

Riddings Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	112496
Local Authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	357113
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Rashida Sharif HMI

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan Wilson
Headteacher	Ann Politowski
Date of previous school inspection	28 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Twelve lessons were observed and 14 teachers were seen. Inspectors observed the school's work, and examined the school's policies, assessment records, pupils' work, teachers' plans and school improvement planning. Discussions were held with the headteacher, staff, governors and groups of pupils. The inspectors analysed 56 questionnaires completed by parents and carers and others by staff.

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

- How well pupils, especially boys, develop and use their literacy and numeracy skills.
- The extent of pupils' understanding of cultural diversity in Britain.
- The rigour of the school's systems for monitoring teaching and learning and the quality of the plans for developing it further.
- Whether the school's analysis of data provides an accurate picture of pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Pupils attend this average-sized school from the Riddings area of Alfreton. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well above average. There are very few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and, on rare occasions, the school has a pupil who speaks English as an additional language. The school has a number of awards including National Healthy Schools, Basic Skills Quality Mark, Eco Schools Bronze, Financial Management Standards in Schools and a National award for their work in Every Child a Reader.

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

Riddings Infant and Nursery School is a good school, which is well regarded by parents and carers. Good provision in the Nursery ensures that children settle quickly and are happy. They adapt quickly to the routines to become confident and self-reliant learners. The personal and social skills they acquire at this stage provide a firm foundation for their later learning. In particular, the well-resourced outdoor area provides many creative and worthwhile activities to develop early literacy and numeracy. However, its use is not consistent across the Early Years Foundation Stage. The good progress made in the Nursery is not sustained in all areas of learning by the end of Reception and Year 1. Consistently good progress in Year 2 ensures that pupils reach average standards by the end of Year 2. However, some weaknesses remain in the achievement of boys in writing and numeracy throughout the school.

Teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils well. They plan effectively together to ensure pupils enjoy a good range of activities in their lessons. On some occasions, the teaching does not fully stretch the boys. Pupils' natural curiosity is reflected in their knowledge of different countries. However, their knowledge of different cultures and faiths is somewhat limited because they have not enough opportunities to meet those from backgrounds different to their own. The curriculum has some strength. It ensures that pupils practise the principles of a healthy lifestyle and know how to stay safe. The successful emphasis which the school places on pupils' physical well-being is underlined in the daily physical activities including some through extra-curricular provision which they take part in with enthusiasm.

Pupils say they feel safe at school because members of staff are friendly and approachable. Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are good at taking responsibility in school and the local community, for instance by making suggestions about how to make the school even better, and by singing for older people in the area and sending them food parcels during harvest time. Children also send boxes with presents to Africa at Christmas.

The school has responded well to the issues for improvement raised at the time of its last inspection. The school is recovering well from a slight dip in overall attainment in 2009. The successful leadership of senior staff is reflected well in the high quality provision for pupils' welfare. The drive to improve overall attainment is shared by all staff. This is exemplified in the way that the Key Stage 1 staff, particularly Year 2 team, implements measures to raise attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. These factors and the accuracy of school's self-evaluation of its work demonstrate that the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good. Some of the recent developments in creating a team-based approach to monitoring and evaluating the provision in some curriculum areas have, however, not yet bedded down. Monitoring arrangements for pupils' progress are

