

# Reed First School

Jacksons Lane, Reed, Royston, SG8 8AB

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress throughout the school and some make outstanding progress. The standard of their work when they leave the school is above that usually seen nationally.
- Attainment at the end of Year 4 in reading and writing is above average.
- Teaching is typically good and some is outstanding. It has improved because the school has made good recent appointments and other staff have developed their skills.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Pupils cooperate well and incidents are extremely rare. Pupils come to school determined to learn.
- The school is a safe and happy community. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and pupils are articulate and polite.
- The headteacher's good leadership has ensured the quality of teaching is improving. The school works hard to become even better.
- Governors are conscientious. They support the school well and hold the headteacher to account effectively.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some weaknesses in teaching remain.
- In Year 1 and 2, pupils are not always given enough guidance on how to improve their work. Teaching in these years does not always match pupils' work to their abilities.
- The quality of marking in mathematics is not as good as it is in English.
- The teaching of letters and sounds has not enabled enough pupils to reach the expected standard by the end of Year 1.
- Staff and governors are not yet supporting the headteacher well in making further improvements to the school.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed teaching in seven lessons led by five teachers. All were jointly observed with the headteacher. He also looked at pupils' books and observed other aspects of the school's work.
- The inspector listened to pupils read and attended an assembly. He spoke with pupils during break times.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, a group of pupils, school leaders and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspector took account of the 20 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and of the 13 responses to a staff questionnaire.
- A number of documents were looked at, including the school's own data relating to pupils' achievement, the school improvement plan, planning and monitoring documentation including external reviews, behaviour logs and a range of information relating to safeguarding.

## Inspection team

St.John Burkett, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is smaller than average. All pupils are of White British heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Very few pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for specific groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals.).
- Children are taught in three mixed-age classes for pupils in the Nursery and Reception Years, those in Years 1 and 2, and those in Years 3 and 4.
- A very high proportion of pupils currently at the school are boys.
- The headteacher was appointed to the school in 2010.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, particularly in Years 1 and 2, so that it is consistently good or outstanding and pupils make even greater progress, by:
  - teaching the matching of letters to sounds (phonics) more rigorously
  - giving pupils better advice on how to improve their work in mathematics
  - planning activities in Years 1 and 2 which always take full account of pupils' differing levels of ability.
- Improve leadership and management by involving other staff and the governing body more extensively in supporting the headteacher to secure further improvements.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Children start in the Nursery year at levels that are generally typical for their age. They make good progress in most areas of their learning to reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception year, with some achieving beyond this level.
- Pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 1 and 2. A very high proportion of summer-born pupils in Year 2 in 2012 and 2013 led to fewer pupils attaining the higher levels than in previous years. However, these groups of pupils made good progress from their starting points, particularly in reading and writing.
- Pupils make good progress in Years 3 and 4, particularly in English. Pupils leave the school with standards at or above those seen in other schools, and with growing numbers achieving more highly in mathematics.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers and sometimes better. This is because they are well supported in school, and because their work is carefully matched to their needs.
- Pupils who are supported through pupil premium funding achieve as well as, and sometimes better than, their peers. Teachers check on the progress of these pupils carefully and consequently they are well supported in their work. In 2012 all pupils, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, reached Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2, which is the standard expected for their age.
- The school is beginning to tackle pupils' progress in matching letters to sounds. The work done by the school has, however, not yet led to enough pupils meeting the expected standard in the national phonics check in Year 1.
- The school has worked to improve mathematics, and the school's own information shows achievement has recently increased in all year groups in this subject.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is mostly good and some is outstanding. It has improved and is now consistently good or better in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 3 and 4. Nearly all parents and carers responding to the online survey (Parent View) believe that their children are taught well.
- Teachers use questioning well and give many opportunities for pupils to discuss their work with their peers and to reflect on what they are learning. In a lesson on sequences, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were asked to work out missing house numbers. They were guided by clear and focused instructions from the teacher to think in depth about the information they had been given and to draw conclusions from it.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, and ensure that all pupils are able to learn well. Teachers have good subject knowledge and often present topics to pupils in an engaging way. Pupils present their work well.

- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs engage in activities alongside their fellow pupils because the activities are adapted well. Additional help, including some one-to-one support, is regularly available. A parent of one of the pupils spoke of the strength of this aspect of the school's provision, saying, 'The school is like one big family and has enabled my son to renew his confidence'.
- The teaching of reading has improved through the implementation of whole-school strategies. These include the provision of books that pupils find interesting and weekly group-reading sessions. The school recognises that the teaching of the sounds that letters make is not strong enough to increase rates of progress in reading and writing even further.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked, although with occasional variations. In most subjects and classes marking and feedback to pupils indicate the next steps they need to take to improve their learning. However, this is weaker in Years 1 and 2 and in mathematics.
- Where teaching is not yet good, particularly in Years 1 and 2, some of the work is not well enough matched to pupils' abilities and their progress slows.

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

- Pupils' behaviour, courtesy and attitudes to learning are outstanding. They come to school every day determined to learn and in doing so become confident and articulate.
- In classrooms, pupils' attitudes are the driving force behind the good progress they make. They work well with each other and with adults. They know that, by following the clear guidance given by the school, they are able to enjoy every part of the school day.
- The school has a warm and welcoming ethos that parents and pupils value highly. The school provides a safe and secure environment and pupils know they are always able to find an adult to help if needed.
- Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the school. Older pupils help younger ones through a buddying system and school councillors have jobs such as 'Welcoming Officer' to greet parents arriving for the Friday sharing assembly and other special events, or to help show people around the school.
- Pupils said the aspect of school they enjoy most is the range of imaginative equipment which has been provided for them to use at playtimes and in outdoor lessons. The school has excellent systems in place which enable pupils to cooperate and extend their use of what is provided.
- Pupils also said they are unable to recall bullying or any other behaviour incident. School records confirm this. Pupils know about the different types of bullying, such as name-calling. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are supported well. This ensures their safety and good behaviour because of the attention the school pays to ensuring their full integration with other pupils.
- Pupils supported through the pupil premium are able to enjoy the school's 'Early Birds' club alongside other pupils, which provides extended curriculum and social opportunities.
- Attendance is high and pupils are punctual.

**The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher has accurately identified areas of the school's provision where improvements are needed and has been systematic in addressing each. Changes have improved teaching in most year groups. Pupils' achievement and the numbers of pupils on track to leave the school with attainment above the national average are increasing.
- The school has a strong focus on English and mathematics, but also offers a wide range of subjects for pupils to study and which relate to their own experiences. These subjects are supplemented by a range of extra-curricular activities. For example, a project in Years 3 and 4 on rainforests involves a 'leavers' performance' on this theme. As pupils prepare for this they are also raising money for a rainforest charity.
- Systems for managing the performance of staff have been put into place to ensure that all staff are effectively carrying out duties in line with their role. Teachers who are new to the school are developing good skills in the analysis of assessment data and have used this to ensure their pupils make good progress.
- Safeguarding procedures are effective, with regular training for all staff and governors.
- The school has worked well and with other local schools and organisations to ensure it understands how to improve its own practice. The local authority has worked well with the school to help it develop in key areas.
- The school has developed good and growing links with its local community, including the church. There is good access to cultural aspects of the community through assemblies and other opportunities offered to pupils.
- Provision for pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and excellent in Years 3 and 4. For example, in one lesson, pupils were encouraged to reflect on key aspects of human experience when they thought about the impact of deforestation in the Amazon on its peoples and wildlife.
- The headteacher leads the school's work successfully and ensures improvements are made. However, these are not as rapid as they could be because the school's leaders, including governors, do not yet share the responsibility for leading changes in school's practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body works closely with the school to raise achievement. It offers a good level of challenge and governors undertake their roles conscientiously. Governors have a clear understanding of finance, and are developing their knowledge of the school's assessment data. They benefit from good guidance and presentation of information from the headteacher. They have a very good understanding of the school and local community and its history.
  - Governors ensure that teachers' pay increases are linked to their performance. They check the provision that has been put into place to support pupils through the pupil premium, and ask key questions about whether the money has been well spent.
  - The governing body has carried out an audit which has led to a reorganisation of its structure and given governors an accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's governance. Currently they are not providing sufficient support to the headteacher in leading the improvements the school plans to make.

## 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>	117129
<b>Local authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	412020

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

<b>Type of school</b>	First
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	54
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nadine Fynn
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jackie Harvey
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 July 2009
<b>Telephone number</b>	01763 848304
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