

Rushey Mead Primary School

Gipsy Lane, Leicester, LE4 6RB

Inspection dates

22–23 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
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Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Effective leadership and management, supported well by the governing body, has improved teaching. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Standards in English and mathematics are rising.
- As a result of good teaching and stimulating activities, children settle quickly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make good progress from generally low starting points.
- Leaders and teachers carefully check the progress of every pupil to ensure that nobody falls behind.
- Carefully planned help and guidance for pupils who join the school at different times ensures that they make good progress.
- The school provides a calm and orderly learning environment in which pupils behave well and feel safe.
- The school benefits from the support of parents.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted exceptionally well. This contributes to the strong sense of community in the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There are weaknesses in the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics) in Year 1.
- Achievement in writing is not yet as good as that in reading.
- Not all staff with middle leadership roles, such as subject leaders, have the skills needed to play their part in checking and improving teaching and learning.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 27 lessons. Several lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher or the deputy headteacher, who also joined the inspectors in reviewing pupils' work and the work of teaching assistants.
- The inspectors observed one assembly, made a number of short visits to classrooms and observed pupils were at break and lunchtimes.
- The inspectors held discussions with the headteacher, staff, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Groups of pupils of different ages were heard reading.
- The inspectors met with some parents at the start of the school day and during the inspection. They took account of 189 responses to the most recent survey of parental views conducted by the school. There were too few responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, to be considered.
- Inspectors looked at the school's policies, teachers' plans, samples of pupils' work, school improvement planning and records on behaviour and safety. Inspectors also looked at information on individual pupils' progress and teachers' performance, and records of meetings held by the governing body.

Inspection team

Kenneth Thomas, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Greg Morris	Additional Inspector
Catherine Beeks	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an above-average-sized primary school.
- Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The overwhelming majority are from Indian backgrounds.
- Virtually all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for pupil premium funding is well above average. This additional government funding is provided for pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, from service families or looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- A high proportion of pupils join partway through their primary school education, particularly during Key Stage 2.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement by:
 - making sure that in Year 1, the quality of teaching of letters and the sounds they make matches the high quality seen in the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - sharing the best practice in the use of speaking and listening as a prompt for writing.
- Improve leadership and management by providing middle leaders with the skills necessary to check the quality of teaching and learning and drive improvement in their areas of responsibility.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills that are generally well below those expected for their age. Virtually all are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Because children receive good care and support from adults, good progress is made in all areas of learning, although there are remaining weaknesses in communication and language. In 2013, about two thirds of children entered Key Stage 1 having achieved the Early Learning Goals.
- Good progress continues in Key Stage 1 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly average at the end of Year 2. Pupils also make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2, and achieve well in English and mathematics. As a result, standards in reading and writing at the end of Year 6 are rising. Current work and school assessment information show that pupils' good progress in English and mathematics is being maintained this year.
- Standards, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, are affected by the high number of pupils who join the school at different times, most of whom are in the very early stages of learning English. Pupils who join the school in the Early Years Foundation Stage attain significantly higher standards than those who join in later year groups. Nevertheless, these pupils also make good progress.
- Pupils make particularly good early progress in their ability to link letters and sounds (phonics). This was reflected in the 2013 Year 1 phonics screening check, where all groups of pupils reached higher than nationally expected levels. Pupils develop confidence in reading, and by Year 6 most read widely for purpose and pleasure.
- The many pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well because the rich opportunities for speaking and listening provided in most lessons help them to improve their reading and writing. However, progress in writing lags behind reading.
- Standards in mathematics are broadly average and have risen because pupils have more opportunities to apply and develop their mathematical skills in a wide range of contexts.
- More-able pupils make good progress. They are challenged well because of the emphasis placed on setting demanding work that really makes them think.
- Pupils who are known to be eligible for pupil premium funding also do well. At the end of Key Stage 1, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is about the same as their classmates. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 2013, they were behind other pupils by about 17 months in mathematics, 12 months in reading and six months in writing. However, many of these pupils had joined during Key Stage 2 with low attainment, and the results still represented good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The way they are catered for is led and managed well. Their individual needs are well known and additional support is carefully tailored to meet those needs.

