

Ripley Junior School

Poplar Avenue, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 3PN

Inspection dates

5–6 June 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher has quickly won the trust of pupils, staff, governors, and parents and carers. She is determined that all pupils will achieve to the best of their ability.
- Senior leadership is strong. Leaders are ambitious for their pupils and so have high expectations of staff. As a result, the quality of teaching is good.
- Leaders' actions are improving standards in reading, writing and mathematics. An increased proportion of current Year 6 pupils are attaining at a higher standard in all three subjects, compared with 2017.
- Leaders have developed a whole-school approach to reading. An increased proportion of current pupils in all year groups are reaching expected and higher levels in reading, compared with 2017.
- Subject leaders are taking on more responsibilities. To date, they have had limited impact on the quality of teaching and learning, and pupils' outcomes.
- Leaders do not thoroughly check the impact of additional government funding, including the pupil premium funding and the primary physical education (PE) and sport premium.
- School's information shows that current disadvantaged pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are not making as much progress as other pupils, particularly with their reading.
- Teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and relationships are positive. Pupils have positive attitudes, demonstrating resilience and independence in their learning.
- Teachers use their good subject knowledge and questioning to develop pupils' learning. They quickly identify and address any confusion and extend pupils' thinking.
- Pupils behave well, both in their lessons and at other times of the day. Pupils are respectful towards others. Instances of bullying are rare. As a result, most lessons flow smoothly and promote effective learning.
- Most teachers provide work that enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. On occasion, teachers do not support the least able pupils well enough in their learning.
- Overall, pupils' attendance is above the national average. However, disadvantaged pupils do not attend as well as other pupils.
- Until recently, leaders and governors have not followed processes involving the recruitment of staff and volunteers rigorously enough.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils respond to guidance to improve their work. This slows pupils' progress.
- Parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - leaders and governors follow rigorously and check regularly the systems and processes for recruiting staff in order to ensure that safeguarding procedures remain secure
 - leaders and governors closely monitor and evaluate the impact of additional funding received by the school for disadvantaged pupils and of the primary PE and sport premium
 - leaders develop the skills of subject leaders so that they can improve the quality of teaching and raise standards in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve the quality of teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers use pupils' assessment information effectively to reduce any variations in the progress made by all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils
 - teachers set work that provides appropriate support for all groups of pupils, particularly the least able, to eliminate any instances of off-task behaviour
 - pupils act on the guidance from teachers about how they can improve their work so that they make faster progress.
- Leaders continue to reduce the proportion of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, who are regularly absent from school so that it is below the national average.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Since her appointment in April 2017, the headteacher has brought about significant and widespread improvements in the school. She has gained the overwhelming support of pupils, parents, governors and staff. Staff say they respect the headteacher and the fact she is approachable and transparent. They feel motivated and valued and are proud to be a member of the school.
- The headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are a united team. They are ambitious for, and have high expectations of, pupils and staff alike. Senior leaders have a shared vision of how the school can improve further. They have developed precise and measurable plans for the school's key improvement areas. As a result of their concerted efforts, along with the support of the staff, there is a strong capacity for continued improvement throughout the school.
- Together, leaders and staff have created a school culture where the well-being of the whole child is at the heart of the school's work. Increasingly, parents engage with the school and their children's learning. As one parent stated, 'There is a sense of real pride instilled in the children that truly encourages them to be at their best.'
- Regular checks on the quality of teaching and learning have enabled leaders to identify quickly weaker performance. Where teaching is less strong, leaders provide support and training to improve the quality of teaching. Leaders and teachers agree targets for improvement, linked to pupils' progress, which feed directly into the school's improvement plan. The quality of teaching is generally strong or improving.
- Leaders have designed a successful curriculum to motivate and engage pupils in their learning. The curriculum helps pupils to make connections in their learning, while widening their horizons. Pupils make good use of the wide range of extra-curricular activities available for them, such as drama, fencing, archery and craft club. As a result, pupils develop good knowledge and understanding across a wide range of subjects and activities.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is highly effective. Teachers promote monthly values, such as determination and respect, through lessons and assemblies. Pupils value being awarded 'maple currency' if their actions reflect these values. Pupils enjoy learning about a range of faiths and cultures. Displays around the school celebrate the wealth of pupils' experiences, ensuring that they are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Leaders use the school's assessment information incisively to plan actions to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Leaders and teachers regularly analyse this information to ensure that the provision meets the needs of all pupils. Teachers increasingly use this information in their planning to ensure that pupils make faster progress. However, this process is not yet consistent or rigorous and does not precisely focus on closing the gaps between different groups of pupils.
- Senior leaders are beginning to share responsibilities with subject leaders. Subject leaders are very positive about their roles and are keen to develop their skills and expertise. They are beginning to monitor and track the quality of teaching and pupils'

learning in their subject areas. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

