

Ridgeway School

Deansway, Warwick, CV34 5DF

Inspection dates

5–6 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils across the school make good progress and achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils also achieve well in their language and communication skills due to the good teaching they receive.
- Pupils who are supported by the pupil premium make progress at rates faster than their peers in the school.
- Children in the early years settle into the school very quickly and make outstanding progress from their starting points.
- Teaching across the school is consistently good due to the rigorous monitoring by the senior leadership team and governing body, together with focused training and support for staff.
- Teachers have high expectations and set challenging targets for their pupils.
- The headteacher, supported by the senior leadership team, has an accurate view of the school. Together, they know how to improve the school and so raise achievement further.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors check the results of all spending and make sure that results are positive.
- The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Behaviour is good and pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- The work the school does to keep pupils safe is outstanding and pupils say that they feel very safe in school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is not currently enough outstanding teaching to ensure that pupils' achievement is outstanding.
- Senior leaders monitor the progress of the majority of groups of pupils and individuals, but not the progress of the different year groups. Their view of achievement across the school is not, therefore, as sharp as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed lessons across all year groups and were accompanied by the headteacher or deputy headteacher during all of these observations.
- Inspectors heard a number of pupils read from Year 1 and Year 6. They also observed lessons on language and communication skills development.
- Discussions were held with a representative of the local authority, the Chair of the Governing Body and three other governors, a group of pupils and members of the leadership team.
- The inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation covering safeguarding, minutes of governors meetings, information relating to the quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils across the school. Inspectors looked at documentation regarding the behaviour of the pupils and their attendance.
- Inspectors looked at a range of the pupils' work both in their books, files and around the school.
- The inspection team also took account of the 20 responses to Parent View, the online questionnaire, the 32 responses to a recent school questionnaire and the comments made by a parent by telephone. They also took account of the 32 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Ronald Hall, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jayne Clemence

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ridgeway School moved to its new current premises in 2010 and caters for pupils with complex learning difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders.
- The headteacher has been in post for the past four terms and the school has had three headteachers in the past three years.
- All pupils have a statement of special educational needs for either moderate learning difficulties, profound and multiple learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium is approximately 16% of the school population, which is below average compared with national figures. This extra government funding supports pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and/or looked after children.
- The majority of pupils are of White British origin.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is broadly average and the proportion of those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school has a larger than average number of pupils who enter and leave the school at times other than those normally expected.
- The early years is made up of a discrete Nursery provision and mixed early years and Key Stage 1 class. The Nursery children currently attend the school in two groups, a morning session and an afternoon session.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching further by using the best practice already in the school to help staff develop their skills further and so raise pupils' rates of progress and levels of achievement to outstanding.
- Improve leadership and management further by ensuring that data analysis routinely tracks the progress of year groups as well as the other groups currently tracked, in order to give the senior leadership team an even sharper view of progress and achievement across the school.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have a clear and well-focused vision for improvement. They work hand-in-hand with the middle leadership team to ensure that all aspects of the school are monitored effectively. Together they have ensured teaching is at least good and standards are rising.
- The impact of the leadership's work is clearly seen in the outstanding work carried out in the nursery provision, where excellent resources, bright and vibrant learning areas, and rigorous monitoring of both teaching and children's progress, has led to excellent outcomes.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team devolve subject and year group responsibilities to the middle leaders. This is a very effective arrangement in which clear lines of accountability are established. The governing body routinely holds all leaders and managers to account. This has led to all leaders and managers feeling that they have the ability to be imaginative, creative and so developmental in helping to build a better school. The performance management of all staff is a robust system and governors are an integral part of this process.
- The senior leadership team have ensured that a varied range of subjects is taught as practically as possible and related to the lives of the pupils.
- The good quality of teaching is promoted through rigorous monitoring. All staff provide pupils with interesting and fun activities which stimulate learning. This was clearly seen during a cookery lesson in which pupils were making biscuits and cakes. Due to imaginative teaching pupils covered a range of skills from measuring and weighing in mathematics to thinking scientifically about materials and changes, as well as developing language and communication skills. Throughout the whole lesson, pupils were fully engaged and clearly enjoying their learning.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities to develop the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff use a range of local and wider community groups to bring in visitors to the school as well as providing places to visit. The school also uses assemblies and everyday events, such as break and lunch times, to reinforce and improve pupils' understanding of right and wrong, their social skills and to develop their appreciation of art and music. This, in turn, ensures that pupils have a good basic understanding of living in a modern British society.
- The senior leadership closely link the development of pupils' moral, social, cultural and religious development with their work to ensure that everyone in the school is treated equally and there is no discrimination. All staff and pupils are encouraged and provided with opportunities to do their very best.
- The senior leadership team and all teachers work well with a range of specialists such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, art therapists and nursing staff to ensure that all the needs of every pupil are fully met. These specialists have a regular input into the planning of pupils' learning, as well as providing specialist support where needed. The quality of this work was clearly demonstrated in a one-to-one session observed with the art therapist. The specialist was working with pupils who had had severe behavioural difficulties at the beginning of term, but due to this provision have settled well and are now controlling their behaviour for the majority of the time they are in school.
- Links with the local authority are good and the school appreciates the support provided by them. The school and local authority work closely to moderate the work of the school and act as a check on the quality of its work. Links with parents are good, although a few parents have concerns regarding leadership and management and behaviour. The evidence of the inspection indicates that this was due to the many changes in leadership in a short period and that stability has now been established.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have created a very positive safeguarding regime, which ensures that all staff, pupils and parents feel highly safe in school. These procedures are so robust that the local authority and other schools use these systems to help other schools improve their own

