

John Rankin Infant and Nursery School

Garford Crescent, Newbury, RG14 6EX

Inspection dates 17 – 18 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Teaching, including the teaching in the early years, has not been good enough over time to ensure that most pupils make good progress.
- Across the school, teachers do not always have high enough expectations. They do not always set tasks that offer sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils, particularly the most-able.
- Teachers do not consistently expect pupils to take care with the presentation of their work. As a result, pupils' work is not always tidy.
- Most middle leaders, including the early years leader, are not yet sufficiently involved in checking the quality of teaching and the extent of pupils' progress in order to raise achievement in their area of responsibility.
- Leaders do not effectively check the knowledge and skills that each subject is contributing to pupils' development.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make consistently good progress. Gaps between their attainment and that of others are not closing fast enough.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not consistently good. Where their subject knowledge is weak, teachers are not clear about what they want pupils to learn. This limits pupils' progress.
- Teachers do not apply the school's marking policy consistently. They do not always give pupils enough guidance on how to improve their work.
- Pupils' safety requires improvement. Not all pupils have a secure understanding of the different types of bullying or how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet.
- Checks on the extent of children's progress in all areas of learning are not regularly made in the early years.
- Some parents express concern about the quality of the communication they receive from the school.

The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher, head of school and governors have worked well together to challenge poor performance and to improve the quality of education provided. As a result, attainment is now improving.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) has improved and is now effective.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are polite and friendly and have positive attitudes to their learning.
- The use of additional adults to support disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is ensuring that these pupils are now making the same rates of progress as their peers.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils working in 12 lessons, two of which were joint observations with senior leaders. They also looked at work in pupils' books and listened to pupils in Year 2 reading.
- Meetings were held with the senior leaders, governors, and teachers with additional responsibilities. In addition, a meeting was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The inspectors took account of the 120 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View) and three letters written to the inspection team by parents.
- The inspectors examined the school website. They observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including information about pupils' achievement, records of behaviour and attendance, records of monitoring teaching and learning, the school's self-evaluation, plans for improvement and information relating to safeguarding policies and procedures.
- The inspectors observed pupils at breaktimes and lunchtimes and talked to them in lessons and around the school.

Inspection team

Kerry Rochester, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

James Hood

Additional inspector

Fiona Montacute

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a school that is broadly average in size.
- The school appointed a new executive headteacher in March 2015.
- There has been a high number of staff changes since the last inspection.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium (additional government funding for disadvantaged pupils) is below average.
- Children in the Nursery attend in the morning only. The children in the Reception class attend full time.
- The 'Sunshine Club' provides before- and after-school care. This provision is not managed by the governing body and is the subject of a separate inspection report.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, including that in the early years, so that all groups of pupils make good rates of progress across the school, by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and set challenging work, particularly for the most-able pupils
 - the work of pupils in all year groups is tidy and well presented
 - teachers have secure subject knowledge so that they consistently make clear to pupils what they will be learning in lessons
 - all teachers consistently apply the school's marking policy and regularly provide pupils with effective guidance about how to improve their work.
- Improve the safety of pupils by ensuring that they all develop a secure understanding of the different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - targeting the funding for disadvantaged pupils more precisely so that the gaps between the attainment of these pupils and that of other pupils nationally close more quickly
 - developing the role of middle leaders, including the early years leader, so that they check the quality of teaching and extent of pupils' progress in order to raise achievement in their areas of responsibility
 - ensuring that leaders check the knowledge and skills that each subject area is contributing to pupils' development
 - improving the quality of communication with parents in order to keep them better informed about developments in the school.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management

require improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because leaders have not yet ensured that teaching supports pupils to make good progress in all year groups and subjects.
- The high number of new staff in the last two years has had an adverse impact on the quality of leadership and management. As a result, the current middle leaders are at an early stage of learning their new roles. They are beginning to make checks on the quality of teaching and on the extent of progress in their areas of responsibility. However, it is too soon to measure the impact of their work on pupils' achievement.
- The newly appointed executive headteacher, head of school and the governors have an accurate view of the school and how well it is performing. In a short space of time, they have begun to improve the quality of teaching and to raise pupils' achievement. Senior leaders have effectively eliminated all inadequate teaching across the school.
- The executive headteacher has accelerated the pace of change considerably. Middle leaders who are new to their roles have had initial training and support from local schools in aspects of leadership. They are enthusiastic and committed, and the morale of current staff is now high.
- There have been extensive changes of subject leaders. One effect is that the new leaders are not yet checking sufficiently on how well each subject area is contributing to the development of pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Some parents who had contact with inspectors expressed concerns about the quality of the school's communication with parents. The inspection team found that leaders are aware of the need to improve the school's communication with parents and are actively taking steps to address this.
- A broad and balanced curriculum is in place for each year group. There is an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, which includes opportunities to apply their skills in other subjects. The school offers a range of after-school activities, such as dance and archery, and provides pupils with a good variety of experiences which enrich their learning.
- Assemblies and class discussions promote pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development well. Pupils know right from wrong and are kind, polite and well mannered. As a result, pupils begin to understand their rights and responsibilities as British citizens and are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders take prompt action to tackle any discrimination. However, the promotion of equality of opportunity requires improvement because not all groups of pupils are achieving as well as they could.
- School leaders do not check closely enough on the impact of the additional funding for disadvantaged pupils. As a result, these pupils do not make consistently good rates of progress. The gaps between the attainment of these pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and that of other pupils nationally are not closing at a fast enough rate.
- The school uses the government's primary physical education and sports funding effectively to employ specialist coaches to teach pupils and provide professional development for staff. As a result, pupils are now involved in a range of sporting competitions, and increasing numbers are taking part in sport and developing healthier lifestyles.
- Child protection and safeguarding arrangements have been strengthened this academic year and fully meet statutory requirements. The school site is secure and well maintained, ensuring that pupils remain safe.
- The local authority has rightly provided closer support for the school in recent times because of the high proportion of new and less experienced staff. Effective training for senior and middle leaders has helped to bring about positive developments in the school.
- The governance of the school:
 - Governors are closely involved in the school and provide effective challenge to help leaders to make improvements. They are experienced and bring a range of professional expertise to their work as governors. They receive regular updates about how well pupils are doing. They check carefully on the progress of the different groups of pupils and hold school leaders to good account for their achievement.
 - Governors have developed an accurate understanding of how pupils' attainment compares with national standards and recognise that, in the past, many pupils' progress has not been good enough. Governors have worked closely with the head of school, and more recently, with the newly appointed executive headteacher to revise and strengthen the appraisal process for staff. They ensure that any increase in salary is linked to good staff performance and the national standards expected of teachers. They have ensured that extra support has been put in place where teaching was weak and this has helped to

