

Rendlesham Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134882
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	360651
Inspection dates	20–21 October 2010
Reporting inspector	George Logan

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	184
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eric Spicer
Headteacher	Sarah Gallagher
Date of previous school inspection	16 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 14 lessons taught by eight different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body, staff and pupils. They looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's self-evaluation documents, including records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 62 parents and carers were also considered.

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

- How far advanced are children when they enter the Nursery class and how much progress do they make during the Early Years Foundation Stage?
- How rapid is pupils' progress in Years 3 to 6?
- How well do staff use assessment to plan work which challenges pupils sufficiently, particularly in mathematics?
- To what extent have governors met their obligations in relation to community cohesion?

Information about the school

Rendlesham Community Primary School is of similar size to most primary schools. The school opened in September 2006 to serve new housing developments in the village of Rendlesham. It has grown steadily and is now approaching capacity. The school's population has become increasingly stable and is almost entirely White British. There are no pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. Almost all children now enter the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery class. The Nursery class operates only in the mornings. As a consequence of the current admissions policy, some children, usually the youngest in any year, only have one term in Reception. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly above average. The majority of these have moderate learning difficulties or speech and language difficulties. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The school shares its building with a Children's Centre. Until April 2009, this was under the direct management of the headteacher. A change in policy locally means that the Children's Centre now operates independently and is subject to a separate 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

3

Main findings

Rendlesham Community Primary School provides a good education. Although the school is still relatively new, the high level of inward mobility is now much reduced. Pupils' diverse prior experiences mean that patterns of progress and attainment have been complex. However, most pupils, particularly those who have been at the school for several years, make good progress, benefiting from stable staffing and good teaching. Although attainment is broadly average it is improving as better prepared, more cohesive groups move through the school.

The school has worked hard to establish a good partnership with parents and carers and meaningful links with the emerging local community. Parents and carers appreciate the care and support provided by the school, which ensures pupils' well-being and makes a strong contribution to their good personal development. As a result, pupils' attendance is above average, pupils enjoy school very much and they feel very safe. Almost all have positive attitudes to learning. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and diet, and undertake frequent exercise. Pupils' contribution to the school is good. They behave well and exclusions are rare.

Children have a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and, for the last two years, have entered Year 1 with skills and knowledge above those expected. The first pupils with this initial advantage have just entered Year 2. Until now, attainment in Year 2 has been broadly average, although progress is good in both reading and writing. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory. The pattern of progress is very similar in Years 3 to 6. Attainment in writing, which was a key area for improvement last year, is now average and pupils are making good progress. Progress in reading is slightly greater than in writing. Teachers are becoming increasingly skilled in evaluating how well pupils are progressing and their marking has become more rigorous. However, until recently, the data used to track pupils' progress has not been sufficiently accurate and this has affected the school's evaluation of the impact of its work. To an extent, this remains the case. Pupils' personalised targets are now used well to promote progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, particularly those with highly specific needs, mostly make good progress in lessons. These pupils receive good support, with work carefully adapted to their needs.

The good curriculum offers pupils a rich range of experiences and promotes their personal development particularly well. It has a key focus on literacy, numeracy and scientific skills, although, until recently, support for mathematical development has been the least effective. Specialist external support contributes to good opportunities in physical education and to the support of able, gifted and talented pupils. Extra-curricular provision and enrichment opportunities are excellent.

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The governing body has a good understanding of its role. It fulfils its statutory duties well and is closely involved in helping the school to manage its significant deficit. The governing body knows the school well although it is not aware of how it is doing in relation to the national context and this affects their ability to challenge school leaders. While teaching, learning and pupils' progress are good, and development priorities are accurately judged, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory. This is because the school has no likelihood of appointing a deputy headteacher, due to its large budget deficit. This is also a significant constraint upon the school's ability to initiate improvements through better resourcing.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Build upon actions already in place to ensure that pupils:
 - make more rapid progress in mathematics and attain at higher levels
 - have more opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in subjects across the curriculum.
- Base all plans and interventions on accurate information about pupils' progress and attainment, ensuring that:
 - the school's data systems are accurate and reliable in all key subjects
 - staff and governors have a greater awareness of the school's performance in relation to the national context.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Over the last year, there has been significant improvement in writing. Improvements have not materialised as quickly in mathematics, but pupils are now making more rapid progress in this subject. The new mathematics leader has rigorously monitored progress and attainment and has identified specific strategies to target areas of identified weakness. Processes have been established to ensure that numeracy targets are now robust and that pupils' learning is more effective.

