

Reckleford Community School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123726
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	363968
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Jane Neech HMI

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	136
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sam McAleenan
Headteacher	Helen Swainson
Date of previous school inspection	12 May 2010
School address	Eastland Road Yeovil BA21 4ET
Telephone number	01935475938
Fax number	01935475938
Email address	hswainson@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Age group	3–7
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Inspection number	363968

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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The lead inspector observed six lessons jointly with school leaders. The additional inspector completed a learning walk with the senior teacher which focused on behaviour. The lead inspector completed a learning walk with the acting headteacher looking at community links and spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of pupils' learning. The inspectors held meetings with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and a representative from the local authority core group. The lead inspector met with pupils and a group of parents and carers. The inspectors observed the school's work and evaluated a range of school documentation. They scrutinised 27 questionnaires received from parents and carers and 15 completed by staff

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

- The levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.
- How well teaching, learning and assessment contribute to pupils' progress in English and mathematics.
- The impact of actions taken by leaders and managers to improve teaching, the curriculum and the achievement of all pupils.

Information about the school

Reckleford Community School is a small infant school. It is part of a children's centre which includes a maintained day nursery for children aged three to five years. The Nursery class was included in the inspection. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. A high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and a larger than average proportion are at an early stage of learning English. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the Nursery, are above average. Amongst the awards held by the school are National Healthy Schools Status and the Activemark.

At the last inspection, the school was given a notice to improve. Significant improvement was required in relation to levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics. Significant improvement was also required in teaching, learning and the use of assessment. Thirdly, improvement was required in how school leaders monitor teaching, learning and pupils' progress. Since the last inspection, there have been changes in leadership. Two members of staff are currently acting headteacher and senior teacher. In January 2011, one of Her Majesty's Inspectors made a monitoring visit and was of the opinion that the school was making inadequate progress in addressing the issues for improvement.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

Since the monitoring visit, Reckleford Community School has focused on improving pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics. As a result, pupils' progress has accelerated so that their academic achievement is now satisfactory. The focus on improving the areas of weakness identified has been relentless. Consequently, the school has been successful in raising attainment at the end of Year 2. Leaders and managers have systematically tracked and monitored pupils' progress. School data show that performance in the most recent national tests is broadly average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. Leaders have supported staff in improving the quality of teaching and learning. The recent improvements made to teaching mean that pupils report enjoying learning because teachers make lessons interesting. Consequently, Reckleford School now provides a satisfactory education, and all groups of pupils are being challenged to continue to improve their achievement.

The nurture and care of pupils and their families are a strong feature of the school's work. Parents and carers say that their children are safe and well looked after. Behaviour is good and pupils understand how to cooperate with one another so that everyone gets along well. Parents and carers are confident that the school has improved in the last year and are now pleased with the progress made by their children.

The school has a satisfactory capacity to implement and sustain improvements necessary to the attainment of pupils because of:

- the ambition, drive and commitment of leaders, governors and staff
- pupils' good progress
- the systems in place to track pupils' progress
- the partnership with parents and carers and outside professionals
- the positive attitudes of pupils and their enjoyment of school
- the actions taken for improvement by the governing body and the leadership team as a result of evaluating the school's strengths and weaknesses.

Positive relationships between adults and pupils are a feature of the sound teaching, as is the targeting of extra support for groups and individuals. The kindly manner in which teaching assistants encourage pupils at the early stages of learning English to speak the language helps pupils develop confidence and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities benefit from being supported in small groups and whole-class activities and, as a result, make good progress. Leaders and managers have identified

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

areas of weakness in the curriculum, such as in Key Stage 1, where there are too few opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills with other subjects. However, leaders have begun to develop provision further across the school. Recent changes to the outside area for the Reception class have improved learning opportunities for younger children.

The introduction of pupil progress meetings means that teachers are accountable for improving pupils' performance and this has had a positive impact on attainment. However, the consistent use of assessment to find out how well pupils are doing in lessons is not yet established. The school understands that the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment requires a sharper focus on setting and reviewing timely targets for further improvement. Leaders and managers acknowledge that the Nursery and Reception classes need to work more closely together in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further develop the monitoring of teaching and learning by setting and reviewing timely targets for improvement which are shared with all staff.
- Improve teaching and learning through using assessment more effectively in lessons by:
 - ensuring there is a clear objective to the learning objective in each lesson
 - including a plenary at the end of each lesson to extend pupils' learning
 - reshaping tasks during lessons to support pupils' understanding or provide more challenge.
- Help the Nursery and Reception classes to work more closely together by developing a common approach to observation, assessment and planning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The youngest children begin in the Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding below levels typically seen. The picture of good progress from pupils' different starting points, through to the end of Key Stage 1, is now consistent. The performance of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that of their national counterparts. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well, particularly in mathematics.

