

Radipole Primary School

Radipole Lane, Weymouth, DT3 5HS

Inspection dates 17–18 January 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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.

- Pupils make good progress. Their progress is improving because teaching is good and steadily becoming better.
- Assessment information is used well to plan lessons and to make sure pupils have the help they need to learn well.
- Pupils enjoy learning and they behave well. They say they feel safe and that rare cases of bullying are dealt with well.
- The school accurately identifies areas for improvement and acts quickly to deal with them.
- The headteacher and all other leaders, including governors, provide clear direction for the school to improve. They provide good professional training to help teachers improve their teaching skills.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally lessons focus more on completing the activity than on making sure pupils learn important ideas.
- Teachers' questioning does not always find out where pupils do not understand what they are learning.
- Pupils are not always given the time to follow the guidance teachers provide when they mark work.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 teachers in 30 lessons or parts of lessons. Two of these were observations with senior leaders to check that they evaluate teaching accurately.
- Meetings were held with staff and pupils, and with members of the governing body. Inspectors also spoke to a representative of the local authority and to parents bringing their children to school. They also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors looked at documentation about the school’s work, including information about the achievement of pupils, development planning and the school’s self-evaluation.
- They took account of 95 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, and also examined the school’s own survey of parents’ views.

Inspection team

Ted Wheatley, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Clive Dunn

Additional inspector

Juliet Jaggs

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than most primary schools.
- Pupils come from mainly White British backgrounds. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is broadly average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funds given to the school by the government for children looked after by the local authority or known to be eligible for free school meals) is well below average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in English and mathematics.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

Improve the quality of teaching to outstanding by making sure that:

- lessons are clear about what pupils should be learning
- teachers use questioning to find out how well pupils understand what they learn, and to help them discuss their learning so that their progress improves
- pupils have opportunities to follow the guidance teachers give them on how to improve their work.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Their attainment when they start in Year 1 is broadly average, and by the end of Year 6 they reach well-above-average standards. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels of attainment has risen considerably.
- Children in the Reception classes make good progress. Some children start school with lower-than-expected literacy and numeracy skills for their age. By the time children enter Year 1 almost all have achieved the expected skills for their age.
- The great majority of pupils read well. They make good use of the skills they have been taught to link letters and sounds to read words they do not recognise. They enjoy reading and regularly practise their reading at school and at home.
- Standards in writing are above average, and for some pupils well above average. Pupils write confidently and imaginatively, and use a wide vocabulary. They spell accurately, explain their ideas well and produce long pieces of writing about topics they study in other subjects.
- Pupils have good mathematical skills and they handle numerical information well. For example, a Year 6 class used detailed rainfall and temperature graphs that they had produced earlier to give accurate advice to a traveller on which was the best time to visit certain places in Australia.
- Pupils carry out mental mathematical calculations well and add, subtract, multiply and divide confidently and competently.
- In most lessons pupils' learning is good. However, sometimes misunderstanding is not noticed by the teacher quickly enough, and pupils' progress briefly slows.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress because staff provide careful support and opportunities for pupils to work independently or with other pupils. In this way they practise what they are taught and gain confidence in the new skills they have learned.
- Past small differences in achievement between different groups of pupils have narrowed. The most able pupils do well. They make good and sometimes excellent progress. The small number of pupils whose first language is not English make good progress. Boys' writing has improved considerably because the school has improved the range of books that interest boys.
- Pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium achieve well, and make as good progress as other pupils. Funding is used effectively by making sure these pupils receive individual help when they need it.
- Outstanding relationships between pupils and adults make an important contribution to learning. Pupils work exceptionally well together. They take account of each other's ideas and opinions, and this helps promote their social, moral and cultural development well.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good. Recent work to improve how well teachers check pupils' progress means that work is usually accurately matched to pupils' learning needs. Teachers often provide extension activities for the most able pupils, and help for pupils who learn more slowly. However, on a few occasions, even though the work is pitched at the right level for pupils, the focus is more on completing the task than on learning new ideas or developing understanding.
- Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to plan lessons. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for the most able is well organised.
- In the best lessons teachers use questioning and discussions well to encourage pupils to talk about their understanding. For example, in Year 4 lesson pupils were developing their skills in writing poetry. The teacher questioned pupils and used their answers well to help them recognise features in each other's work that resulted in effective rhyming couplets in their work. The discussion was effective in helping pupils learn.
- Occasionally teachers do not recognise where pupils do not understand what they are learning.