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extensive, and support most pupils, particularly the most vulnerable. While tracking of individual pupils' progress is robust, this is not as consistent across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1. In addition, detailed records of progress do not generate sufficiently stretching targets for some pupils, in particular boys. This constrains the school's aspirations to further raise standards. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion. It recognises that more needs to happen to raise pupils' understanding of cultural and religious diversity. Partnership work with other agencies and local schools in the extended services cluster is good, but work to develop local and global links with other faith groups is still in the early stages of development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment, particularly that of boys in writing and mathematics, by:
 - improving the quality and quantity of writing and mathematics in pupils' everyday work
 - setting more challenging targets for all pupils including those in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- Accelerate the implementation of the school's plans to establish meaningful links with schools of a different profile in order that:
 - pupils' awareness of cultural diversity in Britain is enhanced and provides them with first-hand experiences of meeting pupils of different cultural and faith groups.
- Improve the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - establishing robust and accurate assessment throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage that helps to track children's progress and inform the next steps of learning for each child
 - ensuring consistency in the use of outdoor provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to provide ample, creative opportunities for children to practice writing and numeracy skills so progress in these areas is accelerated.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils make good progress and achieve well. Children's skills, knowledge and understanding when they start Nursery are well below those expected for their age. Children make good progress in Nursery but, by the end of Reception and Year 1, pupils' progress in some areas of learning is satisfactory rather than good. By the end of Year 2 pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, make good progress overall. This is particularly so in reading because of the effective strategies such as the reading recovery programme to raise standards. Lessons seen confirmed a continuing picture of pupils' good progress leading to broadly average attainment by Year 2.

Pupils develop their interest and skills well in guided reading lessons. Their progress is closely tracked, so that they are soon ready to move on to more challenging texts. Some pupils write copiously, sometimes using imaginative vocabulary based on what they have read and discussed, but for many, especially boys, their skills in writing and in structuring sentences and paragraphs are not as well developed as they could be. For example pupils

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perform well in reading and writing separately but have not yet acquired the skills to bring these two together to help them compose extended imaginative pieces of writing.

Support for vulnerable pupils, including those pupils who benefit from tailored speech and language programmes, is targeted very well to help them keep up with their learning. Pupils spoke positively about their enjoyment of the school and the roles that some of them played as playground friends. They are very proud when they are rewarded for good work, behaviour and their contribution to the life of the school. Pupils demonstrate mature skills in being able to work well in small groups and independently and readily volunteer to undertake a range of tasks, for example, as helpers. They express themselves confidently, concentrate well and persevere in their work. These factors contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning and stand them in good stead for the next stage of their education. Despite their young age, pupils can explain fully about potential dangers. They understand the benefit of healthy foods and drinking water, demonstrating that the school deserves its Healthy School Award and Activemark. Pupils say they feel well supported by the staff and enjoy coming to school because of the many friends that they have made. This contributes to their good attendance. Assemblies are used effectively to promote pupils' maturity, self-esteem and good sense of team-work. Pupils particularly enjoy assemblies when their parents are present. They say they 'feel warm inside' when they are presented with the headteacher's sticker and certificate for their hard work.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

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How effective is the provision?

Teachers have good relationships with pupils; consequently behaviour in lessons is good. Teachers and teaching assistant work well together and provide well-judged support for pupils' differing needs and provide interesting activities that pupils are keen to learn. For example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed making up words when they were asked to write a poem that had rhythm and words that excited them. Teachers question pupils well and quickly clear up any misunderstandings. As a result, pupils develop the confidence to answer well and provide good reasons for their answers. In the best lessons, the pace of learning is brisk. Marking supports pupils' progress effectively. The curriculum is good and has been successfully developed to ensure that topics are relevant and interesting and strong links are made between different subjects. Opportunities for pupils to keep fit and healthy are good, and pupils are very enthusiastic about taking exercise and eating sensibly.

Members of staff at all levels provide good care, guidance and support for all pupils. Pupils who have fallen behind in their learning are quickly identified and specific support programmes have a positive impact on their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported particularly well. As one parent who wrote in said 'we are eternally grateful for the dedication to his welfare' which 'was excellent and we always knew that he was in capable hands'. Pupils in the calm and relaxed breakfast club have healthy breakfast options and benefit from a choice of quiet and lively activities and those that help them with their literacy and numeracy.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is respected by both her staff and parents. She has a clear vision for the school and a realistic view of its strengths and areas for further development. The enthusiastic senior leaders are working together well with parents and a range of outside agencies to support pupils to ensure that all receive the best education they can. Hence, attention to equality of opportunity is good and leaders have identified correctly that improving progress in writing and numeracy, particularly for boys, is a current priority. Leaders, including the governing body, are successful in ensuring that members of staff feel supported and professional development is high on the school's agenda particularly for writing and numeracy. Several changes in staffing have been managed well so that the school has kept its well-deserved good reputation in the local community. The school's leaders have carried out a detailed analysis of pupils' understanding of different communities, so that the curriculum can be changed in order to fill the gaps in pupils'

