

Reddal Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103954
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	286820
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Tom Shine

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 on roll	
School	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathy Jackson
Headteacher	Elaine Hill
Date of previous school inspection	3 February 2003
School address	Trinity Street Cradley Heath B64 6HT
Telephone number	01384 569053
Fax number	01384 637827

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size school which has surplus places in most year groups. There is a nursery that has capacity for 60 children to attend on a part-time basis. Approximately half of the school population are from minority ethnic groups, the largest proportion being from Pakistani backgrounds. Nearly half of these children enter the nursery with little or no English. The school is part of the Rowley Regis Learning Community and benefits from funding to support staff training and curricular development.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Parents are very supportive of this effective school and rightly appreciate what it provides for their children. 'I think this is a good school. I moved my child from another school to here and have no regrets and am very happy with the school,' is a parent's comment reflective of the views of many others. The headteacher provides good leadership and, together with other senior staff, drives improvement forward. The overall quality of provision, particularly teaching, is good. As a result, pupils achieve well in relation to their below average starting points. Children's starting points in speaking and language skills are well below expected levels when they enter the school. Standards have improved over the last two years and are broadly average at the end of Year 6. As they progress through the school, pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress and this enables these pupils to achieve well.

Teaching is good. It is stronger in Years 1 to 6 than in the Foundation Stage. Children in Nursery and Reception make a sound start in developing their skills in most areas of learning. However, during certain tasks, such as creative and physical activities, teachers do not intervene enough to show children how to improve their skills and therefore the children do not make as much progress as they could. In the rest of the school, teachers plan their lessons well and ask sharp, focused questions to check on their pupils' understanding. Just occasionally in lessons, more able pupils are not challenged enough to do as well as they can.

Pupils enjoy coming to this friendly school. They like their teachers, who they describe as helpful. 'If you've got a problem you'd go to your teacher,' said a number of pupils. They are keen therefore to attend school, although some are taken away by parents on extended holidays during term-time against the advice of the school. The curriculum is good and captures pupils' interest and imagination. It is adapted well to meet the needs of the pupils with English as an additional language. They achieve well in spoken and written English and are able to work without additional support in the older classes in the school. There is good provision in the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology (ICT). In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils say they feel safe and secure. They also have a good awareness of the importance of exercise and keeping fit and are aware of how important it is to eat healthily. Although pupils have a good knowledge of the benefits of healthy eating, this awareness is not consistently reflected in the contents of their lunchboxes. The school provides good care, guidance and support for its pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, all pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning. The high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language are also supported effectively.

Management of the school is good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and senior staff are effective in their roles and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The chair of governors gives of her time very willingly and liaises effectively with the school. The school's capacity to improve is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged in all lessons.
- In the Foundation Stage, ensure that teachers intervene sufficiently to show children how they can improve their skills during practical activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and attain broadly average standards. Children enter the nursery with below expected skills in most areas, and with well below expected skills in communication, language and literacy. They make satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception but by the time they leave the Foundation Stage children's levels of attainment, although improved, are still below those expected for their ages in all areas of learning. Their progress in all areas is hindered by their limited, although improving, skills in English. New methods have recently been introduced in the teaching of reading and writing in the Foundation Stage and there are early signs of good progress. The results of the national assessments in Year 2 over recent years have been well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in the present Year 2 are higher as a result of effective teaching. In recent years, standards in Year 6 have improved steadily. They were broadly average in 2006 in English and mathematics but below average in science. Current standards show continuing improvement with standards in mathematics and science improving noticeably on those in 2006 as a result of improvements to the curriculum. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress. The good support received by pupils who are learning English as an additional language enables them to make good progress and achieve well. However, the more able pupils are capable of doing even better than they do currently, and could be stretched more.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong and an awareness of the needs and feelings of others. Pupils are polite and well behaved in and around the school. They enjoy managing the tuck shop and taking on other duties where they can exercise their independence, such as the house points system. They enjoy their lessons, are enthusiastic in class and are very competitive about doing well in school. Pupils are very familiar with the school's basic rules of safety and carry these out well. They make a good contribution to the school and wider community. Members of the school council, for example, take their responsibilities very seriously. They take pride in the initiatives they have worked on, such as the Arena play area in the playground. They are also involved in fundraising activities for those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy and their developing skills in ICT prepare them adequately for the next stage of their education and beyond.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers generally plan well and have good subject knowledge. They ask penetrating questions to test their pupils' levels of understanding and use this information well to plan future work. Just occasionally, the higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work they are given and this hinders their progress. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage them well. Teaching assistants work well with the teachers, and are used effectively to support particular pupils. Teachers are very mindful of the needs of those pupils still acquiring

