

Rushmere Hall Primary School

Lanark Road, Ipswich, IP4 3EJ

Inspection dates 3–4 June 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Early years provision		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement has declined since the last inspection.
- Achievement of all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is too variable in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, too many pupils do not achieve the national standards expected for children of their age.
- The headteacher has been ineffective at leading all aspects of the school, including raising achievement, improving teaching and learning and ensuring the well-being of pupils.
- Subject and key stage leaders have not had sufficient guidance, support or training to allow them to fulfil their roles effectively.
- Systems and procedures to ensure pupils' safety are not reviewed regularly enough and routine checks are not efficiently scheduled.
- Teaching assistants are not always used effectively in all classes. They sometimes have little opportunity to effectively support the progress of groups or individuals, because their deployment does not closely match pupil needs.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in reading, writing and mathematics. This is because teaching requires improvement. Some teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve. They do not plan sufficiently well to meet the learning needs of all groups within their class.
- Improvements in early years provision have not been in place long enough to demonstrate a sustained impact on all areas of children's learning, particularly in outside learning opportunities.

The school has the following strengths

- Governors have a clear understanding of the actions required to improve the school and are committed to improving outcomes for pupils.
- Levels of attainment are now rising across the curriculum and the previous decline in standards is being addressed with some success.
- Middle and senior leaders are robust at tracking pupil performance. They are identifying where pupil achievement is low and are beginning to intervene successfully to accelerate progress.
- Pupils are polite and courteous and take a pride in their work. As a result, behaviour is good.
- Teachers plan lessons that successfully engage the interest of the pupils.
- Parents and carers value the strong communication skills and care shown by the class teachers.
- The school choir is exemplary.

Information about this inspection

- The team of inspectors gathered a range of evidence to judge the quality of teaching over time. This included observing parts of 27 lessons throughout the school, including several jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors looked at pupils' work and children's learning records, listened to readers and talked to pupils about their work.
- Policies, procedures and school logs were considered along with school documentation that covered the curriculum, pupil performance and the quality of teaching. The school's own self evaluation and action plans were reviewed, including the governors' action plan. Reports provided by the local authority and the school's own school improvement partner were shared.
- The views of parents were considered, including the 69 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire. An open meeting was held for parents and the inspector received several letters and had a telephone conversation with one parent.
- The views of staff were taken into account during discussions and through the 75 responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, the special needs co-ordinator, staff responsible for the specialist units, key stage, phase and subject leaders, pupils, parents, the bursar and governors. Inspectors also met with representatives for the local authority, including a telephone meeting, to discuss school performance and the provision within the specialist units.
- Telephone contact was made with all additional academic provisions accessed by pupils at the school on a dual role basis.

Inspection team

Deborah Pargeter, Lead inspector

Seconded Inspector

Zara Harrington

Seconded Inspector

Susan Cox

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Rushmere Hall is much larger than the average-sized primary school and has expanded to include three classes per year group in recent years.
- The headteacher is leaving the school in July 2015 and the governing body has put in place interim arrangements that include a revised senior leadership team, with new appointments agreed.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils and those for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided to schools for pupils in local authority care and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is slightly below average when compared to schools nationally.
- The school has two additional specialist provisions for children with hearing impairments and speech and language difficulties. Pupils with a statement of educational need or an education healthcare plan access these provisions. This means that the percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is higher than in most schools.
- An average proportion of pupils joins or leaves the school at different times during the school year.
- The school has a Nursery provision that admits children aged 3 years old who attend part-time. Children in Reception attend full-time.
- A small number of pupils attend on a regular basis at Alderwood Pupil Referral Unit and Thomas Wolsey School.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standard, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching and raise pupils' achievement by:
 - planning and delivering lessons that results in pupils' progressing by modelling high expectations and providing tasks that enable all pupils to learn well
 - matching the content of the lesson to the various abilities of all groups of pupils within the class
 - training and deploying teaching assistants to ensure that their skills meet the learning needs of their pupils, providing them with adequate information about the purpose of the lesson.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - the new headteacher give the school a clear strategic direction that develops a cohesive staff team and positively impacts on pupils' achievement
 - all senior and middle leaders are given opportunities for guidance, support and training to allow them to develop professionally
 - changes in achievement and progress data are responded to immediately, and strategic actions are put in place to support rapid improvements.
- Develop robust monitoring systems to check that safety and well-being of all pupils continue to meet national and local expectations.
- Improve the provision in early years by:
 - ensuring that all outside activities are purposeful, are linked to learning outcomes and provide opportunities for children to access all areas of the early years curriculum