- The coordinator for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is knowledgeable and has a detailed understanding of the needs of these individual pupils. She involves parents and outside agencies skilfully and liaises with feeder infant schools effectively. However, she does not check rigorously enough on the progress that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities have made from their individual starting points. Leaders are not able to evaluate the impact of additional support being provided for these pupils, including the deployment of teaching assistants.
- Leaders use the pupil premium funding to provide additional support for disadvantaged pupils. These pupils, however, do not make consistently good progress in all year groups. Leaders do not sharply analyse the effectiveness of their actions against measurable outcomes to ensure that the attainment gaps between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils close more rapidly.
- Leaders do not ensure that the primary PE and sport premium is used effectively to promote long-term improvements in pupils' engagement with physical activities.

Governance of the school

- The governing body is ambitious for the school and committed to supporting and helping the school to improve further.
- Governors have a good mix of skills and expertise that they use to challenge and support senior leaders. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, not all governors have a sharp enough understanding of the school's assessment information to enable them to hold leaders fully to account.
- Governors gain first-hand insight into the school's effectiveness through regular visits to see the school at work and to meet with staff. However, many of their visit reports are not formally shared with the full governing body in order to inform their work.
- Governors do not hold leaders to account as effectively as they could, particularly with regard to the uses of additional funding. For example, governors do not analyse the impact of the pupil premium funding as rigorously as they should in order to hold school leaders to account more effectively for the attainment and progress of disadvantaged pupils.
- Until recently, governors have not effectively reviewed the school's safeguarding processes involving the recruitment of staff and volunteers to ensure that leaders are carrying out all of the appropriate checks thoroughly.
- Support from the local authority has been limited. There is little evidence to suggest that their support has had any tangible impact on pupils' outcomes.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils' welfare is the top priority for all staff. Parents, staff and pupils agree that the school is a safe place to learn and pupils are protected from harm.
- Pupils trust adults in the school and say they know who to talk with if they are worried.

They also appreciate being able to use the school's 'worry box', either for themselves or to share concerns about other pupils. Pupils talk knowledgeably about how the school keeps them safe, including how to stay safe online.

- The designated leader for safeguarding keeps all members of staff and governors up to date with the latest guidance on keeping pupils safe in education and ensures that they are trained on a regular basis. Leaders make effective use of the school's website to provide parents with useful information to help them to keep their children safe.
- Staff are aware of their responsibilities to keep children safe. They understand, for example, the signs of neglect and the localised risks from radicalisation and extremism.
- Leaders, staff and governors all display a secure knowledge of the school's systems for raising any concerns they have regarding pupils' safety or welfare. Leaders keep secure online records that show they respond swiftly to all concerns reported. Leaders are tenacious in involving external agencies when pupils need additional support.
- Recent changes made by leaders ensure that recruitment checks on the suitability of staff and volunteers to work with children are now thorough and accurately recorded.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is typically strong across all year groups. Teachers are enthusiastic. They use their detailed subject knowledge to create a well-planned and well-structured curriculum that engages all pupils. They collaborate effectively to share their good practice. Where teaching is less strong, senior leaders provide effective support, training and guidance.
- Teachers build constructive relationships with pupils, based on well-established classroom routines and high expectations. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are confident sharing their ideas and collaborating together. Parents and staff agree with inspectors that pupils make good progress.
- Teachers motivate pupils' learning well. They plan sequences of lessons to capture pupils' imaginations and interests. Teachers use resources to support and promote pupils' learning. Inspectors observed pupils accessing independently, for example, the 'working wall' to provide them with ideas to enhance their written pieces or to support their understanding of time in mathematics. Pupils say they enjoy teachers challenging them and they feel well supported.
- Teachers make effective use of the school's six 'learning attitudes', for example 'aiming high' or 'dare to be different'. Pupils understand how each 'learning attitude' helps them to make faster progress. They are resilient, being willing to take risks in their learning.
- Teachers use probing questions and model answers skilfully to check pupils' understanding and promote deeper thinking. Pupils are always encouraged to explain their answers in more detail, providing evidence from the resources. Many teachers use timely interventions to clarify pupils' misconceptions. As a result, pupils make good gains in their learning.
- The teaching of reading is becoming a strength of the school. Leaders and teachers have developed a whole-school approach to improve pupils' reading skills, for example

