

# Redbourn Infants' and Nursery School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117236
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358111
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 September 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Wynford-Jones

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	198
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Melanie Wooding-Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jane Byrne
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 July 2008
<b>School address</b>	Long Cutt Redbourn, St Albans AL3 7EX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited one assembly and 15 lessons, observing seven teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including the data the school has collected on pupils' attainment and progress, procedures for keeping pupils safe and the school improvement plan. Inspectors analysed 126 questionnaires completed by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- boys' progress, especially in writing
- pupils' appreciation and understanding of cultures other than their own
- the contribution of middle managers and governors in contributing to school improvement.

## Information about the school

Redbourn Infants' and Nursery is slightly smaller than the average-sized school of its type. Pupils are mostly of White British heritage, with a few from minority ethnic, Traveller or mixed-heritage families. Very few speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. However, the proportion of pupils holding a statement of special educational needs is similar to that found in most schools. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning or speech, language and communication difficulties. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly similar to the national average. The school holds Healthy School status and has gained the sports Activemark award. The headteacher was appointed in September 2009.

The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two part-time Nursery and two Reception classes.

The school shares the site with a Children's Centre and Redbourn Junior School. They were not part of this inspection.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good school. It meets the needs of its pupils well and has considerable potential to advance further. Since her appointment one year ago, the headteacher has brought a fresh, effective and powerful momentum to improving provision and outcomes for pupils. Staff, parents and carers speak highly of her and the changes she has introduced. One parent wrote, 'The headteacher has had a very positive impact on the school and has an open and approachable manner. She is receptive to new ideas. It is obvious that the staff and children under her care are thriving and valued.' This sentiment was echoed by others. One member of staff commented, 'We are proud to be members of a team that is going places.'

A strength of the school is the exemplary level of care, guidance and support provided for all pupils. Combined with effective teaching and a recently restructured curriculum, the school ensures pupils settle quickly, develop good social skills and make good progress in their learning. Significant emphasis is placed on promoting pupils' personal development. As a result, they have an outstanding understanding of keeping safe and adopting a healthy lifestyle. They make an excellent contribution to the school and local community. Pupils' attendance has improved steadily and is now high in comparison with the national average. They behave well and, at times, particularly in lessons which capture their interest, their behaviour is excellent.

On entry to the Nursery, most children have skills and knowledge similar to those expected for their age. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is consistently above and, in some years, well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The numbers of children attaining the higher Level 3 are increasing steadily. Pupils in the current Year 2 are on track to do equally well. Overall, pupils' attainment and achievement are good.

The enthusiasm of the headteacher and her vision for the school's development have resulted in middle managers and governors reviewing their roles and responsibilities. Middle managers are fully committed and have a good understanding of their respective roles. They have developed monitoring strategies well and are well placed to make even greater contributions to the development of the school. For example, to assist in the consolidation and evaluation of the impact of the recently introduced changes to the curriculum on pupils' learning and progress. Governors are in the process of re-aligning their responsibilities to make even better use of good skills and expertise to continue to challenge the school. Priorities to bring about further school improvement have been identified. These are based on a secure self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development. However, they have yet to be formalised in the school development plan. Nevertheless, based on the improvements made over the last twelve months and the

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determination and teamwork of all staff, the school has good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Refine and extend governors' and middle managers' understanding of their roles and responsibilities in contributing to the development of the school in order to make pupils' achievement and attainment outstanding.
- Embed, monitor and evaluate the impact of the recently introduced curriculum changes on pupils' learning and progress so that the curriculum becomes outstanding in its impact on pupils' learning and progress.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils are very proud of their school and value their community. They say they enjoy school because, 'The teachers are nice, we have lots of friends and we learn a lot.' Their excellent understanding of healthy living is reflected in the school gaining Healthy School status and the Activemark award. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and to take part in a wide range of local events such as the Redbourn 900 year celebrations. They freely offer to undertake tasks around the school and want to be members of the school council. Pupils have a good understanding of other cultures. They get on well, show respect for each other's background and beliefs and thoughtfully celebrate different religious festivals during the year.

In lessons, pupils, including the few from ethnic minority, mixed heritage and Traveller backgrounds, are attentive and work with sustained concentration. They are developing their speaking, listening and social skills well. They appreciate the opportunities to play together and to discuss matters with a 'talk-partner' and share their ideas. Teachers encourage pupils to express their ideas and to develop their vocabulary. This is reflected in the improvements in the content of pupils' writing and wider use of vocabulary. Pupils' mathematical skills are developing well. Many pupils in Year 2 are confidently identifying and ordering numbers to 100. They enjoy using computers to help their learning. However, their skills in using computers are not as advanced as their abilities in reading, writing and mathematics. Boys' and girls' attainment is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls' attainment tends to be higher, reflecting the national picture. However, the school's assessment records show that although boys and girls are making good progress, boys are making slightly better progress than the girls in reading and writing. This is contrary to the national picture and reflects the successful efforts the school has undertaken to focus on accelerating boys' progress. Pupils who speak English as a second language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and achieve challenging targets. This is because they receive well-targeted support. Pupils' good social skills and above average attainment provides them with a good basis for the next stage in their education.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Systems to ensure the safety and well-being of the pupils are firmly embedded in school routines. Support for the most vulnerable pupils is excellent. Teaching assistants and other additional resources are used very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at the early stages of learning English. Pupils are confident that any concerns will be listened to and acted on. Good links and partnerships with outside agencies and strong and developing links with parents and carers contribute much to ensuring pupils make good progress.