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 can be improved.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher has not done enough to tackle under achievement. A declining trend in data has not been addressed rapidly enough and consequently pupils have not made the progress and attainment of which they are capable. He has not led his staff team well enough, and has not provided clarity of expectations or consistency, for example in establishing a rationale for rewards and sanctions.
- Other senior leaders have started to tackle underperformance but have not been provided with adequate guidance and support to do this effectively. Their skills have not been utilised and they have not worked together as a cohesive team because of weak leadership from the headteacher.
- Leaders accurately track pupil performance and use it to monitor pupils' achievements. More recently this information has been used to strengthen provision, which is having a positive impact on pupil achievement.
- Systems to ensure pupils' safety and well-being are now adequate but need to be monitored more regularly by the headteacher to provide all parties with reassurance that they continue to comply with national and local requirements.
- Performance management procedures are in place but are not robust enough and do not hold teachers to account. Staff who lead performance management meetings have not been sufficiently trained.
- The special needs co-ordinator and leaders of the specialist units have created an inclusive ethos so that pupils with additional needs are generally well supported. In some cases, the headteacher has been too slow to respond to advice from specialist teachers on ways that provision could be improved and individual pupils could be supported more effectively.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding are starting to make better progress. This is because specific support has been allocated to meet their learning needs and their progress is closely monitored by the deputy headteacher.
- Pupils have a strong sense of moral and social understanding. Through visitors to the school and by school trips they are exposed to a broad range of cultural experiences. Opportunities for reflection are evident throughout the school day.
- Pupils understand life in modern democratic Britain and know about fundamental British values, such as tolerance and respect for people with different beliefs. This is because they are knowledgeable about current affairs and play an active part in their school community, through the school council, and contributing to school projects such as the outside reading area in Key Stage 2.
- Leadership of the curriculum is good and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has established assessment practices to support assessment without levels. Middle leaders are improving standards and strengthening provision in the areas for which they have responsibility. Teachers provide good peer to peer support and there is a positive 'can do' attitude amongst middle leaders and with the deputy headteacher.
- Leaders use the school's sports funding well and this has resulted in increased uptake in sport, improvements in sporting skills, improved resourcing and better quality coaching. Pupils particularly enjoy swimming in the school pool.
- Attendance remains below the national average but is gradually improving. Attendance and punctuality data are tracked regularly and the local authority welfare team is working effectively with families at the school.
- The local authority has worked effectively with governors and the specialist units. There has been limited engagement with the headteacher and senior leaders.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body has recently reconstituted and governors have the necessary skills and experience to bring about rapid school improvement. The governors have an accurate view of the school and use a variety of reliable sources to gather and evaluate information. They have independently commissioned audits and reviews and have developed a close working relationship with the local authority. The governor action plan addresses the areas within school leadership and achievement that need to improve and the impact of their actions is apparent.
- Governors have tackled weak performance management systems by commissioning their own moderation of performance. They have held the headteacher to account for underperformance.
- Governors have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and performance data. They use this information to challenge senior leaders and regularly carry out monitoring visits with the support of educational consultants.
- The governing body has been strategic in establishing a leadership structure to provide a more sustainable model for improvement following the departure of the existing headteacher.

The behaviour and safety of pupils requires improvement

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. They behave well in class and around the school. Pupils are courteous and polite at all times.
- The majority of pupils have a positive attitude to their learning and engage well in lessons. They are not easily distracted and enjoy making links in their learning and sharing it with their teacher and peers.
- When behaviour by individual pupils is less than good, disruption to the class is minimised and there is no loss of teaching time.
- Pupils are very proud of their school and can describe their achievements and know how they need to improve.

Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure requires improvement.
- All systems currently conform to statutory requirements, but systems to ensure this for the future are not reviewed regularly enough.
- The administration of first-aid and recruitment records is good and the office staff seek out opportunities to review and improve their practice.
- Pupils are able to describe how to keep themselves safe and know how to respond to name calling. They could not recall any incidents of bullying.
- Pupils and parents are happy that any concerns they have about their child's well-being are adequately addressed by their class teacher. They did not express the same level of confidence in the headteacher.
- Parents have expressed concerns about inconsistencies in the supervision of pupils' at particular times during the school day.

