

# Ravenswood Community Primary School

Ravenswood Avenue, Ipswich, IP3 9UA

**Inspection dates** 26–27 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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.

- Excellent leadership by the headteacher has ensured that teachers, governors, support staff and pupils all work together as a highly cohesive team.
- Pupils make good progress in all year groups and achieve well in relation to their very low starting points. Attainment is broadly average by the time pupils leave the school.
- Additional adults employed to help pupils who find learning difficult are very effective.
- Parents are very pleased with what the school provides for their children.
- Teaching is typically good. Some teaching is outstanding. Regular and thorough checking of teaching by the headteacher and senior staff has led to pupils making better progress so that standards are rising across the school.
- Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good and sometimes it is excellent.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning, want to improve their work and are keen to do well.
- Relationships throughout the school are excellent.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding but this is not yet sufficient to secure exceptional achievement.
- Work set which recognises that pupils are now making more rapid progress and therefore working at a higher level than in the past is not yet consistent across the school.
- Teachers do not always ask probing questions which encourage pupils to think more deeply about what they are learning.
- Expectations about the amount of work some pupils are capable of producing in lessons are not equally demanding in all classes.
- A small number of pupils have not yet fully secured their knowledge and understanding of basic number facts, including knowing their times tables, or how to use letter sounds to better help them to read and write.
- The school is not yet planning sufficiently well to help pupils develop their weak spoken language more rapidly.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 20 lessons, 7 of which were joint observations with the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Inspectors also observed pupils moving around the school, in the dining room and at break and lunchtimes. They listened to pupils read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, senior leaders, including subjects and other leaders, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 24 responses to Parent View (Ofsted’s online questionnaire for parents) as well as parents’ spoken views and the school’s most recent parental questionnaires. Inspectors took account of 47 staff questionnaires.
- Inspectors looked closely at a range of documentation, including the school’s information about the progress of pupils, the school’s view of its own performance, plans for improvement, safeguarding policies and records relating to the management of teachers’ performance.

## Inspection team

Nichola Perry, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Linda Phillips

Additional Inspector

Terence Cook

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium funding (additional money given to schools for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority and some others) is higher than average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is lower than average. The proportion of pupils supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is higher than average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The governing body has a plan in place outlining its intentions for use of the primary sport funding.
- Since the previous inspection, there have been a lot of staff changes, including the promotion of an assistant headteacher to that of acting deputy headteacher.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching in order to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by:
  - ensuring that work in all lessons is sufficiently demanding and takes account of pupils' improved rates of progress and higher attainment, so that more pupils across the school make better than expected progress
  - encouraging pupils to think more deeply about what they are learning by asking more probing questions
  - having higher expectations that pupils in every class will produce a greater volume of work, specifically in writing, and across a range of subjects, in the time available.
- Extend the strategies for teaching basics skills in literacy and numeracy so as to ensure that all pupils can confidently apply their knowledge in lessons by:
  - devising a plan which extends the development of pupils' spoken language and ensures that all lessons focus strongly on this element of their learning
  - making sure that all pupils develop an understanding of basic number skills, including knowing their times tables
  - providing all pupils, but especially older pupils who still have gaps in their prior learning, with the necessary skills to apply their phonic knowledge more effectively to their reading and writing.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is average by the time pupils leave the school. Rapid and considerable improvements in teaching have contributed strongly to sustained improvement. Learning in all classes is now consistently good so that more pupils than (ever) before are making expected progress from their very low starting points on entry to the school. Progress has accelerated further since the previous inspection when pupils across the school did not make as much progress as they should. This represents good improvement.
- The number of pupils reaching expected levels for their age in reading, writing and mathematics have increased very significantly, particularly in 2012. Increasing numbers of pupils are now making better than expected progress as most teachers have raised their expectations of what pupils can actually do. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs also make good progress because their learning is well planned and structured and they are very effectively supported. Progress in mathematics has been more erratic, particularly for pupils in Years 3 to 6. This reflects past underachievement and the fact that pupils' understanding of basic number, including knowledge of their times tables, is not yet fully secure across the school.
- Pupils in all ability groups are now making at least expected progress in all year groups. Work in pupils' books, including those from last year confirms this. Whilst gaps in some pupils' earlier learning are still evident, predominantly in Years 6, and to a lesser degree in Year 5, the legacy of past underachievement has reduced rapidly. Excellent use of additional sessions and support, plus the outstanding quality of teaching assistants has helped many older pupils catch up so that they too have made the progress expected for their age.
- The good teaching of phonics is having a considerable effect on pupils' ability to improve their reading skills. It is also increasingly helping them with their writing. Many pupils that were heard reading during the inspection are starting to make good use of letter sounds to help them read new or unfamiliar words. As yet, there has not been sufficient emphasis placed on helping all pupils to apply their phonic skills more widely to their reading and writing.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress as they rapidly acquire knowledge and skills across all areas of learning. They are taught well and given exciting things to do. This encourages them to become inquisitive and excited about learning new things and helps to develop their very poor language and social skills. There is outstanding practice in the Nursery class where learning focuses very strongly on helping children to communicate and understand how to become good learners. In this way even the youngest children learn very quickly that the school has high expectations of them.
- Pupils make good progress from below average starting points so that attainment by the end of Year 2 is average in reading, writing and mathematics. Continued strong emphasis on learning through play helps all pupils develop their language and social skills. Pupils make good progress in applying their initial sounds to improve their reading, although some pupils do not have sufficiently secure skills for working out more complex words. Good emphasis is placed on language and teachers provide many opportunities for talking, which helps pupils develop better confidence when they are writing. Lots of practical activities, often through play, help pupils learn basic number skills, however, they are not yet developing a sufficiently secure sense of number.
- Attainment for pupils supported by pupil premium funding has been erratic in both English and mathematics over the last two years. For example, national data shows considerable

