

Red Hill Field Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120083
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	358689
Inspection dates	6–7 April 2011
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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	236
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	David Cowe
Headteacher	Matthew Brookes
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who visited 21 part lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance records, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring, school development planning and risk assessments. They also analysed the questionnaires received from 22 staff, 110 pupils and 130 parents and carers.

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

- How well have school leaders succeeded in ironing out inconsistencies in teaching and learning?
- What has been the impact of curriculum innovation on outcomes for pupils of all abilities?
- How much do pupils learn about cultures and beliefs that go beyond their everyday experience?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. Most pupils are White British. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, although there is quite wide variation between different year groups. Red Hill Field has Active Mark and Basic Skills awards and Healthy Schools status. The headteacher was appointed in September 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. As the many very satisfied parent and carers attest, it succeeds because it lives up to its motto: 'Inspire Challenge Achieve'.

The headteacher, leadership team and governing body inspire pupils to work hard and do their best. They have developed a stimulating curriculum that is made interesting and fun. Subjects are linked together imaginatively so that pupils are motivated to learn. In Year 6, for example, a project built around a fictional stately home has been extended to involve a range of subjects. Work, for example, in mathematics, on ratios was enlivened by linking it to the practical activity of mixing the ingredients for scones and non-alcoholic cocktails for a soiree. Among the features that stand out at this school are pupils' keen awareness of safety issues and their very positive response to the many opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. They have taken up issues with local councillors, and have successfully campaigned for the imposition of tougher speed limits on traffic around the school. They take a keen interest in the locality, contributing, for example, to plans to redevelop a neighbourhood play area. They have less first-hand experience, however, of more ethnically mixed communities in Leicester and further afield in the United Kingdom and wider world.

Teaching is consistently good throughout the school, from Reception to Year 6. Teachers set out learning objectives at the start of each lesson, usually with success criteria that they agree with the pupils. They often ask pupils to signal with their thumbs whether or not they understand, although they do not always take enough note of wavering thumbs that indicate that a pupil is unsure. Lessons are, nonetheless, well planned. Activities are varied and lessons are briskly paced so that pupils get a lot done in the time available. Teachers also take care to match work to pupils' different capabilities. Although this means that all benefit from challenge, there remain occasions when the most-able pupils are given only slightly harder variations of the same work as others when they are capable of more. There is good provision for pupils' care and welfare, with its impact particularly evident in pupils' excellent rate of attendance. Pupils who need extra help with their learning benefit from very well-targeted support. Often this is provided in lessons by teaching assistants. These staff also lead some of the small groups aimed at boosting pupils' learning, for example of letter combinations and the sounds they make (phonics). Teaching assistants' skills are underutilised on those occasions when they are passive observers during teachers' lesson introductions.

Because they are well taught and motivated to try their best, pupils achieve well at Red Hill Field Primary. Attainment has been consistently above average, and the current work of both boys and girls shows that pupils continue to make good progress throughout the school. This has not engendered any complacency among school leaders, however. Careful tracking of each pupil's progress enables them to provide targeted interventions to

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boost the learning of any at risk of falling behind. Along with regular monitoring of lessons, this has given leaders a very accurate picture of the school's many strengths and its areas for development. Together with the governing body, they are keen to move the school forward and further accelerate pupils' learning. Their success in maintaining good achievement, and eliminating the inconsistencies in teaching and learning identified in the last inspection, shows the school's good capacity for continued improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the end of the autumn term 2011, further accelerate pupils' progress in lessons through:
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are used by teachers to best effect during whole-class teaching
 - consistently involving pupils in assessing how well they are learning and making full use of this information in planning future lessons
 - extending the challenge for the most able pupils
 - giving pupils time to reflect on and respond to the comments teachers make when they mark their work.
- By the spring term 2012, extend opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultures and ways of life in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

For the school's recent 25th anniversary, pupils constructed celebratory ceramics and mosaics. Among these is a display outside the entrance that proclaims the school is, 'A happy place to learn'. Pupils confirm this is an accurate description of Red Hill Field Primary. They greatly enjoy school. Behaviour is consistently good, and pupils of all ages get on well together. They learn how to keep safe, for example when riding bicycles and when using the internet, and they have a good understanding of the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise, even if the temptations of crisps and chocolate mean that they do not always practise what they preach. Pupils' active involvement in community campaigns has given them a keen awareness of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. This is mirrored in their enthusiastic fundraising for a range of charities, including cancer charities in fond memory of their previous headteacher, who passed away.

