

# Rectory Farm Primary School

Olden Road, Rectory Farm, Northampton, NN3 5DD

## Inspection dates

13–14 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Pupils' achievement varies from class to class and from subject to subject.
- Although achievement is improving in the Reception class, children do not make enough progress with their writing and reading skills.
- Work is sometimes too easy for more-able pupils and these pupils do not always achieve as highly as they should, particularly in writing and reading in Key Stage 1.
- Teachers do not always set clear targets for improvement when they mark pupils' work, nor do they consistently give pupils opportunities to act on the advice given.
- Questioning is not used as effectively as it should be to help pupils to fully understand their work.
- Leaders and managers have not brought about the necessary improvements in achievement and teaching quickly enough. This is because targets for teachers to improve their teaching have not been as detailed as they should be.
- Leaders and managers do not monitor the way that teachers share good practice rigorously enough.
- Reviews of pupils' progress are not linked to the required improvements in teaching as well as they should be.
- The plan to improve teaching and achievement does not contain measurable targets for pupils' achievement.
- Governors are unable to hold the school to account on an appropriately regular basis because they do not receive information on pupils' progress frequently enough.

### The school has the following strengths

- Achievement is improving, particularly in Year 5 and Year 6.
- The teaching in some classes is good and this results in pupils making good progress.
- Pupils' writing skills in most year groups are improving at a good rate because leaders have ensured that pupils have more opportunities to develop these skills than they have had in the past.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they behave well. The school's core values are well known by pupils and these make a significant contribution to the respectful, positive relationships throughout the school.
- Pupils have many varied and exciting opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 12 lessons, four of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. The inspection team also made short visits to lessons to look at the progress that pupils make in their books.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils. Other meetings were held with members of the governing body, school staff, including those responsible for subjects, and senior leaders. The lead inspector met with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including those relating to the monitoring of teaching and the targets set for teachers to improve their work. They also looked at records relating to attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding, the school improvement plan, data on pupils' progress and samples of pupils' work.
- Too few parents responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire for parents (Parent View) for results to be available to the inspection team.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read.
- The publication of the report was delayed to allow an inspector to gather additional evidence in response to an issue raised by a complaint. Inspectors found no evidence to substantiate the complaint

## Inspection team

Richard Sutton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Janis Warren

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- Two thirds of pupils are from White British backgrounds and one third of pupils are from minority ethnic heritages.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is much lower than average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are supported through the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for pupils in local authority care and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school does not use any alternative educational provision.

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

- Improve teaching so that it is consistently good or better by ensuring that all teachers:
  - include targets and 'next steps' when they mark pupils' work and give pupils opportunities to act on the advice given
  - set work which is always well matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly more-able pupils
  - improve the use of questioning in lessons in order to develop pupils' thinking skills and help them to fully understand their work.
- Improve achievement by:
  - ensuring that pupils make good progress in reading and writing in the Reception class
  - making sure that all pupils in Key Stage 1, particularly the more-able, make good progress in writing and reading.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - making sure that the targets set for teachers are specific and contain appropriate detail
  - ensuring that reviews of pupils' progress enable teachers to focus on developing their teaching skills as well as improving pupils' achievement
  - ensuring that the way teachers share good practice with each other through coaching is rigorously monitored
  - making sure that the school improvement plan contains clear, measurable targets for pupils' achievement and the quality of teaching and that these are reviewed frequently
- Improve governance by ensuring that the governing body holds leaders at all levels to account more rigorously and frequently for pupils' performance and the quality of teaching.
- An external review of governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The standards that pupils reach by the end of Year 6 have been below average for the past two years although there was a significant improvement in 2012.
- Achievement in Key Stage 1 is too low because teaching has not been consistently good, particularly for more-able pupils in reading and writing. However, the school's own data for Year 2 show that progress and attainment are improving.
- Children join the Reception class with skills and abilities well below those typical for their age. Children's progress over the past few years has been too slow. Although achievement overall is beginning to improve, it remains too low in writing and reading and has been declining in recent years. As a result, pupils begin Year 1 having not reached the standards expected in reading and writing.
- Inconsistent progress is evident for almost all groups of pupils, including those speaking English as an additional language, those from minority ethnic heritages, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. This is because teaching is not always fully matched to the needs of pupils.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium also make variable progress between year groups and subjects. In 2012, pupils eligible for the pupil premium were a term behind other pupils in mathematics. However, these pupils were a year and a half behind other pupils in English. The school has used some of its additional funding to provide extra small-group support for these pupils as well as subsidise educational trips and visits.
- The achievement of more-able pupils is not as good as it should be because teaching does not always ensure that work is at the right level for these pupils.
- Achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is improving. Achievement in Year 5 and 6 is stronger than it is in the rest of the school. This is primarily as a result of teaching which is usually good, particularly with respect to helping pupils to improve their writing skills.

