

William Rhodes Primary School

Hunloke Avenue, Boythorpe, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S40 2NR

Inspection dates

24–25 April 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Since the last inspection, pupils' progress has declined. Changes made to leadership and staffing are beginning to rectify this but pupils' progress and attainment are not yet good.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently good. Leaders are taking action to improve this but some teachers are slow to respond to the teaching approaches which leaders have introduced.
- By the end of key stage 2, pupils have not made enough progress. This is equally true for disadvantaged pupils.
- Most pupils behave well. Some, however, do not concentrate on their learning well enough and low-level disruption occurs. This is especially true when teaching does not meet pupils' needs well enough.
- Pupils do not attend as regularly as they should. Despite leaders' actions, some pupils continue to have high levels of absence.
- Support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities has not been effective enough. These pupils are well cared for, but leaders have not checked on their progress closely enough.
- Children in the early years do not make a good start to their education. Their progress is slower than at the time of the last inspection.
- Senior and middle leaders are new to their roles. Much of their work is at an early stage of development.
- Members of the governing body have not developed the skills they need well enough to fulfil some of their roles and responsibilities.

The school has the following strengths

- The new headteacher, ably supported by other leaders, is ambitious and has high expectations. The actions leaders are taking to accelerate pupils' progress are making a positive difference.
- Leaders provide an environment where pupils feel safe. Incidents of bullying are infrequent.
- The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of subjects and learning experiences. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is quickly improving.
- Leaders are developing strong relationships with parents and carers. Parents appreciate the improvements leaders are making.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the impact of leadership and governance by ensuring that leaders:
 - check on the quality of teaching more thoroughly and that all staff follow the school’s agreed teaching policies
 - develop an effective system to check on the progress of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and measure the effectiveness of the actions they take to support this group of learners
 - support members of the governing body in developing the skills they need to make pertinent checks on the school’s effectiveness.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and accelerate pupils’ progress by ensuring that teachers:
 - support different groups of pupils, especially disadvantaged pupils, in catching up with other pupils nationally
 - provide pupils with more opportunities to increase their vocabulary and develop their comprehension skills
 - further develop pupils’ writing skills, especially handwriting and vocabulary use
 - consistently apply the school’s chosen approach to the teaching of mathematics
 - provide pupils with opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Improve pupils’ attendance by ensuring that:
 - leaders develop more effective ways of working with parents to increase pupils’ attendance.
- Improve children’s progress in the early years by ensuring that leaders:
 - provide children with more opportunities to develop the skills they find more difficult to grasp
 - develop ways to engage parents in their children’s learning.

An external review of governance should be undertaken to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

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

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- There have been many staffing changes since the last inspection. During this period of instability, standards across the school have declined. It has taken time for the headteacher to establish a committed team of staff. The headteacher has raised expectations and pupils' achievement is beginning to rise again.
- Leaders' actions to improve the school have, until recently, not been effective enough. The headteacher has a thorough understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has established clear priorities to improve the areas identified as weaknesses. Improvement plans are now sharply focused on these priorities.
- Local authority support has not been effective enough to prevent the decline in pupils' progress since the last inspection. Checks on leaders' effectiveness, made by the local authority, are frequent. However, the support provided has been too slow to help leaders make the rapid improvements needed.
- Instabilities in staffing have meant that the quality of teaching has not improved quickly enough. Leaders have stepped up their approach to improving the quality of teaching. Some teachers, however, are slow to respond to the strategies which leaders are implementing. Leaders do not check teachers' effectiveness or their adherence to policies swiftly enough to modify teachers' practice and accelerate pupils' progress further.
- Teachers do not apply the school's marking and feedback or homework policies consistently. While some teachers use these policies to great effect, others do not engage with them well enough to support pupils' learning.
- Leaders have not used the extra funding for disadvantaged pupils well enough. Leaders check their progress and provide them with a range of support. This support has helped some disadvantaged pupils reach higher standards in their learning. Other approaches, however, are not making a positive difference to pupils' progress. The achievement of disadvantaged pupils remains below that of their peers and of pupils nationally.
- The leadership of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has not been effective enough. Where necessary, the school provides appropriate care for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. However, leaders' systems to check on pupils' progress are not thorough enough. Leaders do not check closely enough on how well teachers tailor their teaching to meet the needs of individual pupils. The support which leaders provide does not routinely match the pupils' learning needs. The new leader has quickly gained a firm understanding of the improvements needed. Although her work is at an early stage, she is conscientiously beginning to improve the quality of education the school provides for this group of pupils.
- Leaders have reviewed the school's curriculum since the last inspection. The curriculum now provides pupils with opportunities to learn about a broad range of subjects. Teachers do not, however, provide pupils with enough opportunities for them to practise their literacy and numeracy skills in the different subjects they study.
- The school's arrangements for checking the achievement of pupils have improved.