linking reading to topic work on the Second World War. Teachers use high-quality texts to inspire pupils to read, including a well-stocked library. As a result, pupils enjoy reading. Most of the pupils who inspectors heard read used their phonics skills to self-correct. These pupils were confident and fluent readers and read regularly at home.

- Pupils' workbooks show they have opportunities to write extensively about a range of interesting topics from across the curriculum. Teachers support pupils' handwriting skills effectively. Pupils practise their grammar, punctuation and spelling skills separately. Most pupils use these skills in their writing successfully to help them make good progress. However, not all teachers consistently correct pupils' spelling mistakes, leading to errors in their final written pieces.
- Pupils enjoy their homework. Homework activities support and extend pupils' basic numeracy and literacy skills effectively. Pupils also complete topic-based projects over a number of weeks. Leaders say homework has helped to improve parental engagement with the school.
- In the most successful lessons, teachers make effective use of pupils' progress information. They set pupils tasks that are well matched to their abilities so that all pupils can make accelerated progress. Teachers challenge the most able pupils with additional tasks to accelerate their progress. However, some teachers do not use progress information for the least able pupils effectively enough to support their learning. On these occasions, off-task behaviour may occur and their learning does not move on.
- Most teachers use the school's assessment and feedback policy consistently well. However, teachers do not ensure that pupils always act on the guidance provided about how they can improve their work. As a result, the progress of these pupils slows.
- Teachers typically deploy teaching assistants well. The teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils' learning when working with individual pupils or small groups. Sometimes, teaching assistants do too much for the pupils and they become overly dependent on the support.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are interested in their learning and most take pride in their work. Those pupils spoken with during the inspection explained how having a positive learning attitude helps them to take more responsibility for, and develop confidence in, their own abilities. Pupils enjoy taking on a challenge, particularly the most able pupils. Their positive attitudes contribute well to the good progress they make.
- Pupils enjoy celebrating their own successes, and those of their peers, in school assemblies. They value every opportunity to collect 'maple currency', awarded by teachers when they demonstrate different learning attitudes. Pupils are well motivated and proud of their achievements.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school and they can talk confidently about how to stay safe online and avoid, for example, cyber bullying. Older pupils value the sessions they have

had discussing 'stranger danger', as well as how to stay safe on their bicycles. They know who they can talk to in school if they have any concerns. Parents have valued being able to attend workshops about online safety, as well as making use of the helpful information on the school's website.

- Pupils also say bullying is rare but, when problems occur, staff will resolve them quickly. All staff and the vast majority of parents who responded to their respective surveys agree that staff deal with bullying effectively.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn about the world around them, including different faiths and cultures. Pupils feel valued and listened to, showing courtesy to each other. Pupils are confident that new pupils feel welcome at the school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Leaders have high expectations of behaviour. They respond to any issues involving pupils' behaviour swiftly in order to resolve them effectively. Pupils, parents and staff are almost unanimous in their view that pupils' behaviour has improved since the senior leaders introduced a new system for its management.
- Leaders keep detailed records of any incidents of poor behaviour. They review records frequently to ensure that they identify any patterns or trends and deal with them quickly. Learning mentors support pupils with additional behavioural needs effectively through individual behaviour plans. Pupils know and understand the system in place to deal with poor behaviour. They say most staff apply the behaviour system consistently. Instances of poor behaviour have reduced significantly this year.
- Pupils are happy and feel safe in school. Adults ensure that social time is supervised effectively and there are calm and sensible transitions between the playground and classrooms. Pupils' conduct around the school site at different times of the day is excellent, including in the corridors and on the playground. Year 6 pupils enjoy the responsibility of being 'peer buddies', organising games for pupils of all ages. During social times, learning mentors provide additional support for some pupils in the safe space of the 'sanctuary'.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very positive and respectful. Pupils can confidently articulate their ideas to adults and visitors. In lessons, there is a calm, learning environment. Pupils settle quickly to each task and little learning time is lost. They respond well to instructions and collaborate productively with each other. The majority of pupils concentrate well and try hard to complete their work.
- Interruptions to pupils' learning in lessons are rare. Pupils only lose focus when they are unsure or when teachers do not match work well to their ability or needs. For example, on occasion, when the least able pupils are not able to access a task, they become distracted.
- Pupils say behaviour on the playground before the start of school is not as good as it is during the rest of the day. School leaders agree and have recently changed the procedures to reduce any chances for poor behaviour to take place.
- The proportion of pupils who are excluded has reduced over time and is now close to the national average. Pupils who are excluded receive effective support to improve

their behaviour. In the current year, no pupils have been excluded more than once.