- Pupils enjoy physical activity. Their health and well-being are enhanced by their participation in well-taught physical education lessons.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now mostly good and occasionally outstanding. Literacy and numeracy are typically taught well across the curriculum.
- Consistently good teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children a secure start to their learning. Teachers make good use of their knowledge of the needs of early learners of English to plan a language-rich learning environment. They are good role models in showing pupils how to speak clear and correct English, and make good use of both the indoor and outdoor areas to develop children's social and academic skills.
- Phonic skills are taught exceptionally well in the Nursery and Reception classes. This provides the basis for the good performance seen in the Year 1 screening check. However, following changes in staffing, this good quality of teaching is not seen consistently in Year 1, where there are weaknesses in teachers' understanding of how phonics should be taught.
- Good relationships form the basis of effective class management in most lessons. These foster positive attitudes to learning and the good behaviour in lessons that enables pupils to concentrate on their work without distraction.
- Teachers make good use of their knowledge of pupils' attainment levels to ensure that work is suitably demanding for all groups of pupils, including pupils of higher ability.
- The school's strategies for improving writing include the use of paired discussion to help pupils to organise the language they need before writing. This is particularly helpful to English language learners. For example, in a particularly successful Year 3 English lesson, the use of talk partners led to adjectives such as 'musty', 'shining sun', 'long elegant windows' and 'staring books' being used in lively written descriptions of a library. However, this practice is not yet consistent across the school, and in a few lessons pupils' writing is less imaginative and not so well organised when they are moved quickly on to writing without the opportunity to share their thoughts.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to make sure that the work given to disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is demanding but not too hard. Together they ensure that work builds up in sequence so pupils make good progress towards their personal learning targets.
- The use of pupil premium funding to supplement teaching support is having a positive impact on the progress of these pupils in English and mathematics. Bilingual adults make a particularly good contribution to the learning and progress of pupils who join the school at different times. They ensure that these pupils are taught alongside their peers and, through carefully planned support, provide a secure base for development of both reading and writing skills.

- The vast majority of pupils take pride in their work, and it is neat and well presented in their books. Marking is generally thorough. It gives pupils clear guidance on what they must do to improve and contributes well to the good progress they are making.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes and good behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. Parents and carers, and staff, agree that the behaviour of pupils is typically good.
- Pupils are friendly and care for each other well. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well with each other. New pupils are made very welcome and given good support. They soon become part of the school community.
- The emphasis on good behaviour begins in the Nursery and Reception classes and is reinforced throughout the school. The vast majority of pupils conform to the school's high expectations of behaviour and this contributes to the calm and purposeful learning environment.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe is good. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that adults will look after them well if they have any concerns. The school makes clear that bullying or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Pupils understand about different kinds of bullying, including physical bullying and persistent name-calling, and are emphatic when they say that they cannot think of any incidents of this type or of any racist comments.
- Pupils respond well to opportunities to take on responsibility. Through, for example, their roles as school councillors they develop self-confidence and make positive contributions to the school community.
- The school places a high emphasis on the importance of regular attendance, although overall attendance rates have been affected by a small number of persistent absentees. Through the work of the learning mentor this number is decreasing and attendance is improving. It is now approaching average.

The leadership and management are good

- Good leadership and management are responsible for the school's improvement since the last inspection. With the full support of her deputy and governors, the headteacher provides the school with a clear agenda for continuing its upward trajectory. Staff morale is high and all are committed to raising pupils' achievement.
- Leaders have an accurate awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the correct areas for improvement are identified through careful checks on its work. Management action to tackle the weaknesses identified in the last inspection has been successful. Both the quality of teaching and the curriculum in the Early Years Foundation Stage have improved. Although writing standards have also risen to some extent, this

remains an ongoing improvement priority.

- Effective management of teachers' performance has improved the quality of teaching. With good support from the local authority, firm action has been taken to eradicate inadequate teaching. Suitable training is provided for teachers to help them to continue developing their skills to ensure pupils are well taught. There is a clear understanding of the link between teachers' pay and promotion and pupils' progress.
- Teachers are encouraged to take on leadership roles. Subject leaders and others responsible for particular aspects of the school are increasingly responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. Several of these middle leaders are new to the role and have yet to develop the skills needed to fully support the drive for improvement.
- The curriculum promotes achievement well. There is an appropriately strong focus on language development and the embedding of literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects. The curriculum is enhanced through visitors and visits to places of interest, which broaden pupils' horizons and promote self-confidence.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted very well through art and music, and the school's clear vision and beliefs. The impact is seen, for example, in pupils' acceptance of clearly defined boundaries of what is right or wrong. Pupils develop a good understanding of religious and cultural diversity in modern Britain.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well and makes sure that there is no discrimination. It fosters good relationships with parents, other local schools and the local community.
- The school uses the primary school sport funding to strengthen teachers' skills through working alongside specialist coaching staff and to enable pupils to participate in a wider range of competitive sports. There are suitable plans to measure its impact.
- The school receives good support from the local authority. Training and support for staff and governors have contributed effectively to its improvement.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is improving under the direction of a knowledgeable Chair. The governing body is representative of the community the school serves, and benefits from governors' constructive support. Funding is managed conscientiously and all statutory duties are met, including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils. All necessary checks are carried out to ensure pupils' safety. Governors make sure that the income received through the pupil premium is spent for the purposes intended. They know how the school's performance compares with that of other schools and understand that teachers' pay and promotion must be justified by the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. Governors are keen to strengthen their contribution to the school and as part of this process, the local authority is to carry out an independent review of governance later this year.

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	120009
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	430577

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	462
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sue Welford
Headteacher	Debra Bailey
Date of previous school inspection	20 June 2012
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