

Rednal Hill Junior School

Irwin Avenue, Rednal, Birmingham, West Midlands B45 8QY

Inspection dates

21–22 November 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has not been good enough over time. Strengthened leadership and teaching have improved current pupils' progress but have not raised their attainment sufficiently.
- The rates of progress and standards attained by disadvantaged pupils still lag behind other pupils nationally.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is variable. At times, pupils, including the most able, are not fully challenged in their learning.
- Teachers do not always provide tasks which build on what pupils already know. There are too many lessons when pupils are not engaged. When this happens, their attention wanders, behaviour deteriorates and there is some disruption to learning.
- Middle leaders are developing their leadership skills but are not yet impacting fully on the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make.
- There are not enough opportunities provided for pupils to develop their knowledge of grammar, spelling and punctuation and writing at length. Teachers do not always have high enough expectations of handwriting.
- Pupils do not read widely and often lack positive attitudes to reading.
- Teaching has not done enough to improve pupils' skills in mental calculation, limiting their ability to solve problems successfully.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website.

The school has the following strengths

- Under the inspirational leadership of the new headteacher and senior leaders, an ethos of high expectations has been created. The whole-school community is committed to raising aspiration for all. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take action accordingly.
- Governors are providing good support and challenge.
- Leaders are providing staff with good training and professional development. As a result, teachers now work collaboratively to address any issues that arise. Morale is high.
- Pupils are happy and say that they feel safe. The school provides well for their personal development and care.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress pupils make by:
 - providing challenge for pupils of all abilities, especially the most able
 - planning tasks which build on what pupils already know and understand to move their learning on faster
 - making sure that tasks engage and enthuse pupils and they do not have to wait for instructions or resources
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to improve their spelling, grammar and punctuation and writing at length
 - ensuring that the quality of handwriting and presentation skills is of a high standard across the curriculum
 - making sure that pupils develop mental calculation skills so they can apply them successfully when solving problems
 - developing pupils' attitudes to reading and their language and vocabulary by providing more varied and interesting books to read.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the impact and accountability of leaders who are new to their roles in improving the quality of teaching and pupil progress
 - making sure that effective use is made of the pupil premium grant to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils
 - ensuring that the school complies with government guidance on what maintained schools must publish about curriculum content for all subjects, and how the improvements made as a result of the primary physical education and sports funding will be sustainable.

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

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since his appointment, the headteacher has been unwavering in his determination to secure a quality standard of education for pupils in this school. He has been supported by very capable deputy headteachers and governors. Leaders and the whole staff team are focused on improving the quality of teaching and the rates of progress that pupils make in their learning. The impact of the team's work is beginning to emerge.
- The ambition and drive to improve all aspects of school life, including from dedicated and knowledgeable governors, are being maintained. Many changes in staffing have been managed carefully. Recent appointments have strengthened the leadership and teaching team. However, middle leaders have yet to have an impact on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' progress in their areas of responsibility or subjects.
- The headteacher and senior leadership team have quickly identified weaknesses resulting from a decline in many aspects of provision. They have taken swift and decisive action to improve the quality of teaching and, as a result, current pupils are now starting to make improved rates of progress in their learning. There has been too little time to see improved outcomes for pupils in published data from statutory assessments, or to plug gaps in some older pupils' knowledge and skills that have resulted from historic weaker teaching.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is planned to support their needs and to enable them to catch up. However, the use of pupil premium funding is not yet effective as it does not have a consistent impact on accelerating the progress of disadvantaged pupils of all abilities.
- Leaders' plans for further improvements reflect a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school development plan carefully monitors the impact of planned actions on outcomes for pupils in their learning. The tracking of actions ensures that no time is wasted to drive further improvements.
- Arrangements for the management of staff performance are in place. Staff value effective professional development and it has led to improvements. For example, teachers' use of questioning to probe responses and check pupils' understanding.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with interesting topics and themes to study. It is designed to ensure curriculum coverage and to promote key values. British values are taught through the school's key values. The school makes use of visits and visitors to enhance the curriculum, such as a visit to the Sea Life Centre and RAF Cosford.
- The primary physical education and sport funding is used to provide a sports coach and increased opportunities for a range of sports and competitions with other schools. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of after-school clubs, such as badminton, football and tag rugby. The spending plan, however, does not include how the school will ensure that the impact of the grant will be sustainable.
- Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils develop an understanding of democracy and human values through lessons and in the election of school councillors. There are plenty of enrichment opportunities and events,

such as anti-bullying week, where respect and consideration for others are given high priority.

