

Ruislip Gardens Primary School

Stafford Road, Ruislip HA4 6PD

Inspection dates

29–30 March 2017

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of education at the school has declined since the previous inspection. Across different subjects and year groups, pupils' progress is variable. Although outcomes are improving, not enough pupils make consistently strong progress.
- Leaders are determined to raise standards and improve teaching. However, their evaluation of the school's effectiveness is too positive. This has prevented them from taking more decisive action to speed up pupils' progress.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching regularly. However, teachers are not always clear on how to improve their practice to ensure that all pupils learn and achieve well. This has contributed to the variable quality of teaching in the school.
- Teaching is not routinely challenging. Pupils, including the most able, often complete tasks which do not stretch their skills and knowledge.
- The pupil premium funding is not used consistently well to promote the achievement of disadvantaged pupils. This is particularly the case for the most able disadvantaged pupils.
- In the 2016 assessments, the attainment of Year 6 pupils was lower than other pupils' nationally. The progress of different groups of pupils was inconsistent, particularly in writing. Disadvantaged pupils and boys made much slower progress than other pupils nationally.
- Pupils made good progress overall in the 2016 key stage 1 assessments. However, not all groups of pupils achieved equally well. Too few boys with low prior attainment made the swift progress necessary to achieve age-expected standards in reading.
- Although governors are committed to the school, they have not held leaders to account fully on their work to improve pupils' outcomes.

The school has the following strengths

- Leaders are taking effective action to ensure that all pupils attend school regularly.
- Pupils' behaviour is typically sensible and calm. They are respectful and considerate of others.
- Parents are supportive of the school. They appreciate how teachers support their child to develop positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils benefit from a broad curriculum which promotes their personal development effectively. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to challenge themselves in their learning.
- In the early years, children receive a good start to their education. As a result, they are well prepared for their learning in Year 1.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils make consistently strong progress in reading, writing and mathematics by ensuring that:
 - teaching is matched precisely to pupils' needs so they are able to build quickly on their existing skills and knowledge
 - teachers' questioning helps pupils from all ability groups to explore their ideas in greater depth
 - the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, routinely move on to more demanding learning as soon as they are ready
 - disadvantaged pupils from all ability groups receive well-targeted teaching and support to help them achieve to the very best of their capabilities.
- Improve the leadership of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that:
 - teachers receive regular support and guidance to help them maximise how well different groups of pupils learn and achieve
 - teachers' assessments of pupils' knowledge and skills are consistently accurate
 - senior and middle leaders evaluate precisely the impact of their work to improve teaching and speed up the progress made by different groups of pupils.

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

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

Requires improvement

- Leaders, including governors, are committed to improving the school. However, their understanding of the school's effectiveness is overgenerous. Consequently, leaders have been slow to challenge each other and staff about what needs to be better.
- Although some pupils make good progress overall, there is too much inconsistency across subjects and year groups. Not all groups of pupils achieve equally well. Senior and middle leaders are now tackling this with greater urgency and rigour. As a result, pupils' outcomes are improving. However, much of leaders' work is too recent to have had a clear and sustained impact on raising achievement for all pupils.
- Leaders rely heavily on the use of 'catch-up' sessions to help pupils achieve age-expected standards. Insufficient emphasis is given to ensuring that pupils receive consistently good teaching over time. Although leaders regularly visit lessons and review work in pupils' books, teachers do not receive high-quality guidance to help them improve their practice. This has contributed to the decline in the quality of teaching.
- Middle leaders are developing the skills they need to drive improvements. They feel well supported by senior leaders. They are beginning to focus their actions more sharply on improving teaching and raising standards. For example, leaders have recently introduced strategies to help pupils think deeply about their learning in mathematics. However, they do not always check whether their work is helping to accelerate the progress of all groups of pupils.
- Leaders have implemented clear systems for tracking pupils' progress. This is helping leaders to spot pupils who are not achieving as well as they should. However, leaders are overly positive on the achievement of current pupils. This is because they are not checking carefully whether assessment information matches the work in pupils' books.
- The school has not used the pupil premium funding effectively to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. In the 2016 national assessments, pupils in key stage 2 made slow progress when compared with other pupils nationally. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils also made variable progress from their different starting points, particularly in reading. Outcomes for current disadvantaged pupils, although improving overall, remain inconsistent. The most able disadvantaged pupils do not routinely receive the right level of support to help them excel in their learning.
- Recent action by leaders has strengthened the provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Effective partnerships with parents, as well as new assessment procedures, are helping leaders to provide pupils with support that is more closely matched to their needs. As a result, these pupils are making better progress than they have done in the past.