The quality of teaching requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because too often it does not meet the learning needs of pupils in the class. Some pupils make limited progress because of this.
- Where teaching is better, pupils attain well and make good progress. They enjoy making links in their

learning and sharing them with their teacher and peers.

- Teachers are pro-active in selecting topics and themes that stimulate pupils and match their interests.
- Marking and feedback are not used effectively in some classes and subjects. Pupils' work is sometimes unmarked and they are not provided with sufficient guidance on how to improve.
- Class-based teaching assistants are not allocated to meet the learning needs of the pupils and are not fully aware of the expected learning outcomes of the lesson. They do not receive adequate training to allow them to fully support different groups of learners and individual pupils.
- Inspectors observed several small group support sessions where pupils made good progress because teachers and teaching assistants had clear objectives and a good range of strategies to promote learning.
- Teachers have recently improved the delivery of guided reading and this has had a positive impact on standards. The improvements in the teaching of reading are extending into improved delivery of writing lessons, resulting in improvements in writing standards throughout the school.
- Mathematics is not taught consistently well throughout the school. In some classes lessons lack academic rigour and expectations are too low. In other classes pupils are challenged and respond with accelerated progress in the application of their mathematical skills.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive personalised programmes and their attainment and progress is rigorously monitored to ensure they achieve well. In a small amount of cases the lessons lack adequate challenge when teachers are delivering to very-mixed-ability small groups.
- All classrooms are exciting, stimulating and celebrate pupils' learning.
- Work is presented well. It is neat and ordered and older pupils consistently write in joined regular script.

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Standards reached at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 in 2014 were lower than most pupils nationally. As children enter the school with skills typical for their age this indicates that too many pupils have underachieved. Recent improvements in teaching and learning led by middle leaders, most specifically in reading and writing have meant that standards are starting to improve. This was evidenced by inspectors in pupils' classwork and during discussions with pupils.
- Disadvantaged pupils leave the school attaining approximately a year behind in reading but about four terms behind in mathematics and writing when compared to other pupils nationally. They were about a year behind their classmates in mathematics and writing but only a term behind them in reading. Too few disadvantaged pupils have made good progress. The underperformance of disadvantaged pupils is now being addressed by the deputy headteacher. School tracking data indicates that this group of pupils is making better progress throughout the school.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress in the specialist teaching units within the school. Their learning needs are catered for in an environment that promotes independence and self confidence and develops learning skills.
- In the main school, disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make adequate progress. Pupils who receive a higher level of support make good progress, especially in reading.
- The standards in phonics have improved this academic year, and school data indicates that pupils will achieve broadly average results in the Key Stage 1 phonics tests. Inspectors watching class phonics sessions evidenced this improvement.
- Attainment of most-able pupils is improving as a result of targeted teaching and additional challenge in intervention sessions. Most-able pupils in Year 5 and 6 have weekly lessons that allow them to access a more challenging curriculum, particularly in mathematics.

- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision outside the school on a regular basis make good progress and school leaders liaise closely with these provisions to ensure that this continues.

The early years provision

requires improvement

- Children enter the Nursery setting with skills, knowledge and understanding typical for their age. Approximately two thirds of the Reception class have attended the school's own Nursery and these children enter Year 1 achieving well. Children who enter the Reception class from other provisions achieve slightly less well. Overall the proportion of children reaching the expected level of development by the end of Reception is broadly average when compared to other children nationally.
- The leader of the early years provision has a clear understanding of the setting's strength and areas for improvement. Advice from external consultants has been acted upon and the impact of recent changes is evident in areas such as the indoor continuous provision.
- The indoor learning environment in the Nursery is exemplary and the adjoining Reception classes are being improved to mirror the strong Nursery provision. The outside learning area is less good as some activities lack purpose and adults do not adequately support several areas of learning.
- Children's behaviour is good in the setting. They respond quickly to their teachers, demonstrate a positive attitude to their learning and clearly enjoy school. Adults ensure that children are kept safe.
- Teaching in early years is improving and the leader is providing colleagues with good professional development to enable them to deliver consistently better lessons and provide child initiated learning opportunities that support the seven areas for learning and development.
- The allocation of teaching assistants and additional staff requires attention to ensure that all adults in the setting are receive adequate training and have a clear understanding of the learning needs of children in early years.

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	124679
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	461655

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	555
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Laurence Collins
Headteacher	Neil Challis
Date of previous school inspection	3 July 2012
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