- The strong leadership of the special educational needs coordinator has resulted in high-quality provision for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities. Their needs are identified early, and their progress, which is improving, is tracked accurately. Consequently, the special educational needs funding is used increasingly effectively by leaders.
- The school works extremely well with support and training from consultants and local schools. There is clear evidence of the impact of recommendations and advice.
- Parents, staff and pupils overall have a positive view of the school and welcome the recent improvements that have been made.
- Governors have not ensured that the school complies with government guidance on what maintained schools must publish on their website.

Governance of the school

- Governors have recently commissioned a review of governance and have addressed the recommendations. They have redefined their roles. They come into school regularly and meet with leaders. Consequently, they have an understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement. Documentation shows that they now challenge leadership. However, in the past, they did not do enough to prevent the school declining.
- Governors are keen to bring about rapid improvement. They recognise the work of the headteacher and senior leaders to improve staff performance. They recognise that the school is strong on the pastoral side and that pupils' attitudes to learning are much improved. However, governors know there is work to be done to improve pupils' outcomes, especially for the most able and for disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors correctly identify that developing the responsibilities of middle leaders is a priority for improving the quality and consistency of teaching and pupils' progress across year groups and subjects.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Senior leaders and governors have ensured that there is an ethos of keeping children safe in school. Staff are well trained and well aware of any dangers posed to pupils.
- Procedures are updated regularly. Staff know the pupils well and detailed records are kept about safeguarding issues. The school works well with parents and outside agencies, including health and other professionals, to safeguard pupils. As a result, the most vulnerable pupils in school are well cared for and protected. Children missing in education procedures are followed up well.
- Appropriate checks are made on employees and visitors. There is a code of conduct in place for staff. Pupils feel safe, and parents also agree that their children are safe. The school gives good attention to a range of risk assessments to keep both the pupils and the staff safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. Teaching does not always build on what the pupils already know and understand. Sometimes pupils have tasks to do that are too easy for them and do not move learning on quickly enough.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. They do not consistently plan work that challenges all pupils, especially the most able and the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- Tasks do not always engage and stimulate the pupils. Sometimes they have to wait for resources or instructions from the teacher. As a result, pupils lose concentration and their behaviour deteriorates.
- Teachers make good use of questioning skills to probe pupils' responses and deepen their thinking. For example, effective questioning was used to enable pupils to work out the rules to multiply and divide decimals by tens, hundreds and thousands.
- Staff have secure subject knowledge. This is due to a great deal of recent training, particularly in the teaching of reading, writing and mathematics. However, the impact of this has not yet been seen on pupils' performance in national tests.
- Pupils work together well and support each other. This is due to the positive relationships in school between staff and pupils. Pupils demonstrate respect for others' views and ideas in classwork.
- Pupils practise their writing skills in a range of subjects within the curriculum. However, teachers do not provide pupils with enough opportunities to write at length. Teaching does not focus sufficiently on improving pupils' knowledge of spelling, grammar and punctuation. Misconceptions, either spoken or written, are not picked up and addressed quickly enough. Teachers do not have high enough expectations of handwriting and presentation.
- Developments in the teaching of reading have led to recent improvements in pupils' reading skills. However, the school does not provide enough varied and interesting books for the pupils to read. Pupils do not read widely and often. Consequently, their knowledge of authors and books is weak and they have less opportunities to widen their vocabulary through reading.
- In mathematics, the work in pupils' books shows that they are taught calculation skills, reasoning and problem-solving. However, there is a history of pupils' weakness in mental mathematics and the use of basic skills. This limits their ability to solve problems quickly.
- A few pupils need extra support in phonics. The teaching of phonics is structured, well organised and bespoke to individual needs. Staff make sure that these pupils make strong progress.
- The teaching and support for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities ensure that they make good progress. This is because the deployment and training of support staff are carefully planned to meet the specific needs of individual pupils. Staff make good use of useful additional resources in classrooms to meet pupils' needs.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are polite, courteous and have good manners. They are generally respectful to others and adults. They ensure that visitors are made to feel welcome. They display a strong sense of pride in the school and in their appearance.
- As a result of the good pastoral guidance and support offered, pupils' personal skills are developing well. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, for example when online. Parents who completed the Ofsted online survey, Parent View, say their child is well looked after.
- Pupils are confident learners and have positive attitudes to learning when the tasks really engage them.
- Instances of bullying and name calling are extremely rare. Pupils say that they are taught what to do if harassment occurs and that staff deal with concerns or worries swiftly.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. This is because there is low level disruption in lessons where tasks do not engage the pupils. Sometimes pupils have to wait for instructions and resources, leading to their behaviour deteriorating.
- Records show that over the past year there are marked improvements in the behaviour of pupils generally and for targeted pupils in particular. The new rewards and sanctions system is understood well but still needs to be used effectively by all staff. Pupils and parents say behaviour 'is managed better now and has improved'.
- Attendance is improving strongly and is now in line with the national average. Evidence shows that where staff have worked with parents, the attendance of pupils has improved. Leaders have a coherent and successful strategy to address non-attendance issues. Good attendance is recognised and suitably rewarded.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement as pupils do not make consistently strong progress across all year groups in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This is due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching over time, resulting in a legacy of underachievement.
- From 2014 to 2016, the school met the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results. For some time, the progress that pupils make and their attainment have been below the national average.