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knowledge. Currently pupils do not have enough first hand opportunities to engage with others from ethnic and religious backgrounds different to their own. Plans are in place to improve these and, hence, the national and international aspect of community cohesion by forging greater links with schools in a contrasting part of Britain and abroad.

Governance is good. The expertise of governors is used well, especially in financial matters. All statutory requirements are met, and governors ensure that the school adopts good practice across all areas of safeguarding particularly the most vulnerable. Checks on teaching, carried out by the senior leadership team provide a clear picture of what needs to be improved and all teachers know what they have to do to provide an even better education for all the pupils. The school works well in partnership with local schools and a range of services to promote pupils learning and well-being.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy coming to school and are happy to talk to adults about what they are doing and learning. Behaviour is good and children play well together, learning to take turns, cooperate with each other and play independently. They enjoy outdoor play, particularly at the early stages of their education, when they are able to practise balancing skills and role-play activities. There are some good opportunities for children to develop early writing and numeracy through well structured and interesting activities in the outdoor area. However, the quality of experiences varies across the three classes because there are not yet consistent expectations or approaches to the way that children's basic literacy and numeracy skills are developed. Children's knowledge and skills on entry have been wide and varied but, overall, are well below what is typical for their age. Children make good progress but this slows down by the time they approach the end of Early Years Foundation Stage. Satisfactory leadership and management have brought about some improvements

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to the learning environment, for example, the use of outdoor play; however, this is not used consistently by all children. Systems for assessing what children know are not yet consistent or rigorous enough across the Foundation Stage to ensure that assessments are always secure. This makes it difficult to track children's progress and so consistently plan appropriate next steps in their development.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

Virtually all parents and carers are happy with all that the school provides. Many praise the school and its teachers for helping their child to enjoy their education and keeping them safe and secure. Inspection findings endorse parents' positive views. The small number of individual concerns did not fall into any particular pattern and were raised anonymously with the headteacher and the chair of governors who will endeavour to address these issues.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Riddings Infant 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 56 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 177 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	36	64	20	36	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	68	17	30	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	26	46	28	50	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	46	28	50	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	33	59	22	39	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	43	32	57	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	48	29	52	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)	25	45	25	45	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	48	29	52	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	41	27	48	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	41	28	50	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	29	52	27	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	32	57	22	39	0	0	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



21 October 2010

Dear Children

Inspection of Riddings Infant and Nursery School, Alfreton, DE55 4EW

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school. We were pleased that you enjoy coming to school and that you have many friends to play with. We were impressed with you always being on the look out to make sure that anyone who is lonely and doesn't have anyone to play with can go to the playground friends. We agree with you, your parents and carers that Ridding Nursery and Infant is a good school. You parents and carers can be proud of your good manners and behaviour.

You told us that you go to a good school, where you all feel safe and happy. We agree. You learn quickly in most of your subjects and leave Year 2 knowing your next steps in education. You told us that you like all the extra clubs and enjoy having many of the visitors who come to school. You enjoy your lessons but you don't make as much progress in your writing and mathematics, particularly the boys, as you do in other subjects. Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to be done to make the school even better. These are the things we have asked your school to do next:

Help you to improve your writing and mathematics even more.

Help you to know more about people who come from other cultures and religions in this country and other countries.

Make sure that everyone in the Early Years Foundation Stage learns from, and enjoys, using the outdoor provision.

Help you to keep on improving your early writing and number skills so that these get better as you move into Years 1 and 2.

Thank you once again for talking with us about your school and showing us your work. You could help your teachers by making sure that you come to school everyday and that you work hard when you are doing your writing and number work.

Yours sincerely

Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector

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