- Pupils experience a broad curriculum which contributes to their enjoyment of school and successfully supports their development as well-rounded individuals. Themed events help pupils explore their skills and talents. For example, during a recent 'Arts bonanza', pupils participated in drama and sculpture workshops. Trips and visits are used well to aid the development of pupils' skills and knowledge in different areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 1 pupils visited a local farm as part of their science topic on animals. Pupils also benefit from a wide range of clubs, including dancing, knitting and a school choir. Effective use of the sport premium means that pupils have access to a greater variety of sports clubs and physical activities. Parents are very positive about the school's work to help their child enjoy school and value their learning.
- The school's work to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. Pupils' understanding of equality and respect is well developed. They appreciate that everyone is different and are ready to learn from others. Pupils have a detailed knowledge of different faiths and have opportunities to visit places of worship. This contributes effectively to the development of pupils' respectful attitudes.

Governance

- The governors are committed to the school and are keen to contribute their skills and experience. However, they have not held the headteacher to account rigorously for the standard of education the school provides.
- Governors have access to a wide range of information about how well pupils learn and achieve. They visit the school regularly to meet leaders and see for themselves what is happening in classrooms. As a result, they are aware that pupils' achievement across the school is variable. However, they have not questioned leaders incisively on the reasons for this, or whether leaders' actions to address underachievement are securing rapid improvements.
- Governors understand that the achievement of disadvantaged pupils needs to be better. However, their oversight of the pupil premium funding has lacked challenge. Consequently, leaders and governors are unclear about whether this funding is helping disadvantaged pupils to achieve as well as other pupils nationally.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. They are clear about school systems to promote their safety, including regular fire drills and safe routes onto the school site. The vast majority of parents agree that their child is safe and happy in school.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive regular training and are fully aware of the different factors that represent a risk to pupils' welfare. Staff understand their statutory responsibilities to report concerns under the 'Prevent' duty as well as those relating to female genital mutilation.
- School records show that staff are vigilant. Concerns about a pupil's welfare are reported promptly. Leaders work constructively with external agencies to ensure that vulnerable pupils, including those at risk of harm, receive timely help and protection.

- Leaders carry out all the necessary checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work in the school. This includes checks on agency staff, volunteers and members of the governing body. Staff are clear about what they must do if they are concerned about the behaviour of another adult in the school, including procedures for 'whistle-blowing'.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Across different subjects and classes, the quality of teaching over time is variable.
- Typically, teachers plan activities for different ability groups. However, they do not always take into account what pupils already know or can do well when planning the learning. Consequently, teaching does not routinely stretch pupils' knowledge or skills.
- Pupils often spend time on activities that are too easy or too hard. This is because teachers do not adapt tasks during lessons to ensure that pupils complete work that is at the right level for them. This slows pupils' progress over time.
- Teaching is not consistently challenging the most able pupils to excel. This includes the most able disadvantaged pupils. Pupils often complete more of the same work, rather than tasks that deepen their learning. Many pupils told inspectors that they found their work 'easy'.
- In mathematics, well-chosen visual images and resources help pupils develop a secure understanding of the calculation methods they use. For example, in Year 2, pupils used arrays, cubes and number lines to help them work out multiplication and division facts. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to tackle more complex problems which help them to think hard about their mathematics. Leaders have recognised this. Mathematics teaching now gives greater emphasis to the development of pupils' problem-solving and reasoning skills. However, this approach is inconsistent across year groups and classes.
- Where teaching is strongest, teachers question pupils skilfully to help them explain their ideas. However, questions are not always precisely targeted to help pupils explore their ideas in greater depth. On occasions, adults intervene too quickly to provide pupils with the answer rather than allowing them to work it out for themselves.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support on an individual or small-group basis, particularly for pupils with low prior attainment and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, during whole-class teaching, additional adults are not always clear about how best to support pupils' learning.
- Teachers typically have secure subject knowledge. They explain the learning clearly and use technical vocabulary precisely. This helps pupils understand how they can be successful in their learning as well as talk about how they can improve their work. This is particularly evident in the teaching of writing. For example, pupils in Year 6 were able to describe how the use of 'rhetorical questions' and 'modal verbs' contributed to the overall effect of their writing. However, pupils' writing skills are not routinely stretched because they have insufficient opportunities to write at length.