improvement in English in 2012 from 2011, when comparing the attainment of these pupils to their classmates. In mathematics figures show that the gap between their classmates and similar pupils nationally widened. This was because a small group of pupils did not achieve as well as expected in their mathematics test. School data demonstrates a very clear picture that the progress of this group of pupils is stabilizing so that they are progressing at the same rate as their classmates and also when compared to other similar pupils nationally.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- Consistently good teaching overall is a key strength in pupils' improved progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Of particular note is the high quality of relationships, evident within all classes, so that pupils clearly feel valued by their teachers and other adults. As a result, pupils' self esteem is good. This results in pupils feeling confident to 'have a go'.
- Lessons are well planned with relevant activities that motivate pupils to learn and which match their needs closely. Although not consistent in all classes, in the best lessons teachers set work which is sufficiently demanding to ensure that increasing numbers of pupils are making better than expected progress for their age. The pace of learning in these lessons is consistently fast and provides a high level of challenge that pupils will extend and apply their skills. Expectations that pupils will produce an appropriate amount of work of a good standard in the time available are high in these lessons.
- Paired work and group work is carefully planned so that pupils can use language to rehearse and practise their ideas with each other. Although this has been a successful initial strategy to encourage more 'talk', there is not yet a whole school strategy which outlines in detail how a more developmental approach, will be used to improve pupils' language skills more systematically.
- Most teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. This is helping them to improve at a faster rate, particularly in literacy where pupils are now writing with greater confidence. In some pupils' books there are insufficient examples of pupils practising their skills across other subjects. Work in pupils' books reflect teachers' high expectations of presentation.
- Questioning is generally used well by teachers and other adults to support and structure pupils' learning. However, only in a few classes have teachers developed especially effective ways of probing pupils' answers so that they are encouraged to think more deeply about what they are learning. Feedback to pupils in lessons is generally good and marking effectively informs pupils about how well they are performing and how they can improve their work. There are some good examples of pupils assessing their own work and that of other pupils. This is helping them to develop a greater sense of responsibility for their own learning and progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Behaviour is good. Sometimes it is exemplary, for example, during a whole school celebration assembly, and as they entered and left the hall to return to their classrooms. Pupils recognise that there are some pupils who 'have difficulties' but say that the behaviour inspectors saw in lessons and around the school is typical. They consider that pupils get on well with each other and only occasionally are there any serious issues in the playground. Pupils report that there are lots of adults around to whom they can go if they should encounter a problem.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are mostly good and they engage eagerly in the activities provided.