- Pupils' attendance has been above the national average for the last two years. Current pupils' attendance figures continue to show a slight improvement. The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent has decreased over time, although it remains slightly above the national average. A proportion of disadvantaged pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2017, the progress and attainment of pupils leaving Year 6 improved, compared to the previous year. In writing and mathematics, these pupils made more progress than other pupils nationally. In mathematics, the proportions of pupils achieving at the expected and higher standards were above other pupils nationally. Too few pupils achieved the higher standards in writing, and grammar, punctuation and spelling.
- In 2017, the least able pupils made significantly strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics, compared to other pupils nationally. Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made good progress in reading, writing and, notably, mathematics from their individual starting points.
- Boys' and girls' progress in reading, writing and mathematics improved in 2017, compared to the previous year. Boys' progress in reading and mathematics and girls' progress in writing were just above the national averages. However, no boys attained the higher standard in writing.
- Year 6 pupils' current assessment information and workbooks indicate that, across all subjects, improvements in pupils' attainment and progress are being sustained or further improved, compared to 2017. Pupils of all abilities are making at least the progress of which they are capable. Increased proportions of pupils are attaining the higher standard, in response to teachers providing additional challenge in lessons for all pupils, particularly the most able pupils. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are making more progress than other pupils in all subjects. As a result, most pupils are well equipped for the next stage of their education.
- In reading, pupils' progress and attainment were below the national averages in 2017. The progress of pupils of average ability has been significantly below the national average for the past three years in reading. Improvements to the teaching of reading mean that current pupils of average ability are making faster progress across all year groups. In all years, an increased proportion of pupils are reaching expected and higher levels than previously because they are developing good comprehension skills.
- In 2017, the gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in writing and mathematics closed compared to the previous year. However, the gap between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in reading increased compared to 2016. The school's information shows that current disadvantaged pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 are not making as much progress as other pupils, particularly with their reading.
- Pupils' progress and attainment are not yet consistent across all years, all groups and all subjects. For example, pupils in Year 5 are not making as much progress as pupils in other year groups. In Year 3 and Year 5, no pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities

are attaining at the expected standard in reading, writing or grammar, punctuation and spelling.

School details

Unique reference number	112611
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10047985

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	306
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Mrs Julie Critchlow
Headteacher	Mrs Jennifer Clarke
Telephone number	01773 742 281
Website	www.ripley-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	info@ripley-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	3–4 November 2015

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in April 2017. She has restructured and streamlined the senior leadership team.
- The school is slightly larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The school runs its own breakfast club and after-school club.
- In 2017, the school met the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 20 lessons. Some of these lessons were visited jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed an assembly.
- Inspectors and senior leaders looked at samples of pupils' work covering a range of year groups, subjects and abilities.
- Inspectors met with two groups of pupils and spoke informally with pupils during lessons, lunchtimes and playtimes. An inspector also heard some pupils read.
- Inspectors observed the behaviour of pupils at playtime and lunchtime and as pupils moved around the school.
- Inspectors held a range of meetings with the headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher, subject leaders and the coordinator for the provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. The lead inspector met with five representatives of the local governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair. The lead inspector also held a telephone conversation with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with parents at the start of the school day. They also considered the 139 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including the 20 responses made through the free-text service.
- Inspectors considered the 23 responses from the staff survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents relating to the school's provision, including: self-evaluation and improvement planning records; minutes of meetings of the governing body; plans related to additional government funding; behaviour, attendance and exclusion records; the school's current information on pupils' progress and achievement; safeguarding records; external reports on the work of the school; and information on the school's website. The lead inspector also checked the school's single central record and the school's system for recruiting staff.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Karen Slack	Ofsted Inspector
Claire Stylianides	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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