Children join the Reception Year with skills and capabilities in line with those expected for their ages. They make good progress so that their attainment is above average at the end of Year 6. Because progress is now more consistent throughout the school, including for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, attainment is rising in Key Stage 1 as well as in Key Stage 2. Attainment was only average in Year 2 in 2010, but it has improved as a result of initiatives this year to accelerate learning of reading and writing through letters and the sounds they make. This has been extended to focus also on spelling and basic punctuation, with the consequent improvement already very evident. Year 1 pupils, taught in separate ability groups, all made rapid progress. Even the lowest attaining group were writing sentences with capital letters and full stops, remembering, when prompted, to leave 'finger spaces' between their words. Pupils in the most-able

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group were building sentences with connectives and 'wow' words that showed off their growing vocabulary. Pupils' high rate of attendance and above average attainment in key literacy and numeracy skills mean that they are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

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	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	1
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?

The good relationship that pupils have with the staff helps to motivate them to work hard and do their best. Teachers establish orderly routines so that pupils settle to work quickly and without fuss. There is little let-up to the pace of learning, even in lessons where pupils move several times between different activities. Questioning is used well to encourage pupils to express their points of view and to expand on their answers. Often these are directed at specific pupils rather than just those that volunteer answers. This helps to keep the pupils on their toes. Pupils are often encouraged to share their thoughts with a partner, but too often they merely report back their own ideas rather than what their partner has told them. This misses an opportunity to further develop listening skills. Pupils know what they need to do to improve their work because marking and assessment give them clear guidance. There is not a routine expectation, however, that pupils take the time to read, reflect and respond to teachers' comments. This means that questions posed by teachers in their marking sometimes go unanswered.

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Pupils' key skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are advanced well through activities in topics that bring together different subjects. Work on pirates in Year 2, for example, has brought together aspects of history and geography around a theme that has prompted imaginative writing and science experiments on materials that float or sink. Pupils have used what they have learnt in mathematics to attractively present their findings in the form of Venn diagrams that also show materials, such as sponges, that both float and sink.

Personalised learning programmes have helped to accelerate the progress of those pupils who need extra help with their learning so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are helped to make the same good progress as their peers. There are comprehensive arrangements for dealing with pupils' medical needs and with first aid. The impact of the school's efforts in elevating pupils' awareness of safety issues is evident in pupils' enviable record of success in county-wide inter-school safety quiz competitions.

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?

Parents and carers point to improvements they have seen over the past year. Several comment that, 'The school has gone from strength to strength.' The headteacher and leadership team carefully monitor provision and outcomes for pupils. They have drawn on this to make the changes necessary to raise attainment and rates of progress. This is demonstrated in the constructive alterations made to the curriculum and, in particular, the adaptations made to the teaching of letters and sounds in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Equal opportunities are promoted well in this school, and so there is no appreciable gap between the performance of girls and boys. This is because leaders' monitoring quickly identifies any gaps that emerge and enables them to take immediate remedial action. Spotting, for example, that girls sometimes lack confidence in mathematics because boys dominate whole-class discussion, leaders set up single-sex sessions to help girls to grow in confidence.