In many lessons, including mathematics, learning is good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy their work. In a good numeracy lesson in Year 6, for example, a range of practical activities had been planned to match the needs of several groups. Pupils had a range of estimating and weighing tasks to complete, working cooperatively. The brisk pace enabled pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to make good progress in their numeracy skills. Questioning was closely matched to each pupil's understanding. A successful numeracy lesson in Year 5 challenged able pupils successfully when they were tasked to produce accurate triangles to different specifications. The difficulty of producing equilateral triangles generated much creative discussion which helped to extend pupils' understanding. In a science lesson in Year 3 on fair testing, the open-ended nature of the suggested experiment served to illustrate the importance of establishing very precise research and methodological criteria in advance. Practical learning opportunities served in all cases to extend pupils' understanding significantly. Across the school, the new focus on evaluating their own work is helping to increase pupils' awareness of how well they are doing and this, together with more effective marking, is contributing to better learning.

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Pupils treat each other, and adults, with courtesy. The school council gives pupils some awareness of the democratic process. Older pupils take responsibility for those who are younger and willingly undertake many community tasks. Although multicultural awareness is not systematically developed, spiritual, social and moral development are good. Adequately developed basic skills ensure that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for future study and later life.

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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

Most teaching seen during the inspection was good. Planning is detailed, offering challenging activities which are generally well matched to pupils' needs. While teachers encourage pupils to develop some independence as learners, the lack of ready access to computers constrains opportunities to undertake research and extend learning. Day to day, teachers have very effective systems for evaluating pupils' knowledge and understanding and these have contributed to improved progress. They question pupils closely to ensure that they have understood key ideas. Rigorous marking provides guidance as to next steps, while individual targets help take learning forward. Pupils make good use of self-evaluation strategies, both oral and written.

The curriculum motivates pupils well and contributes strongly to their good personal development. It supports the development of pupils' literacy and scientific skills well, less so in mathematics. Science is taught primarily through themed weeks and projects which

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provide excellent opportunities for hands-on experience of practical science. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently as a tool for learning across the curriculum, but the school has identified this as one of its priorities for development this year. Pupils' learning benefits from external support in physical education and shared activities to support able, gifted and talented pupils. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is promoted well.

Staff care for pupils well and are very responsive to their needs. Links with the Children's Centre are beneficial to the school's pupils. Transition arrangements are good. The school works closely with support agencies, particularly for pupils with specific needs. The recently established nurture group supports the health, social, behavioural and transition needs of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. The skills of learning support staff are used well to promote pupils' learning and well-being.

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 growth of the school has been managed successfully. Until recently, the structure of classes has varied because of the differing number of pupils in each year. This has affected the organisation of the curriculum and pupils' learning. School leaders judge the school's priorities accurately and key actions are articulated in the school development plan. While budgetary constraints have prevented the appointment of a deputy headteacher, highly committed middle managers are setting the agenda for improvement in their respective areas. Rigorous monitoring has ensured a consistent level of good teaching, which underpins increasingly good progress. However, while assessment within lessons is now good, the school's data system and overview of progress and attainment, though improving, has not been sufficiently accurate to enable the school to evaluate, with confidence, the impact of the teaching. Lesson evaluations do not always focus sufficiently on the quality of written work and this constrains pupils' progress.

The governing body is closely involved in shaping the school's future. It is actively liaising with the local authority in relation to the sizeable deficit, accrued because of high costs incurred in setting up and operating the Children's Centre. This is now funded and managed separately. However, capacity to improve is only satisfactory, because of the restricted senior management team and the limited finance available to underwrite new initiatives.