Pupils are very keen to learn as they increasingly enjoy learning and realise that they 'can do it'. Pupils work constructively together and are considerate and respectful towards adults and each other. They are very accepting of difference and are genuinely delighted when others achieve success in their learning or personal development. Even the very youngest pupils understand expectations of behaviour so that lessons are rarely interrupted by poor behaviour. All pupils understand the behaviour policy and can explain about the different rewards and sanctions.

- Pupils are very proud of their school and say they love coming to school. This is supported by the very significant reduction in absence, including the absence of pupils who fail to attend school regularly, so that current attendance for all pupils is now good. Punctuality is also good. The atmosphere in school is very positive and pupils are learning well how to be polite. This is because the school places very strong emphasis on ensuring pupils develop good social and moral values. From a very young age pupils learn how to share, be kind and above all to learn good manners, such as during snack time in the Nursery.
- Pupils feel very safe and their parents agree. They like and trust their teachers and say that they feel listened to. They understand well how to keep themselves safe, including e-safety. Pupils are able to talk about the different forms of bullying, including inappropriate use of language towards different groups. They know what to do and who to inform should it occur. The school's good practice regarding anti-bullying has recently been recognised with an official award.
- Strong support is provided for pupils and their families whose circumstances make them vulnerable. Liaison with parents, schools and other agencies is excellent. New pupils joining the school, including those joining from other schools or settings, who may not have had positive experiences, are helped to settle quickly. Some benefit from the very clear boundaries of what is acceptable behaviour so that they blend in with the other pupils and feel safe so that they can thrive. Provision and support for pupils attending more than one school is also effective.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The headteacher provides inspirational leadership. This has been the key factor in the rapid rate of improvement since the previous inspection. She has steered the school through some extremely challenging times very successfully without allowing any of these difficulties to detract from improving pupils' learning and progress. She has also maintained the total support of governors, all staff, parents and the pupils themselves. The vibrant and enthusiastic team she has established show themselves to be fully committed to the school and her aspirations for the pupils.
- Thorough and highly effective checking of performance has eliminated inadequate teaching and substantially raised the overall quality, so that it is now securely good. The system for managing and developing staff performance is exemplary and all staff are held strongly to account for their own performance and that of their pupils. Plans to improve the school are purposeful and accurately highlight the correct key objectives to consistently move the school forward. This ensures that leaders at all levels have an extremely accurate awareness of the strengths and areas which require further improvement in their subjects or areas of responsibility.
- The role of senior leaders has been developed effectively and other staff are being well prepared for leadership. The recently promoted acting deputy headteacher is providing strong support for the headteacher, particularly in improving the quality of teaching. There are also notable strengths in the leadership of English, Early Years Foundation Stage and Special Educational Needs, all of which have played a key part in ensuring the work planned for pupils, the quality of teaching and the monitoring of pupils' progress are the best they can be.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is developed well through the subjects and activities provided and there is good focus on developing pupils' basic skills. The introduction of a different style of learning is ensuring that there are more links between different subjects. The school focuses strongly on enriching pupils' learning and broadening their horizons through visits, visitors and strong links with families and the local and wider communities.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively and any discrimination is tackled quickly and effectively. A wide range of extra adult attention and support is provided for vulnerable pupils and their families, such as that provided through the pupil premium funding. This is used extremely effectively and is ensuring that all pupils progress equally well and that pupils' self-esteem is as high as it can be.
- The local authority has provided a high level support for this previously satisfactory school. It fully recognises the school's rapid improvement, which is now accelerating with improved progress and rising standards, and has therefore gradually reduced its level of support accordingly.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Effective governance has supported and challenged school leaders by playing a central role in shaping how the school should develop and making important spending decisions. They are ambitious for the school and make particularly good use of their skills and well focused training to support the work of the school. They are articulate in explaining how and where the school needs to improve further at all levels and are insightful in their proposals and planning to achieve this. They have established an extremely effective system for visiting the school and checking of performance and are very aware of what is done to reward good teachers and tackle underperformance. Finances are managed effectively. Use of additional funding, including the pupil premium money, is used prudently and creatively to meet the needs of individuals and specific groups of pupils and this is making a real difference to the performance of all pupils. For example, the appointment of a person responsible for attendance has had enormous impact on reducing pupils' absence. Governors ensure that the school meets all current national requirements for safeguarding children.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	124650
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	425293

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	419
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Vicky Gibson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen Mills
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473 728565
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