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are warm and respectful. Staff are good role models. They provide pupils with regular praise and encouragement. As a result, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning and are proud of what they achieve. They are keen to challenge themselves further and learn from their mistakes. One pupil told inspectors that: 'I know it is okay to get things wrong because it helps me know what to do next time.'

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy their learning. They work hard during lessons and are eager to do their best. Pupils demonstrate good listening skills and are respectful of each other's ideas. Teachers help pupils to develop confidence in their own skills and abilities so they persevere with their learning.
- On occasions, when teaching is not sufficiently challenging, pupils lose interest in their work. However, pupils' learning is rarely disrupted by poor behaviour.
- Leaders ensure that the large school site is well supervised. For example, they have introduced 'drop-off zones' to ensure that pupils and families enter the site safely. This promotes a calm and orderly start to the school day.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe, for example when crossing the road. They understand about how to use the internet sensibly and safely.
- Pupils report that bullying or prejudicial behaviour is rare. They are clear about the different types of bullying, including that which occurs online. Pupils are confident that adults deal with any unkind behaviour, such as name-calling, quickly and fairly.
- Leaders provide pupils with opportunities to take on responsibilities through roles such as 'house captains', 'eco-warriors' and as members of the school council. Pupils take these responsibilities seriously and are keen to contribute to the school community. For example, eco-warriors help to tidy up the playground and check that any lights are turned off when a room is not in use.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Typically, pupils conduct themselves in a sensible and calm manner, both around the school and during lessons.
- Pupils say that their behaviour is good. They are clear about the systems in place to help them make sensible choices and take increasing responsibility for their own behaviour.
- Leaders track incidents of poor behaviour carefully. School records show that such incidents are infrequent. The majority of parents agree that the school promotes good standards of behaviour.
- The school uses a wide range of strategies to promote good attendance. Parents receive regular letters so they are clear about the school's expectations. Pupils with excellent attendance are rewarded with special events such as end-of-year trips. As a result, pupils' attendance has improved considerably this year.

- Leaders follow up absence rigorously. Reasons for poor attendance are analysed carefully. Close partnerships with families help leaders to provide the right level of support to ensure that pupils attend school as regularly as they should. Where appropriate, additional guidance is sought from the local authority's education welfare service. This more rigorous approach has contributed successfully to reducing persistent absence rates, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils in the school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- As a result of inconsistent teaching, current pupils are making variable progress. This is the case for different subjects, classes and groups of pupils.
- Over the last two years, pupils' achievement has declined. In 2016, too many Year 6 pupils made slow progress. Consequently, the proportion of pupils who achieved the standard expected for their age was lower than in other schools nationally. This includes disadvantaged pupils.
- The school's assessment information shows that current pupils are making better progress than they have done in the past. Work in pupils' books shows that outcomes for pupils, although improving, remain variable across all subjects.
- In the 2015 and 2016 key stage 2 assessments, disadvantaged pupils made inconsistent progress from their different starting points. Last year, their progress was slow in reading, writing and mathematics. Consequently, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who achieved age-expected standards was considerably lower than among other pupils nationally.
- Leaders and teachers focus the majority of additional support on helping lower-attaining pupils to catch up. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about how this support helps them with their learning. However, the most able pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, do not consistently receive well-targeted teaching or support to help them excel. In 2016, the proportion of pupils who achieved the high standard in the reading and mathematics assessments at the end of key stage 2 was lower than in other schools nationally. Very few disadvantaged pupils achieved the high standard.
- Pupils' achievement in key stage 1 is stronger overall, particularly in mathematics. Typically, pupils attain standards that are at least in line with the national average. However, not all groups of pupils achieve equally well. In writing, too few of the most able pupils made the progress needed to achieve greater depth within the standard in 2016. In reading, the progress of lower-attaining boys was not good enough to help them catch up and achieve the standard expected for their age.
- Strong phonics teaching ensures that pupils develop the basic skills they need to read and write well. Pupils' attainment in the phonics screening check has been above the national average for the last three years. However, the teaching of reading does not build successfully on these secure foundations. Although pupils typically enjoy reading, teachers do not check whether pupils are reading books that are at the right level for them. Older pupils are not always encouraged to make more adventurous choices with the books they read. This slows the development of pupils' vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Early years provision