The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met, including the good procedures for safeguarding pupils. Roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding are clearly defined. All pupils have access to the same opportunities. The school is a

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cohesive community in itself and has worked hard to embed good links within the disparate local community. There are emerging overseas links, although there are limited opportunities to engage with more diverse communities within the United Kingdom. In consequence, community cohesion is judged satisfactory rather than good.

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	3
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

On entry to Nursery, the skills and knowledge of most children are consistent with their age group, with a few functioning at higher levels. Almost all children who join in Nursery subsequently enter Reception. The local authority's admissions policy results in the youngest children spending one term in Reception before moving into Year 1. Good induction arrangements, including home visits, ensure that children feel very safe. They are well cared for and establish good relationships with adults and other children. Children settle quickly, play together confidently and behave well. This contributes well to their good social development. Children generally make good progress in their learning, leading to attainment which is often above the expected level by the end of Reception. Above average outcomes in 2009 and 2010 represent a significant improvement on the previous two years, when children entered Year 1 at much lower levels. However, in 2010, progress in reading and writing was less rapid than in other areas, with outcomes similar to the national average. Most children are articulate and present their ideas thoughtfully. They are involved in devising their own learning, requesting, for example, the current curriculum focus on animals. They have good opportunities to make choices both indoors and out. All areas of learning are planned for in the detailed weekly planning. The Early Years Foundation Stage is led and managed effectively with a well-judged vision for building on current good practice. The need to strengthen links between the Nursery and Reception classes is recognised to ensure continuity of good practice. The new leader is aware that although regular assessments provide good information on children's progress,

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the school does not relate its performance to national outcomes and, as a result, is not well placed to analyse the impact of its work.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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

A large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are pleased with the school and what it offers their children. One said, 'There is a real "family" feel to the school - a happy place.' Parents and carers mostly appreciate the opportunities which the school offers. A number of parents and carers had concerns, relating mainly to their perceptions of pupils' behaviour, to the progress their children are making or to the effectiveness of communication. The inspection team found that behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. However, the school has not been sufficiently proactive in informing parents and carers about its obligations and procedures when managing those few pupils who have significant behavioural issues. The school itself recognises that the rate of pupils' progress, although generally good, has not been fast enough in mathematics, although it has improved recently. Inspection findings endorse these views. In addition, the efficiency of day-to-day communications was judged to be effective.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rendlesham Community Primary 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 184 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	33	53	24	39	2	3	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	36	58	24	39	2	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	31	30	48	11	18	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	27	30	48	11	18	2	3
The teaching is good at this school	20	32	32	52	6	10	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	34	29	47	10	16	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	31	50	29	47	1	2	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)	18	29	36	58	5	8	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	27	31	50	8	13	2	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	29	25	40	14	23	3	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	26	31	50	9	15	4	6
The school is led and managed effectively	22	35	29	47	6	10	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	34	33	53	5	8	1	2

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.



23 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rendlesham Community Primary School, Woodbridge IP12??2GF

Thank you for making us welcome during our recent visit. We enjoyed meeting you in lessons and around the school, and hearing your views on the school. We found that yours is a good school. These are our main findings.

You work hard and behave well.

You are making generally good progress, although attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 6. You make more rapid progress in reading and writing than in mathematics.

You undertake lots of jobs in school. You make a good contribution to the school and work hard to engage with the local community.

Teaching and learning are good overall. You mostly enjoy lessons.

You attend school very regularly, feel very safe and have a good awareness of the importance of eating healthily and staying fit.

The curriculum is good and offers some exciting opportunities in science and art. Reading and writing are taught well; extra-curricular provision is excellent.

School leaders ensure that you are well looked after.

We are asking the school to make these changes so that you can do even better.

Enable you to make more rapid progress in mathematics and attain at higher levels.

Provide opportunities for you to use your mathematical skills across the subjects.

Ensure that the school's data systems are accurate and realistic, so that school leaders plan your work on the basis of really robust information about the levels you have reached.

You can help by continuing to work hard and do your best. We hope that you will have every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

George Logan

Lead inspector

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