues that affect their lives and teachers promote the importance of using particular social skills well when working in groups. While the school is effective in ensuring equal opportunities for pupils on a personal level, preventing discrimination, it is not successful in the promotion of good or satisfactory progress for all.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



23 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravensdale Junior School, Derby, DE3 9EY

Thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. Your questionnaires and the discussions we had with you were very helpful. We have judged that your school requires special measures because too many of you do not make enough progress in your writing and mathematics. This means that the school will receive additional support and that inspectors will visit the school again to check how well it is improving. I am pleased to say that we judged your behaviour to be satisfactory. You play together well and show respect for other people. We are aware that sometimes pupils do not always behave as well as they should, which can occasionally disrupt lessons. However, staff generally deal suitably with these situations when they occur, and listen to you when you have a concern or a problem.

We have asked the school to make sure that you make more progress in mathematics and in writing, for example, by providing you with more opportunities to write for longer periods of time in English lessons and in other subjects, and for the work that you are given to be set at the right level so that you learn at a good pace. We have asked the school's leaders, including the governing body, to check how well classes and groups of pupils are doing in each subject, so they know exactly where improvements are needed.

You can help too, by letting your teacher know when the work you are given is either too easy or too difficult especially in writing and mathematics.

Yours sincerely

Angela Kirk
Lead inspector

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