Leaders check the accuracy of teachers' assessments against those of other schools. They are making better use of assessments to identify pupils who need extra help to achieve higher standards in their learning.

- Leaders have placed a high importance on promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is supported by a personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) and religious education. Leaders are determined to provide pupils with rich and varied experiences, which include a programme of educational visits. Leaders also invite visitors into school to share their different views and beliefs with the pupils. Leaders adequately prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- Senior and middle leaders play a valuable role in supporting the headteacher and improving the school. Leaders at all levels have high expectations. They are committed to improving their respective areas and accelerating pupils' progress. As some leaders are relatively new, their actions cannot yet be measured for their effectiveness.
- Leaders provide newly qualified teachers with effective support. Newly qualified teachers appreciate the support that they receive from their mentors and training programmes.
- Leaders are working effectively to build relationships with parents. Parents are more positive about the actions leaders are taking to improve the school. Many parents who spoke with inspectors, or who responded to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, agreed that their children are happy and cared for.

Governance of the school

- Until recently, members of the governing body have not been ambitious enough for the pupils. New governors have higher expectations but have yet to gain a full understanding of some aspects of the school's effectiveness. Members of the governing body offer a broad range of skills and experience. However, they have not honed these skills well enough to carry out their roles and responsibilities with rigour.
- The new headteacher provides the governing body with relevant information about the actions leaders are taking to improve the school. Discussions about pupils' progress and attainment now take place. These discussions are effective in helping governors gain a better understanding of the school's effectiveness. Members of the governing body, however, do not verify this information for themselves well enough.
- Members of the governing body have not made appropriate checks on leaders' use of the extra funding the school receives to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils. Governors do not evaluate whether the additional support for disadvantaged pupils is enabling them to make better progress. Leaders make effective use of the physical education and sports premium funding but the governing body does not routinely check this.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have ensured that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They appropriately manage employment checks to ensure the suitability of staff and volunteers who work in the school.