### The quality of teaching requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is too variable which results in achievement which is not consistently good. However, some teaching is good and teaching overall is beginning to improve, but these improvements have been relatively recent.
- The quality of teachers' marking and feedback to pupils is improving. However, the quality of marking and the 'next steps' set by teachers for pupils are not always as good as they should be. Not all teachers systematically give pupils opportunities to act on the advice given.
- Teachers do not always set work which is hard enough for more-able pupils. These pupils are often given different work from other pupils but this work does not challenge them appropriately.
- Teachers do not use questioning effectively to help pupils to develop their thinking skills because too often questions only require short responses. Questions are not always matched to the

ability of pupils and so they do not help pupils to develop understanding as well as they could.

- Teaching assistants usually contribute well to the pupils' learning. However, the quality of this help can be variable. This contributes to the inconsistent progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs.
- Where teaching is good, the work is well suited to the abilities of pupils in the class. In these lessons, activities are varied and often related to 'real life' which results in pupils having high levels of enthusiasm and motivation.

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

- The majority of pupils have good attitudes to learning, particularly when teaching is good. Teachers consistently and regularly remind pupils of the school's core learning skills and pupils respond very well to these, on the whole.
- Most pupils behave well both in lessons and at playtimes because all staff consistently follow the school's policy on behaviour management. Pupils value the rewards that they receive for both good behaviour and good work, and these act as positive incentives for most pupils to do their best. However, some pupils do not always demonstrate good behaviour and this is why behaviour and safety are not outstanding.
- Serious misbehaviour is very rare. Behaviour has improved significantly in recent years as indicated by the decreasing number of exclusions.
- Pupils show high levels of respect towards each other and their teachers. This is because all staff model positive, respectful relationships at all times and this contributes very well towards creating a calm, purposeful climate for learning.
- The school provides pupils with a high level of care and support. Consequently, pupils say they feel well supported and cared for at school, and they also say that this helps them to feel safe at school. Pupils have a good understanding of safety issues, appropriate to their age.
- Pupils told inspectors that incidents of bullying are rare and school records confirm this. Pupils are confident that, if bullying does occur, staff deal with matters swiftly and effectively. This is also a factor which enables pupils to feel safe.
- The school ensures that pupils attend school regularly and arrive on time through the good work done with families by the family support worker.

### **The leadership and management requires improvement**

- The main reason why leadership and management require improvement is because leaders and managers have not improved teaching and achievement quickly enough and they have not ensured that the improvements that have been made are consistent across classes and subjects.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are appropriately focused on pupils' achievement which is why some pupils in some classes are now making better progress than in recent years. However, leaders have not paid sufficient attention to improving teaching for all teachers and this is also why achievement is inconsistent.

- The targets which are set for teachers to improve their performance are not sufficiently focused on specific aspects of teaching which need improving because they are not clearly related to the 'Teachers' Standards'.
- The headteacher supports and challenges teachers through meetings to discuss pupils' progress. These frequent meetings do not adequately reflect what aspects of teaching need to be developed in order to bring about the identified improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The approach to improving teaching by enabling all teachers to share their practice through coaching has not had enough impact on improving achievement for pupils. This is because the process is not appropriately structured so that it is personalised to the professional development needs of individual teachers.
- The school improvement plan is appropriately focused on improving achievement. However, it does not contain any targets which are to be achieved over particular periods of time and it does not pay enough attention to the achievement of different groups of pupils. As a result of this, the plan does not provide governors with a useful way of monitoring how well different groups of pupils are achieving in writing, reading and mathematics and so does not enable them to challenge the school as much as they should.
- Pupils are able to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding very well because the subjects that they learn are made more exciting by a range of educational trips and visits as well as a link with an African school.
- The school works with an external company who provide support for school improvement. This has been helpful in supporting improvements in teaching and achievement.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has provided an adequate level of support to the school by establishing partnerships with other schools, though these have been relatively recent. It is too early to evaluate the impact of these partnerships.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is aware of the schools' strengths and areas for development. However, the governing body has not ensured that it gets information about pupils' achievement often enough and so this limits its ability to influence rapid and consistent improvements in achievement and teaching. The governing body is fully aware of how the pupil premium is spent and monitors this well in relation to the achievement of pupils who are eligible. It receives information with respect to the management of teachers' performance but is not able to fully monitor how this is used to reward teachers. This is because targets for teachers to improve their teaching do not consistently contain sufficient detail. Governors ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities regarding safeguarding; all staff have been checked as required and are trained appropriately to keep pupils safe and free from harm.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121940
<b>Local authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	406065

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

<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>	208
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Steve Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Snelson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 March 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 411820
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