

Ravenshall School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107799
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	356243
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Pauline Hilling-Smith

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	5–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	159
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Helen Metcalfe
Headteacher	Mrs Jeanette Tate
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2008
School address	Ravensthorpe Road Thornhill Lees, Dewsbury West Yorkshire WF12 9EE
Telephone number	01924 325234
Fax number	01924 325235
Email address	office.ravenshall@edukirklees.net

Age group	5–16
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2011
Inspection number	356243

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 16 lessons given by 15 teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, those in partnership with the school, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, looked at the school's evaluation of its performance, the current development plan, minutes of meetings of the governing body and documentation to ensure that pupils are safe. The responses to 52 questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The progress of all groups of pupils towards their targets especially in writing
- How well the curriculum and teaching promote the learning and personal development needs of the pupils.
- How effectively leaders are bringing about school improvement.

Information about the school

Ravenshall is a larger than average special school which caters for pupils with learning difficulties, many of whom have complex learning needs. Most pupils are in Key Stages 3 and 4. The large majority of pupils in the school are boys. The number of pupils from minority ethnic families is well above average as is the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above average. The school has achieved Artsmark Gold, Healthy School status, Investors in People and Sports Mark. The headteacher came into post in September 2010 and the Chair of the Governing Body was elected in October 2010.

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 is improving rapidly. Progress in English and mathematics is good as is progress in personal development. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to be independent and take on positions of responsibility, thus raising confidence and self-esteem. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are good and, as a result, pupils say they feel safe, and parents and carers overwhelmingly agree. This enables pupils to make the most of the opportunities the school offers.

The new headteacher, the senior leaders and the governing body have effectively built on the good improvements that have taken place since the last inspection. The new leadership has refreshed the strong vision for the school and has established high morale within the staff team who share the headteacher's ambition to further increase the rate of progress for every pupil. A strength of the curriculum is its imaginative enrichment.

Self-evaluation is accurate and gives school leaders a realistic view of strengths and areas for improvement. It is robust because the views of others are taken into account. Monitoring and subsequent support and training have already brought about good improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. All this demonstrates that there is good capacity to sustain improvement.

Staff have a good level of expertise and understanding of how to develop the learning of those with complex needs and learning difficulties. Although teaching and learning is generally good, on occasions pupils' progress slows when lessons fail to move their learning on at a fast enough rate. The headteacher and senior staff are aware that further steps need to be taken to improve the consistency of teaching. Close partnership with other agencies, parents and carers contribute well to pupils' well-being. Pupils' behaviour is good. This is because pupils are very clear about what constitutes good behaviour and they respond well to additional guidance from individual members of staff about how to modify their behaviour if necessary. Attendance is satisfactory overall; however, more can be done to ensure that pupils can spend as much time as possible extending their learning. The way in which the school supports and works in partnership with mainstream schools in the local authority is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance by:
 - raising the profile in school of good attendance
 - basing priorities for improvement on a systematic evaluation of attendance data.
- Ensure that all teaching is good or better by:

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

- planning activities that challenge and engage pupils of all abilities especially the more able
- raising teacher expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

All groups of pupils make good progress overall. Progress in social and moral development is also good because it is well-attended to in lessons as well as at other times during the school day. Staff observe pupils carefully and skilfully support learning when necessary. As a result, pupils are able to sustain their concentration. For example, in a good Year 11 lesson all pupils made strenuous efforts to calculate the cost of items so that they could work out how much change to expect. In another lesson, older pupils were proud that they could recall the facts from 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' and use their answers to make predictions about characters in the story. Pupils achieve well in all aspects of school life and particularly enjoy lessons in sport and art.

Procedures to establish where the pupils are in their learning when they start at Ravenshall show that most pupils arrive with low or very low attainment. Although pupils make good progress, the steps they take in their learning are very small and so their attainment is not judged against national average but against benchmarks appropriate to their needs. During their time at Ravenshall, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics because staff plot pupils' progress carefully and set new targets each term. Pupils with additional physical or more complex learning needs also make good progress towards the targets set for them.

Parents agree with pupils when they say they feel safe and secure. Pupils' behaviour is good and this contributes well to learning in lessons for all groups of pupils. Pupils are keen to make their voices heard and they are given good opportunities to do so. They know they are listened to, as pupils can take their views about bullying to governing body meetings, and can see decisions made by their council put into practice. Pupils develop skills in personal finance alongside peers from a mainstream school and this, together with their satisfactory attendance, makes a good contribution to the development of skills ensuring their future well-being. The artwork displayed around the school shows reflective thinking, and pupils are rightly proud of its quality. Pupils further develop their understanding of different cultures when they visit a range of places of worship and take part in international days.

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

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	
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	3
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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Although teaching is occasionally outstanding and often good, in some lessons learning slows because pupils spend too much time listening to the teacher and the pace of lessons is too slow. Sometimes expectations of what pupils will do and can achieve are too low. In good and better lessons, teaching promotes good behaviour, positive attitudes and a good aptitude to learning. As a result, work produced by the pupils is of high quality. For example, displays of writing show that good progress is being made in this area. The use made of teaching assistants in lessons is good. Teachers have good knowledge of subjects and plan conscientiously; however, sometimes planning is not sharp enough to meet the needs of pupils at different levels by specifying different activities for pupils. Pupils know their individual targets and are clear about what they need to do to improve because all staff give clear information to pupils about how well they are doing. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively and, in the best lessons, pupils use additional technology such as laptops.