- Leaders conscientiously implement procedures to help keep children safe from harm. Records are well organised, detailed and securely maintained. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying and reporting concerns. Effective partnership working with parents and external agencies helps to ensure that pupils are supported and safe.
- Pupils who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe in the school. The curriculum contributes well to raising pupils' awareness of safe practices, especially online safety. Most parents who responded to Ofsted's online survey, and those inspectors spoke with during the inspection, agreed that their children are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not yet consistently good across the school.
- Some teachers have not developed their use of questioning well enough. Teachers routinely use questioning to check on pupils' understanding. However, they do not use questioning to make pupils think harder about their learning.
- Teachers do not routinely plan work that is well matched to pupils' needs. At times, some pupils do not receive the support they need quickly enough. The most able pupils often find their activities too easy.
- Teaching assistants do not provide a consistently effective approach for pupils who need extra support. This is especially true for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Sometimes, they do not help pupils develop their understanding well enough. At other times, they provide too much guidance and pupils find it difficult to work independently.
- Teaching does not routinely develop pupils' writing skills, especially pupils' handwriting and their use of vocabulary. Some teachers plan purposeful writing activities but this is not consistent across all year groups. At times, imaginative activities provide pupils with practical and relevant learning opportunities. For example, in an English lesson pupils were highly engaged in making jam sandwiches to support their understanding of instructional writing. Pupils' writing skills developed well during this activity.
- A new mathematics programme is supporting the teaching of mathematics. Some teachers, however, do not use the new mathematics programme of study well enough. In particular, they do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their problem-solving and reasoning skills. Pupils therefore do not understand their mathematics learning as well as they should.
- Leaders and teachers promote reading throughout the school. Pupils read regularly at school and at home. They told the inspectors that they enjoy reading. However, the teaching of reading does not enable pupils to develop their comprehension skills well enough.
- There are pockets of good practice in the school. For example, some teachers use their subject knowledge effectively to develop pupils' language skills and challenge pupils' misconceptions. In an English lesson, pupils confidently used subject vocabulary to redraft a piece of written text. In a mathematics lesson, the teacher quickly challenged pupils' incorrect understanding of monetary values.
- The teaching of phonics is effective. Pupils enjoy these sessions and confidently apply

their phonic knowledge to read new words. This is supporting pupils to make good progress in their phonics learning.

- Teachers are supporting pupils in building positive relationships. For example, in an English lesson pupils confidently and respectfully peer-assessed each other's work in a mature and supportive manner.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement. Some pupils do not have positive attitudes to their learning. They do not take pride in their work.
- The teaching at the school does not enable pupils to develop their self-confidence as learners. For example, some pupils are overly dependent on the support of adults, while others are not sufficiently challenged.
- Pupils are not committed to improving their work. When their learning has not been successful, they do not routinely use the feedback that teachers provide to try again.
- Pupils learn about right and wrong. Leaders have placed a high importance on pupils learning how to deal with their own emotions more effectively. More pupils are beginning to identify when they have a negative emotion and manage their feelings appropriately. Pupils have yet to fully understand some elements of diversity and equality.
- Incidents of bullying are infrequent. Pupils told the inspectors that when bullying does occur adults quickly deal with it. Pupils are provided with opportunities to develop their understanding of tolerance and incidents of racism are rare.
- Pupils learn about different ways to keep themselves safe. Most parents agree that their children are safe. Pupils understand how to eat healthily and stay fit. Free fruit and sports-based activities during social time provide pupils with opportunities to adopt a healthy lifestyle approach.
- Pupils of all ages enjoy the range of educational visits and extra-curricular activities on offer. For example, pupils benefit from a variety of clubs such as knitting, computing, colouring and gymnastics.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. In some lessons, pupils lose focus and concentration and low-level disruption occurs. This is especially the case when teaching does not engage, support or challenge the pupils well enough. Pupils are generally polite and considerate towards adults and to each other.
- Pupils do not attend school as well as they should. Attendance has declined since the previous inspection. Leaders have introduced a variety of approaches to support pupils, and their parents, in achieving good attendance. Some actions which leaders have taken have been effective. In particular, the actions taken to reduce the level of persistent absence have been successful. However, attendance continues to be below

the national average.