procedures.

- The senior leadership team uses both the pupil premium funding and the primary school physical education and sport funding to good effect. This has resulted in improvements in pupils' achievement and participation in physical activities across the school.
- The senior leadership team monitor and track the performance of individual and various groups of pupils in the school. However, they do not as yet monitor the progress of the different year groups. This means that they do not have as full a picture of how the different groups compare with each other as they might.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors use a range of information to provide them with a good and accurate understanding of the school. They use training to ensure that they have the skills and knowledge with which to challenge the leadership team and support the school in its development. They monitor the spending of additional government funding effectively, relating this to the effect this has on the pupils' achievement. The physical education and sport funding has brought about a rise in the engagement of pupils in physical activity while the pupil premium funding has resulted in these pupils making rapid progress. The governors challenge all members of staff and use the information they gain through the performance management of staff to financially reward positive achievement and develop teachers professionally. Governors, alongside the leadership team, ensure that safeguarding meets requirements and carry out their statutory duties effectively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils have a real desire to learn and clearly enjoy all their learning. They share resources and work together well, supporting and encouraging each other as much as they can. This was highlighted during a mathematics lesson where pupils were using a range of number bonds. Throughout the session they questioned each other and made sure that they were each doing the work correctly.
- Pupils' attendance at school has risen and is above that of similar schools nationally. All pupils spoken to state they enjoy attending school. The work the school does to improve attendance is excellent. For example, they have arranged for a range of medical specialists to support pupils' medical needs in school as far as possible.
- Pupils feel that behaviour across the school is good, although they say that very occasionally some pupils misbehave. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying including that on the internet, and also feel there is no bullying in school. Although some parents and staff have concerns regarding behaviour, all school records, which are well kept, clearly show a steady improvement in pupils' behaviour. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well which results in little learning time lost due to poor behaviour.
- Pupils are polite and courteous with each other and staff alike. They ensure they reach their lessons on time and are fully engaged at all times.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. All staff are rigorously trained and have safeguarding at the forefront of their minds at all times. The policies and procedures in place are very thorough and ensure that everyone knows what to do should a situation arise.
- All risk assessments are excellent, as are the procedures for the physical handling of the pupils. This was well demonstrated during swimming sessions observed where staff were highly considerate of each pupil's dignity, physical disabilities and reactions.
- The nursing staff play a crucial role in the school making sure that all staff are fully aware of each pupil's needs. They support teachers' planning to ensure that these needs are fully met. Nursing staff often

accompany pupils on external visits alongside other medically trained staff, and as far as possible meet their medical needs in school so that pupils do not lose learning time.