In nearly all lessons the pace of learning is brisk. Relationships between the staff and pupils are good. Lessons are interactive and teachers use questioning strategies well to support learning. Lesson content is presented in a way that captures the interests of the pupils. Learning outcomes are shared with the pupils and they are encouraged to evaluate their own understanding. For example, this strategy was used very effectively in a Year 2 numeracy lesson, where pupils chose the activity which they felt best suited their level of learning. All were helped to choose an activity which provided challenge but was at the same time within their capabilities. As a result, they worked diligently and made good progress in their learning. However, not all teaching is as effective. Very occasionally, the work is not matched closely enough to pupils' needs, there is insufficient challenge and the pace of the lesson slows. Marking is informative and offers pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work.

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The curriculum is well planned and carefully thought through to ensure that pupils develop their skills and knowledge and all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. Provision for literacy, numeracy and science is good. The school has introduced strategies to develop the curriculum. For example it has recently adopted a whole-school, half-termly topic or theme approach. The themes have been identified to ensure coverage of curricular, progression and continuity. These initiatives, have not been running long enough to become embedded or for staff to evaluate the impact on pupils' learning and progress. Good-quality displays emphasise the importance placed on celebrating pupils' work and reflect the richness of the curriculum and involvement in the local community. Effective use is made of visits and of visitors to the school to promote learning. Pupils are keen to take part in a good range of extra-curricular activities which contribute significantly to their personal development. Pupils in Year 2 are taught French for one session per week by a specialist teacher and are developing their skills well.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is dedicated to improving provision, raising pupils' attainment and accelerating progress and has already proved very effective in doing so. She is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and, increasingly, by middle managers as they develop their skills and expertise. The headteacher has a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development based on a secure audit of provision and outcomes. The ideas of staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils are valued and contribute to identifying future priorities for the development of the school. Systems for recording and analysing pupils' attainment and progress are in place and increasingly being used to raise expectations and to hold staff to account. Relationships with Redbourn Junior School are developing well. Links with the Children's Centre are well established.

Governors place meticulous emphasis on safeguarding and child protection procedures. They are rigorous in ensuring these meet all the latest requirements and are followed exactly. Governors set suitably challenging targets and monitor the development of the school well. They check that all pupils are included and so there is no discrimination. Gaps in performance between groups are monitored carefully and any discrepancies are investigated and tackled. Governors and senior leaders know the school community well and have done much to promote the school and the Children's Centre locally. The school now has a much higher profile and good reputation in the area. Community cohesion is strong locally, and is developing well beyond the local area. The school has links in Tanzania. This is contributing to pupils' cultural development and awareness of others.

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Links with schools in other parts of the world and in the United Kingdom are under consideration but not yet fully activated.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Procedures for introducing children into the Nursery are excellent. Children settle easily into the Nursery, enjoy learning and quickly grow in confidence. They follow instructions, develop their social skills and behave well. Relationships between children and with the adults are good. In the Nursery and Reception classes, routines are well established. Classrooms are organised and children's work is celebrated and displayed effectively.

Effective teaching and planning of work ensure that all areas of learning are covered. There is a strong focus on developing the children's ability to work together and to promote their skills in communication, language and literacy and problem solving, reasoning and number. Children make good progress in all areas of learning because the tasks are planned well and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Most attain above average standards in reaching the early learning goals on entry to Year 1. Effective use is made of the outdoor area as a natural extension of the classroom to promote learning.

The Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development and is rightly keen to provide children in the Nursery and the Reception classes with more opportunities to work together. Systems for assessing and recording children's attainment are well established and used effectively to target individuals and groups of children. However, some of the end of Early Years Foundation Stage assessments are too cautious and an under-estimation of the children's attainment.

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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

The response rate from parents and carers was well above average. The vast majority of the responses were entirely supportive of the school's work. Very few disagreed with any statements. All, except for one respondent, were happy with their children's experiences at school. A particularly high percentage of parents and carers stated that the school is led and managed effectively, and their children feel safe and enjoy school. Their positive views are confirmed by the inspection evidence.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Redbourn Infants' and Nursery School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 126 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 198 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	100	79	26	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	103	82	21	17	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	63	50	53	42	3	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	69	55	48	38	2	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	90	71	29	23	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	76	60	40	32	3	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	83	66	39	31	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	90	71	29	23	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	81	64	39	31	2	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	63	39	31	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	64	51	49	39	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	97	77	23	18	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	96	76	29	23	1	1	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



17 September 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Redbourn Infants' and Nursery School, St Albans, AL3 7EX**

On behalf of the team, thank you very much for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed our visit and talking to you.

Redbourn Infants' and Nursery is a good school. Your headteacher and all the staff really care about you and want you to do well. The level of care provided is exemplary. You get off to a really good start in the Nursery and continue to make good progress as you move through the school. Your attainment, by the end of Year 2, in reading, writing and mathematics gets better every year and is above that found in most schools. You make good progress because the quality of teaching is good.

We were very pleased to see that your attendance has improved considerably. It is now high compared with that in most schools like yours. You have an excellent understanding of being safe and of healthy living. You help each other around the school and make an excellent contribution to the local community. We are sure you really enjoyed taking part in the Redbourn 900 year celebrations.

Inspectors believe that you can still do even better. To help you we have asked the school to do the following:

- make certain that governors and the teachers who look after subjects develop their roles even more so that they can check that the changes to the way your lessons are planned help you make even better progress.

Please remember, to make your school better you must play your part by always trying your best. Be proud of your school. It is a good one.

Best wishes for the future

Yours sincerely

David Wynford-Jones

Lead inspector

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