fluency and understanding in English and work well with support staff to ensure these pupils receive appropriate help, make good progress and achieve well.

In the Foundation Stage, staff are sometimes a little slow to intervene sufficiently to enable children to improve their skills and learn fully from the activities they are engaged in to enable them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum captures the interest and imagination of most pupils, who work hard as a result. The satisfactory Foundation Stage curriculum is particularly beneficial for children in the very early stages of learning English, who are given effective additional help. However, not enough guidance is given to all children to show them how to develop their skills in areas such as knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative and physical development. Recent improvements to the teaching of early literacy skills are already showing signs of improving children's early reading and writing skills. Subject managers for mathematics and science have ensured that there is sufficient emphasis on pupils using and applying their mathematical skills and developing their investigative skills in science. This has been a key factor in the improved standards in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enjoy the after-school clubs, the provision for which is satisfactory, and there is a good range of visits and visitors. The school ensures that it gives pupils good opportunities so they can broaden their experiences in ways which they otherwise would not enjoy, such as through trips to the seaside and residential visits.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school takes good care of its pupils, which is appreciated by parents. Pupils know that they can talk to their teachers and other adults about any problems they have. They like their teachers and feel they are fair. Arrangements for pupils' personal development and well-being and health and safety, including child protection, are good. The support for children with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. They are supported well in class, small groups or individually and enabled to make good progress.

The academic support and guidance that pupils receive is good. All pupils are aware of their targets and what they need to do to move forward. Teachers' good marking is helpful to pupils in showing them how well they are doing and how to improve their work.

Those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English benefit from the good support that helps them to make good progress. Their progress is monitored carefully and the support is effective.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team has an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and has worked successfully to establish a cohesive approach to making the school even better. As a result, staff work together effectively and have a shared commitment to improvement. The headteacher has introduced robust procedures for checking on the quality of teaching, and, as a result, she has a good awareness of where improvements need to be made. The

leadership team knows that the key to achieving raised standards depends on securing a consistently good quality of teaching and recognises that improvements need to be made to provision in the Foundation Stage and in meeting the needs of the higher attaining pupils. Governors are supportive and are becoming more aware of their role in monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

14 May 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Reddal Hill Primary School, Cradley Heath, B64 6HT

Thank you very much for all the help you gave to us when we came to your school recently. We liked talking to you and to your teachers and coming to your hymn practice and your assembly. We enjoyed your singing. Your school provides you with a good education. You are making good progress because you are well taught. These are the things we liked most about your school.

- You achieve well in English, mathematics and science.
- You are all very friendly and polite.
- You are very well cared for and you told us you feel safe and well supported.
- Your headteacher, who leads the school well, makes sure that those of you who need extra help get it.
- You enjoy school and most of you attend regularly.
- You also behave and get on well with each other and with all members of staff.
- You have a good understanding of the importance of exercise and healthy eating.
- You enjoy the range of out-of-school activities and clubs.

These are the things that we think could be better.

- We have asked the school to make sure that when teachers set you work it is at the right level to help you make good progress, especially for those who find some of the work too easy.
- We think younger children would make even better progress if they were shown more often how to improve their skills.

We really enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn and wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Tom Shine

Lead inspector