- In terms of dealing with pupils' medication, staff follow exemplary procedures to ensure all routines are kept to and all the required checks are made. Excellent records are kept at all times. The equipment the pupils use is regularly checked and maintained to the highest possible levels.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has been well monitored by both the senior leadership team and middle managers. This has resulted in teaching being consistently good across the school and outstanding in the early years. All staff are held fully accountable for the performance of their pupils. This means that staff plan well and use the information they have on their pupils' progress to plan for future learning.
- All aspects of the pupils' learning needs are considered and the development of pupils' language and communication skills are paramount. In all lessons observed, staff used a wide range of communication aids such as signing, symbols, electronic devices as well as developing pupils' verbal communication. The speech and language therapists play a crucial role in the progress in these areas. They support teachers' planning and, where necessary, carry out specialist sessions with pupils. An excellent example was seen during the inspection; two pupils who had little verbal communication were being taught sentence structure through following precise verbal instructions, followed by them having to give precise reactions to these instructions. Throughout, the therapist repeatedly modelled excellent word pronunciation and carefully constructed sentences as examples for the pupils.
- Pupils spoken to all said that teachers made their learning fun with games, practical activities and by making their work as relevant as possible to their own lives. Teachers use the other adults who support learning effectively to make sure that each pupil can and does reach their potential and feels safe and secure in every lesson. Teaching in reading, writing and mathematics across the school is good. Teachers provide pupils with appropriate feedback on how to improve their work.
- All staff know their pupils well and what motivates them to learn. They use this knowledge effectively to challenge pupils and constantly stretch them in their learning. This results in all pupils, regardless of their background and/or disabilities, making good progress. All staff work together with the specialists in school to help pupils improve their physical skills. By the end of a swimming session, pupils who had started the lesson with very limited arm movement could stretch their arms upwards on their own as the result of expert encouragement and help. The pupils' pride in this achievement was obvious.
- Although teaching is good across the school, not enough teaching is as yet consistently outstanding to promote the most rapid progress for all pupils. The senior leadership team are not consistently using the best practice in the school to raise the skills of other teachers and so raise progress rates and levels of achievement.
- Parents rightly feel that teaching is good across the school and especially so in the early years.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils enter the school with skills and abilities well below those typical for their ages due to their highly complex learning difficulties. However, as pupils move through the school they make good and, for some, including those who have been in the school since their early years, outstanding progress. Progress is in very small steps for most of the pupils and staff record these achievements effectively.
- Senior staff and all teachers set challenging targets for all pupils, and all staff note the little steps pupils make towards these targets in every lesson. This is especially so in their language and communication, and physical skills development. The progress pupils make is shared with the specialists in school, parents and with the pupils. The celebration of each step taken is a key element in encouraging the pupils to push themselves further.