Governance is good. The governing body has a clear and accurate picture of what goes on in school, and insists on evidence of positive impact for the changes that are made. The governing body played a key role in steering the school through the trauma of the illness and death of the previous headteacher. Arrangements for pupils' safeguarding do not just meet the current regulatory requirements but go beyond them by involving pupils in themselves identifying risks. This is evident in pupils' monitoring of traffic speeds and their subsequent campaign. The pupils' very active involvement in the locality shows the

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strength of this particular aspect of community cohesion, but other elements are less well developed. As the governing body has identified in its audit of the school's work, there have been visits to Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Buddhist places of worship but the opportunity has not been taken to otherwise broaden pupils' awareness of the range of different cultures and ways of life in the City of Leicester, the United Kingdom and around the world.

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

The good progress that children make in the Reception classes mean that they now join Year 1 with above average attainment in all areas of learning. They make particularly good progress in learning sounds and letters because of good teaching and the well-structured programme that has been introduced this year. This is particularly effective in giving these young children the building blocks needed for their future reading and writing. Children enjoy their learning and benefit from a wide range of creative opportunities, for example, modelling farm animals and making finger puppets. Staff create a warm, nurturing environment where children feel very secure. A calm atmosphere prevails and independence is encouraged.

Parents and carers are welcomed as valued partners in their children's learning and well-being. The induction profile that they help to complete when children start school is used to plan appropriate provision, and parents and carers have input into the Reception classes' termly themes. There is a rich range of exciting, motivating experiences, both indoors and outdoors. Children play and learn with sustained concentration, both independently and when collaborating with others. During the inspection, children were excited when making up a play with hand puppets while dressing up as princesses and

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exploring the effect of gradient when rolling balls down guttering. These activities all contributed to their developing speaking and listening skills.

In this well-run provision, staff keep a careful track of what each child learns through play, including during child-initiated activities. This then contributes to the detailed planning which helps children to build on what they have learned. Writing skills are mostly fostered well but opportunities for early writing are sometimes missed, particularly in the outdoor area. Nevertheless, most Reception children form letters and numbers correctly, write their own names, and make good attempts at spelling simple words.

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

An above average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. In these, parents and carers express overwhelmingly positive views about almost all aspects of the school. Many wrote to comment on how happy their children are at school. Parents and carers are especially pleased with the quality of care and welfare. One summed up the views of many in writing, 'The school has helped my child to grow and build in confidence.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Red Hill Field 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 130 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 236 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	58	52	40	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	86	66	44	34	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	62	48	64	49	4	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	71	55	51	39	6	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	78	60	50	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	42	70	54	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	55	42	69	53	3	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)	50	38	68	52	3	2	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	57	44	70	54	3	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	35	76	58	4	3	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	48	37	75	58	2	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	77	59	50	38	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	80	62	47	36	2	2	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	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.



8 April 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Red Hill Field Primary School, Leicester, LE19 3EF

Thank you for welcoming us when inspectors came to visit your school. Yours is a good school. It is well run and the staff take good care of you. The good teaching and the exciting curriculum help you to make good progress, from the start of Reception to the end of Year 6, to reach above average standards in English and mathematics. As the sign outside proclaims, Red Hill Field Primary is 'a happy place to learn'. This is because everyone is well behaved and you all get on very well together and treat each other with respect. Your attendance is excellent. Inspectors were also impressed with your excellent understanding of how to keep safe and the great contribution you make to the school and wider community. We would like to see you meet and learn more about others from different backgrounds elsewhere in this country and abroad.

It was good to see how keen you are to join in in lessons. Teachers often ask you to show them with your thumbs whether or not you understand what you are being taught. We have asked them to make sure that they always take note of your responses in planning your work. Teachers already try to set you work that is at just the right level for each of you, but we could see that it is sometimes still too easy for some of you. We have suggested that they stretch some of you a little more. You can help by telling teachers when you think what you are doing is too easy.

The teaching assistants do a super job when working with individuals and groups, so we have asked teachers to make sure they always make the most of their help during lesson introductions. We could see also that teachers give you lots of help through the comments and suggestions they make when they mark your work. We would like to see you given more time to read their comments, think carefully about them and to do your best to act on them. Again, this is a way that you can help to make your good school even better.

Thank you again for being so friendly and helpful on our visit, and our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

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