The curriculum is good. It is creative in the way time is used and imaginative in the experiences provided for the pupils. It is flexible and as such meets the needs of the pupils well. A strength of the curriculum is the opportunity for extended experiences after school and on out-of-school activities and visits. Personal health and social education is

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

also a strength, and this plays a significant part in the pupils' good personal development and well-being. This enables pupils to develop their ideas and apply them in a range of contexts. However, the curriculum for the oldest pupils is still under review, which means that it is not as well-developed as in other key stages.

Care guidance and support are good because relationships are good and pupils seek help freely and with ease. The school environment is very attractive and welcoming and pupils are greeted warmly when they encounter staff. Every effort is made to remove any barriers to learning. The ambition of the staff in working to promote independence and responsibility is given priority. Pupils, including those with very significant needs, have great confidence in the adults around them and consequently are able to make good progress in their personal development. Links with other agencies are used very effectively to support pupils and their families. Work with mainstream secondary schools is effective in promoting learning and personal development for the small number of pupils who benefit greatly from attending both schools. However, transition planning for the oldest pupils on leaving the school is as yet less well-developed.

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 new headteacher has quickly established an enthusiastic leadership team. The two deputy headteachers are rigorous in collecting and analysing data and driving the development of the school. Areas for improvement set at the last inspection have been driven forward well, but there is recognition that there is still further work to do. Self-evaluation is accurate and all members of the school community are consulted about priorities for improvement. The Chair of the Governing Body has swiftly ensured that members of the governing body have an understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve further. This means that the governing body challenges the school's view of itself as well as supporting developments. The composition of the governing body reflects the needs of the school. Induction of new governors is in hand so that they can contribute fully to the work of the school.

Processes for tracking pupils' progress enable clear identification of targets and levels achieved for individual pupils. However, analysis by groups of pupils over time is not yet fully developed which means that some targets set are not sufficiently challenging. Observations of teaching and learning are carried out by a number of leaders but are not yet fully moderated between those leaders. In addition, the link between teaching and progress is not always consistent and, as a result, recorded outcomes are sometimes too generous.

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

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Pupils' targets, reviewed and adjusted each term, are communicated to parents and carers who value the care taken to give them full explanations about their children's learning. Procedures for safeguarding and health and safety are good overall and, particularly strong, for the school's work with other agencies which safeguard pupils. However, attendance data are not always clearly evaluated in detail and against national benchmarks. Good partnerships play an effective part in improving learning for all pupils and contributing substantially to their personal development.

The commitment of leaders to promoting equality and diversity is reflected in the welcoming atmosphere felt throughout the building. Community cohesion is developed well. For example, a local primary school with mainly White British students is welcomed each term to work alongside the school's own ethnically diverse population.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The number of children joining the school during the Reception year is very small and they join the others in the Key Stage 1 classroom. However, the indoor and outside provision is arranged so that children can involve themselves in the learning areas of their choice. In one much-enjoyed lesson, children's learning was developed well when they chopped grapes in half and put them in bowls to share at break time. The member of staff joined in and extended their mathematical language skilfully. The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and are well-organised. Careful attention is paid to development planning. As a result, children make good progress and enjoy their learning.

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

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

Thirty per cent of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of responses were positive. A very few expressed concerns about the progress their children make and how the school helps them to support their children's learning. These areas were followed up by inspectors who found that pupils made good progress overall and that the school paid careful attention to giving explanations to parents and carers about how to support their children's learning. The inspection endorses positive views expressed by the majority of the parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ravenshall 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 159 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	67	16	31	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	30	58	21	40	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	21	40	27	52	3	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	40	24	46	5	10	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	26	50	23	44	1	2	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	40	24	46	5	10	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	18	35	31	60	1	2	1	2
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	48	20	38	2	4	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	46	23	44	2	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	52	23	44	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	40	24	46	3	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	40	27	52	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	28	54	19	37	1	2	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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



14 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravenshall School, Dewsbury, WF12 9EE

Thank you for being welcoming when we inspected your school. We enjoyed talking with you and visiting lessons. We were impressed by how attractive and well cared for the inside of the school was and we were very impressed by the artwork on display. Thank you for taking the time to give us your views of the school. It is clear from talking with you and from the questionnaire replies we received from you and your parents and carers, that you feel safe at school and are confident that the staff will quickly help you if needed.

We found that Ravenshall is a good school and getting better. You are making good progress in learning and in your personal development, because the staff are very skilful in helping you to understand how to do as well as you can.

We have asked the teachers to do two things to make Ravenshall even better. It is to:

- make sure that activities in lessons involve you doing work at just the right level of difficulty
- make sure that everyone attends as often as possible.

We know you will try to do all you can to help your teachers and encourage everyone to attend every day. We wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Pauline Hilling-Smith

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.