improve the quality of teaching.

- The governing body regularly checks that it meets all its statutory duties.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

require improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good, both in lessons and around the school.
- Pupils are polite, supportive of each other and courteous to school staff and visitors. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and there is a calm and caring atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils play well together.
- Leaders and members of staff manage behaviour effectively and consistently across the school, including in the early years. As a result, the school's records show that there are few significant behavioural incidents over time.
- Incidents of racist behaviour are rare.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to Parent View agreed that the school makes sure its pupils are well behaved.
- Occasionally, in some classes where teaching is less than good, pupils become restless and lose concentration. However, they are not disruptive and keep their positive attitudes to learning.
- Attendance is in line with the national average.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- Although most pupils can talk about bullying incidents and how to get support from an adult if needed, not all pupils have developed a good understanding of the different types of bullying or how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet.
- Most parents feel that pupils are safe in school. Staff supervise pupils well in all areas of the school and ensure that they are kept safe.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because it does not result in good progress in reading, writing and mathematics by pupils across the school, including in the early years.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. Consequently, they do not always ensure that they set work at the right level of challenge for the different groups of pupils, particularly the most-able.
- Teachers do not consistently expect pupils to take care with the presentation of their work. This results in much of the pupils' work being untidy.
- Where teachers have good subject knowledge, pupils make better progress. However, pupils' progress is limited where teachers' subject knowledge is weak and, as a result, teachers are unclear about what they want the pupils to learn.
- Not all teachers apply the marking policy consistently. There are examples of unmarked work, particularly in pupils' topic books. Furthermore, teachers do not always give pupils clear guidance on what they need to do to improve.
- Adults manage pupils' behaviour in their classes well so that learning takes place in a calm atmosphere.
- Recent training has helped to ensure that phonics is now taught well. All teachers use the same approach to teaching phonics, so pupils are clear about what is expected. Pupils enjoy reading and are developing secure reading skills, such as the ability to draw inferences about meaning from their reading.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because not enough pupils are making good progress across the school in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There have been significant changes to the staffing of the school since the previous inspection. This has affected the quality of teaching and has resulted in a decline in attainment.
- In 2014, pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 was broadly average in reading, but below average in

writing and mathematics. However, as a result of effective leadership action which has begun to improve the quality of teaching, most pupils in all year groups are now making expected rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics.

- School information indicates that attainment is rising. The current Year 2 pupils are on track to reach broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in 2015.
- The most-able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. This is because teachers do not consistently set them suitably challenging tasks, which deepen their knowledge and understanding. As a result, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels at the end of Year 2 was below the national average in 2014.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make the same rates of progress as their peers. This is because the school identifies these pupils' needs and provides support either in lessons or in small groups.
- Current school information shows that disadvantaged pupils make expected rates of progress. However, the gaps between the attainment of these pupils and that of other pupils in the school are not yet closing at a fast enough rate. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were one term behind other pupils in school in reading and mathematics. In writing, they were one and a half terms behind. Compared to other pupils nationally, they were two terms behind in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected standard in the Year 1 phonic screening check was below the national average. However, all staff have received recent training in the teaching of phonics. As a result, current school data indicates that the proportion of pupils who are on track to reach the expected standard is improving. This is helping pupils to get greater enjoyment from their reading.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- The quality of leadership and management in the early years requires improvement because leaders have not ensured that all children achieve consistently well in all areas of learning. This is because they do not regularly check on all aspects of the achievement of each child. This slows children's rates of progress.
- Teaching requires improvement, as it is not yet enabling children to make good rates of progress. This is because staff do not always set sufficient challenge for children.
- Children enter the early years with skills and knowledge that are typical for their age. By the end of the Reception year in 2014, the proportion of children who reached a good level of development was broadly average. This indicates that they are adequately prepared to start in Year 1.
- Relationships between adults and children are strong, and as a result children settle quickly in the Nursery and in the Reception class.
- Children behave well and are keen to learn. They play well together, showing respect to others and for the environment. Adults offer a good level of care for the children, and keep them safe at all times.
- Children enjoy the opportunities to undertake a variety of activities and to have opportunities to make choices about their learning. They work productively, both indoors and outdoors.

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	109826
Local authority	West Berkshire
Inspection number	456189

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	3-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Douglas
Executive Headteacher	Conrad North
Date of previous school inspection	12 – 13 July 2012
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