- Leaders have amended the school's behaviour policy. Expectations of good behaviour have risen and most pupils have responded positively. The number of incidents of poor behaviour is reducing. The proportion of fixed-term exclusions is also falling. Social-time behaviour is lively but pupils generally play well together. A few pupils and parents believe that some pupils' poorer behaviour disrupts the learning of others.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Historically, pupils' progress has been slow in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils' progress is accelerating again. Improvements are now evident in almost all year groups.
- Since the previous inspection, attainment by the end of key stage 1 has been below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2017, attainment at key stage 1 improved. The school's assessment system indicates that pupils currently in key stage 1 are making faster progress. The trend of improvement towards national standards, however, is not yet stable.
- The proportion of pupils reaching the national average in the Year 1 phonics screening check has also declined. Action taken by new leaders has made a positive difference to the teaching of phonics. Information about pupils currently in Year 1 shows that their phonic skills are in line with what is expected for their age.
- Pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 has been below average in recent years. The school's assessment system indicates that pupils' progress is now faster than it has been in previous years. This is the case in almost all the different year groups. Despite these gains, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is typically lower than expected for their age.
- A large proportion of pupils in the school are disadvantaged. In the past, disadvantaged pupils have not made the progress that they should. Current information suggests that while disadvantaged pupils are making faster progress they are not catching up with other pupils quickly enough.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is relatively low. This group of pupils make small steps of progress from their different starting points. However, leaders have not checked their progress towards national standards well enough. The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities making good progress towards the national standards is low.
- The most able pupils have typically made better progress than pupils with lower abilities. There are disparities in the achievement of different groups. Boys, especially during key stage 1, do not make as much progress as the girls.

Early years provision

Requires improvement

- Achievement in the early years has declined since the previous inspection. In 2017, the proportion of children who achieved a good level of development was well below average. Some improvements are now evident, but children do not make good enough

progress across the different areas of their learning.

- Teaching in the early years is not yet consistently good. At times, adults spend time on administrative tasks and do not move on to learning activities quickly enough. Adults do not routinely plan activities to develop key skills.
- Adults assess children's learning to check on the progress that they make. However, they do not use this information accurately enough to plan activities that match children's individual needs and abilities. Teaching does not provide enough opportunities for children to fill the gaps in some of their learning.
- The recently appointed early years leader is ambitious, enthusiastic, and determined to ensure that all children achieve well. She has quickly gained a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the early years, but planned improvements have not been fully implemented.
- Leaders have provided a range of activities that stimulate children's curiosity and imagination. For example, children enjoyed and sustained their play in the 'mud kitchen'. They happily discussed what they were making with each other. In the outdoor learning area, adults provide activities that encourage children to play together and support them in taking risks. For example, a group of children knew how to take turns when playing with their toy drills.
- Most parents are positive about their children's education in the early years. However, leaders recognise that parents do not play a large enough role in their children's learning.
- A high proportion of children join the school with skills well below those typical for their age. The school's assessment records indicate that different groups of children, including those who are disadvantaged, are making faster progress in their learning than children have previously done.
- Adults nurture and care well for the children in early years. They encourage positive relationships and develop children's understanding of good behaviour. Adults intervene successfully when incidents of poor behaviour occur.
- Statutory requirements are met and safeguarding is effective in the early years. Adults take care to keep the children safe.

School details

Unique reference number	112671
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10047984

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 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	248
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Rourke
Headteacher	Rachel Purvis
Telephone number	01246 234626
Website	www.williamrhodes.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	info@williamrhodes.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	4–5 November 2015

Information about this school

- William Rhodes is an average-sized primary school. The headteacher has been in post since April 2016. Three other leaders and several teachers have also been appointed recently.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average. Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is small.
- The proportions of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan are average.
- The school provides a free breakfast club for its pupils.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 10 lessons. Most of this learning was observed jointly with a school leader.
- Discussions took place with school staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- The inspectors met with a group of pupils and talked with pupils informally. Inspectors observed pupils' social time. They also listened to pupils in Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3 reading.
- Inspectors considered the 46 responses submitted by parents to Ofsted's online survey. This included 11 free-text comments. Inspectors also spoke informally with parents at the beginning of the school day. The 17 responses from staff and 108 responses from pupils to Ofsted's surveys were also taken into account.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a broad range of evidence, including: the school's analysis of its strengths and weaknesses; planning and monitoring documentation; the work in pupils' books; records relating to attendance and behaviour; and the school's information on pupils' current attainment and progress in reading, writing, mathematics, and spelling and grammar.
- The school's child protection and safeguarding procedures were scrutinised. A review of the school's website was made to confirm whether it met the requirements on the publication of required information.

Inspection team

Vondra Mays, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Karen Slack	Ofsted Inspector

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