- Any underachievement is quickly spotted and a plan put into place to help close any gaps. This is especially so for those pupils supported through the pupil premium funding. The senior leadership team spotted that these pupils had historically not been closing the gaps between their rates of progress and others in the school. A well-structured plan was created when the headteacher was appointed. This has resulted in these pupils not only closing the gaps on their peers in school but also achieving skills and understanding which are approximately a year in front of their peers in school by the end of Year 6. They are, however, due to their complex needs, still several years behind their peers nationally.
- Children in the early years make outstanding progress. Progress for all groups of pupils is good and there are no variations between the various pupil groups in school. Although the senior leadership team do monitor a range of groups in school, such as those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, they do not consistently review the progress of each year group. As a result they cannot easily check how each year group is doing to inform the actions they need to take to improve achievement further. There is no variation between boys and girls and/or the various ethnic groups within the school.
- The more-able pupils in the school make at least good progress in their reading, writing and mathematical skills and understanding. This is due to teachers challenging these pupils at all times and making sure that any underachievement is quickly resolved. In Ridgeway School, those pupils supported by pupil premium funding are among the most-able pupils in the school.
- Pupils make good, and for some, outstanding progress in their language and communication skills. This is due to the wide range of resources at the adults' disposal to support learning. All staff use signing and symbols, and model good verbal communication. They ensure that where needed a range of electronic devices are available to allow all pupils to communicate as fully as possible. The speech and language therapists assist with planning, take one-to-one sessions and ensure that each pupil makes the progress they should.
- The senior leadership team and teachers effectively build a robust record of each pupil's progress across the school. They use a wide range of information and formats to ensure they have an accurate and measurable account of the progress made. This is made up of photographs, examples of pupils' work, data and information from home. All the specialists in the school contribute to this record. During the inspection, the team reviewed a wide range of pupils' work and books; these clearly showed that over time pupils across the school were making good progress. They also showed a marked and rapid acceleration over the past two terms as new initiatives have begun to take effect.
- The primary school physical education and sport funding has helped develop the school's specialist sports provision and teaching, which has in turn has raised the skills of all the staff. It has also helped fund further sensory occupational therapist support, which has given greater specialist knowledge in relation to each pupil's needs. A greater range of opportunities are available and pupils really enjoy physical activities. This was demonstrated effectively by a very full and enthusiastic Taekwondo class being run by two members of staff. Throughout the session, pupils were highly engaged and determined to overcome their own physical difficulties in order to achieve the moves they were asked to perform.

The early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years provision is a mix of Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils. The children first attend the school for a morning or afternoon session. During this interim period the staff carry out a range of assessments. The leader and manager effectively use the skills of all the specialists in the school to make sure they know the needs and abilities of each child. From this, highly effective learning plans are created and this results in the children very quickly settling into the school and making outstanding progress.
- Staff build excellent relationships, which mean that the children feel safe and secure. The health and welfare of all the children is of paramount concern, and all staff make sure that all resources and learning areas are of the highest standards.
- The children clearly enjoy their learning and quickly learn the routines in the school. For example, in one session observed, the children were engrossed in a range of activities, but as soon as staff said it was

circle time the children responded very quickly. They tidied up what they were doing and moved to the carpet area.

- Children also take great pride in their achievements and this can be demonstrated in no better terms than by the observation of children who had only learned to walk within a few days of the inspection. They were happily walking around as much as they possibly could and staff were extending the children's skills by improving balance, speed, size of steps taken and other skills. One of these activities was walking and throwing a ball, which they gleefully carried out for some time with the inspector and headteacher, throughout which their pleasure at such success was clearly evident.
- A small number of children make such rapid progress that they are quickly able to return to mainstream schools. For the small numbers who stay in the school until Year 6, these pupils make outstanding progress over their time in the school.
- The outstanding teaching in the early years is the driving force behind the children's outstanding progress and this in turn is created by the excellent leadership and management of the provision. Excellent records of the children's development are kept and the children's learning journeys, which map this progress, are exemplary. The local and several neighbouring authorities use this provision as an example of good practice.
- The provision works well with the local primary school early years provision and alongside several other schools to moderate its work to ensure the highest possible standards.
- The links with parents are very strong and they are and feel fully engaged in their child's education and development. There is a daily home/school book as well as regular face-to-face and telephone contact to ensure that they are fully aware of their child's learning and how they can support this further.

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	125805
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	448930

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	102
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Heather Calver
Headteacher	Debra Hewitt
Date of previous school inspection	7 December 2011
Telephone number	01926 491987
Fax number	01983 695926
Email address	head7028@welearn365.com

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