In these instances they do not use questioning well enough to pin-point pupils' misunderstanding and then help them overcome their difficulty.

- Teachers' marking is mostly good. Teachers tell pupils how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work, but not all follow the guidance teachers give them.
- Links between subjects are good and help to make learning interesting. For example, in Year 6, 'Australia' is used effectively as a theme for writing and mathematics to catch pupils' interest. In Year 4, 'The Arctic' is used as a theme in a similarly effective way. Whole-school projects, for example, a dinosaur nest found in the school grounds, are used effectively to encourage pupils' enthusiasm and to promote their learning in English, mathematics, science and design and technology.
- Teaching in the Reception classes is good. Teachers encourage children's development of literacy, numeracy and social and emotional skills well. The outdoor area is used well and plans are advanced to improve it further so that children can experience a wider range of activities outside.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in lessons and around school. They are considerate and thoughtful towards each other, and polite and helpful towards adults. Relationships between pupils and adults are excellent.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. They work hard almost always and enjoy learning. Their attention only wanders from learning on the rare occasions when they do not understand.
- Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong. Bullying is rare and pupils know about the different kinds of bullying and know how this is different from 'falling out' with each other.
- Pupils say they feel safe and are confident that they could go to any adult for help if they needed it.
- Pupils readily take on responsibilities and carry them out well. Older pupils act as peer mentors for other pupils. The school council seeks the views of pupils from all classes and as a result there have been improvements to playground equipment. Several Year 6 pupils have become librarians in the newly equipped library.
- Teachers manage pupils' behaviour effectively and incidents of unacceptable behaviour are unusual.
- Pupils' attendance is broadly average and is improving. The proportion of persistent absence is decreasing because the school is rigorous in checking on why pupils are away from school, and in working with families to improve attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provides exceptional direction and determination for the school to improve. After some changes in staffing, her ambition is reflected in the work and attitudes of other staff. Leadership responsibilities are shared well between leaders at different levels. As a result, leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and what needs to be done to push forward improvements.
- The school takes action quickly to deal with weaknesses. For example, it has overhauled the school's arrangements for checking pupils' progress and trained all staff in how to assess pupils' progress accurately. This helps teachers with their planning and how well they provide effective support for individual pupils.
- The school has dealt with past inadequate teaching rapidly and provides effective training to help improve teaching further. Teachers' targets to help them improve their work reflect the school's priorities and teachers' professional needs, and are closely linked to pupils' progress. Teachers are keen to improve their teaching to be outstanding.
- The local authority provides effective support to help improve teaching, and the school has good

links with the Chesil Education Partnership of schools which provides further valuable support for teaching, leadership and resources.

- The school has made significant improvements to how subjects are taught. In particular, developing the links between subjects and providing a wide range of visits and visitors has helped raise pupils' interest in learning. The personal, social and health education programme promotes pupils' understanding of their own feelings and supports their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
- Leaders are determined that all pupils achieve well. No form of discrimination is tolerated and the gaps in the progress made by different groups of pupils in the past have narrowed considerably. Given the improvements in teaching and pupils' progress, the capacity for further improvement is good.
- Most parents are pleased with the school, and communications with homes are good. The school seeks parents' opinions and works hard to deal with their concerns.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is committed to helping the school improve. It is well informed and makes sure its members are trained and up to date with information so that it can ask the school searching questions about its work and support its development. It understands how the pupils' attainment compares with that of pupils in similar schools. It monitors school spending. For example, it checks the impact of the spending of pupil premium funds in speeding up pupils' progress. It is well informed about the quality of teaching and makes sure teachers have targets to help them improve their teaching, and that their salary is linked to their performance. The governing body ensures all safeguarding requirements are met and has effective procedures to check on the suitability of staff when they are appointed to the school.

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	113717
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	401384

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	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Cridland
Headteacher	Veronique Singer
Date of previous school inspection	10–11 December 2009
Telephone number	01305 783353
Fax number	01305 789979
Email address	office@radipole.dorset.sch.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store St
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2013