- Unvalidated 2017 outcomes reflect some improvement in writing and mathematics but not enough to close the gap with national averages. The progress made by the most able pupils was in the bottom 10% of schools nationally in reading and writing.
- Pupils do not use grammar, spelling and punctuation with enough confidence and skill and this is affecting their achievements in writing. Similarly, their skills in mental calculation prevent them from solving problems swiftly.
- Evidence from improving work in pupils' books, matched by detailed information from the school's assessment system, shows that pupils currently in the school are now beginning to make stronger progress. Actions taken by leaders to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress is beginning to take effect.
- Recently, outcomes for the most able pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, show an improvement. However, although these pupils make broadly average progress they do not achieve as well as they could. This is because teachers do not consistently use information they have on pupils to set suitably challenging work.
- The progress disadvantaged pupils make has improved across the school. This is because of the targeted support provided for them. However, leaders recognise that the progress for this group of pupils needs to be accelerated and much better use made of the additional funding they receive.
- Strong leadership of the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities means they receive timely, good-quality support and make good progress. Extra support and interventions for low-attaining pupils have ensured that the progress they make in all subjects is also improving well.
- Pupils' achievements in other subjects also require improvements. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to use and apply their writing and mathematical skills in other subjects such as science, history and geography. In addition, inconsistent expectations mean the standard of work and presentation varies too much and needs to be developed further.

School details

Unique reference number	103248
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	10037881

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	330
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Eaves-Seeley
Headteacher	Robert Jones
Telephone number	0121 453 2520
Website	www.rednalhilljuniors.com
Email address	j.billingsley@rednalhilljuniors.com
Date of previous inspection	16–17 January 2013

Information about this school

- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information on its website about the curriculum content for science, history, geography, art, music and design and technology and how the improvements made as a result of the primary physical education and sport funding will be sustainable.
- The school meets the Department for Education's definition of a coasting school based on key stage 2 academic performance results in 2014, 2015 and 2016.
- The school meets the government's floor standard (the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress).
- The senior leadership team has been in post since April 2016. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff over the past year.
- This is an average-sized junior school.
- The majority of pupils come from a White British background.

- The percentage of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above that of most schools.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged and who receive support from the pupil premium is well above average.
- The Birmingham Education Partnership has brokered support for the school.
- The school runs a breakfast club and a number of after-school clubs.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all classes. Inspectors observed some lessons jointly with school leaders. An inspector also observed an assembly.
- Pupils' work was reviewed during lessons and a more detailed scrutiny was made of pupils' books with the subject leaders for English, mathematics, science and topic. Pupils read to the inspectors and the inspectors spoke with pupils throughout the inspection in order to gain their views.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime and lunchtime.
- Discussions took place with: the headteacher and deputies, middle leaders, four members of the governing body, a group of teachers and teaching assistants, a school improvement and leadership consultant and the director of continuous school improvement.
- Inspectors spoke informally to a number of parents and carers to seek their views about the school. Inspectors also took account of the online questionnaire for parents (Parent View).
- Inspectors took account of the responses from 20 staff who responded to the questionnaire.
- A range of documents were reviewed. These included: the school's self-evaluation summary, action plans for school improvement, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, performance management documents, minutes of the meetings of the governing body, the school's own assessment information and records relating to behaviour, attendance and the safeguarding of children.

Inspection team

Lynda Townsend, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Derek Gardiner	Ofsted Inspector

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