Good

- The early years is led effectively. Children make good progress from their different starting points and are well prepared for their learning in Year 1. The proportion of children achieving a good level of development has risen considerably over the last three years. In 2016, it was broadly in line with the national average.
- Classrooms are welcoming, organised and attractive environments. Well-developed routines help children feel secure and confident. As a result, children are willing to try out different activities and challenge themselves in their learning.
- Teachers are skilled in questioning children to help them explore and think carefully about their ideas. Children are excited about their learning and keen to talk about their achievements.
- Leaders ensure that children's knowledge and skills are assessed thoroughly. Effective partnerships with other schools help teachers to strengthen the accuracy of their assessments.
- Children's progress is tracked carefully. Leaders and teachers are quick to identify individuals or groups of children who are falling behind in their learning. For example, leaders identified that boys needed further support to help them develop the writing skills expected for their age. As a result, teachers plan a range of exciting activities that motivate boys to write.
- Disadvantaged children also achieve well. School assessment information shows that, this year, a greater proportion of disadvantaged children are on track to achieve the standards expected for their age at the end of the Reception Year.
- Phonics teaching is of high quality. Staff pronounce sounds accurately so children develop a secure understanding of the sounds that different letters make. Work in children's learning journals shows that they are confident using their phonics knowledge to record their ideas in writing.
- A range of events ensure that parents are kept well informed about their child's learning. For example, parents are invited into the classrooms every Friday to review their child's achievements. Weekly 'home learning' tasks also help parents to understand what they can do to help their child make good progress.
- Leaders ensure that all safeguarding and welfare requirements are fully met. Children's safety and welfare are well promoted. Leaders and teachers are quick to identify children who would benefit from additional support. For example, the school's learning and behaviour mentors work closely with vulnerable children to help them learn and achieve as well as their peers.

School details

Unique reference number	102416
Local authority	Hillingdon
Inspection number	10019240

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	473
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen Courtnadge
Headteacher	Mr Marc Titeux
Telephone number	01895 632 895
Website	www.ruislipgardensschool.co.uk
Email address	officeemail@ruislipgardensschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–2 December 2011

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. A greater proportion of pupils leave and join the school during the school year than is the case nationally.
- The school serves a wide range of ethnic groups. The largest is White British, followed by pupils from other White backgrounds and Asian or Asian British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average. However, some year groups have a much higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils when compared with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly in line with the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the time they leave the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited lessons across the school. Many of the visits to lessons were conducted jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed pupils' behaviour at playtimes, in the lunch hall and as they moved around the school site.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils about their learning during lessons and in the playground. Inspectors also met formally with groups of pupils from Year 2 and Year 6, both to hear them read and to evaluate their experiences at the school. A group of pupils gave inspectors a tour of the school.
- A range of documentation was scrutinised, including the leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness, the current plans for improvement and leaders' checks on the quality of teaching. Records relating to safeguarding and behaviour were also scrutinised by the inspection team.
- Inspectors held a meeting with members of the governing body. Inspectors also considered written records of the work of the governing body to support and challenge the school.
- Telephone discussions were held with the school's improvement partners, one of whom represented the local authority.
- Pupils' work in books was scrutinised by inspectors, both during visits to lessons and in a meeting with senior leaders. Inspectors also considered the school's information on the progress and attainment of the current pupils in the school.
- Inspectors took into account responses to Ofsted's online surveys, including 93 responses from parents, 92 from pupils and 52 from staff. Inspectors also spoke to parents informally at the start of the school day.

Inspection team

Sarah Murphy-Dutton, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Shelley Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Angela Corbett	Ofsted Inspector
Penny Barratt	Ofsted Inspector
Janet Hallett	Her Majesty's 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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