Attainment is average overall and pupils' English and mathematics books show an increasing amount of work at a good standard. Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are keen writers and produce their own books on favourite topics. Pupils report that they are proud of their writing and can talk about how their work has improved. When reading, pupils use their knowledge of how letter sounds are put together to make words. In this way, they work out unfamiliar words in the text. In a reading session guided by the teacher, more-able pupils could identify subtle aspects of the text, such as the feelings of the characters. Pupils readily refer to their individual targets, which are attractively displayed in classes, and they can talk about what they need to do to achieve them. They say that the teachers' marking helps them to improve their work.

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

Pupils value the opportunity to talk to adults if they have a worry or concern. Adults model good communication skills which are replicated in the way pupils respond to one another. Pupils understand about the differences between right and wrong. They respond well to advice from adults which helps them think about positive behaviour. Consequently, the school is a harmonious community. Parents and carers report that the school is particularly helpful in supporting those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the move to the next stage in their education. As a result of the increased focus on English and mathematics, pupils' basic skills of literacy and numeracy are now satisfactory. Pupils understand the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, as recognised by the school's National Healthy Schools Status and its Activemark award. They learn about different religions and cultures through stories, art and role play.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
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	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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	3
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

How effective is the provision?

The teaching of English has improved since the last inspection. In a reading session for pupils at an early stage of learning English, the teaching assistant used good questioning skills and a range of visual clues to develop pupils' understanding of the text and help them understand key words. There was much amusement when everyone could translate the word for wristwatch from Polish into English. As a result of the targeted support, pupils make good progress academically and grow in confidence socially and emotionally.

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

Teachers' marking and the targets set make a contribution to pupils' learning because they are generally well matched to the needs of the individual. Occasionally targets and assessments in mathematics are too general to help pupils move on in their learning. Planning in English and mathematics focuses mainly on teaching pupils the basic skills. For example, in English, tasks are set which enable pupils to apply their knowledge of letter sounds to spelling and reading. In an effective mathematics session with children in the Nursery, tasks were well matched to the abilities of the children. As a result, everyone counted beads with confidence and more able children counted them again to check their answers. However, the objectives of the lesson are not always clear and teachers do not always adapt work well enough for the range of ability levels in classes.

The curriculum gives pupils some opportunities to explore their creativity through stories. The Gruffalo story provided pupils with opportunities to enjoy painting and making models. The attractive displays of artwork enhance the learning environment and celebrate a range of pupils' achievements. Parents and carers talked appreciatively of the recent exhibition of children's artwork presented by the school. The school acknowledges there is more work to do to establish curriculum links across subjects and extend creative opportunities further.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers are ambitious to ensure all groups have an equal chance to achieve their full potential, and they have been successful. The school promotes equality of opportunity by ensuring all staff are trained to meet the different needs of pupils. Effective actions have been taken to remedy previous underperformance and accelerate pupils' progress. Partnerships with the children's centre and outside professionals support families. Workshops for parents and carers on literacy and numeracy have been well received and the creation of parent champions has led to improvements in the way parents and carers are engaged in their children's learning. Parent and carer champions are also helping to improve the attendance of pupils from a number of families.

The governing body has benefited from training on its roles and responsibilities by the local authority. The information governors receive through the acting headteacher's reports is comprehensive so they are better informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and equipped to focus on challenging and supporting the school in its drive for improvement. Safeguarding (care and protection of pupils) arrangements are suitable and meet statutory responsibilities because any concerns are identified and actions taken. The school has increased its emphasis on promoting community cohesion since the last

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 and parents and carers report that this has been effective. Families new to the school feel particularly welcomed because of the approachability of the staff. As one parent put it, 'The children are happy and the parents are happy.' There are plans in place to extend the established links with local schools and organisations.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Parents and carers speak highly of the way in which staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage know their children well and help them to settle happily, enjoy their learning and make sound progress. Since the last inspection, children's progress has improved. By the time they reach the end of the Reception Year, the majority have achieved the early learning goals.

Key workers are linked to children in the Nursery class and this supports their social and emotional development. Children play well together. There is a balance between opportunities for teacher-led activities and those initiated by the children. In the Reception class, two children investigated mathematical shapes. They worked outside, creating a pattern with large carpet squares and triangles, which they then turned into a hopscotch game. Adults support the learning so that children make progress. In a teacher-led activity, the adult provided materials for the children to make a home for the animals in The Gruffalo story. From this starting point, children developed their own ideas, such as using logs to make a place for the snake to hide. Children used information and communication technology such as digital cameras to record their work. These, together with adult observations, provide assessment information for staff, parents and carers in children's learning diaries. However, the use of observation and assessment is not consistent across the Nursery and Reception classes. The relatively new Early Years Foundation Stage coordinator understands the stage's strengths and areas for

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

development but has not yet had time to develop a common approach to observation, assessment and planning.

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

An overwhelming majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaires are happy with all aspects of their children's experience at school on almost all survey questions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Reckleford Community School and Children's Centre 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 27 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 136 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	24	89	2	7	1	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	24	89	3	11	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	67	9	33	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	74	7	26	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	63	10	37	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)	18	67	7	26	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	17	63	10	37	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	63	8	30	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	63	9	33	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	19	70	6	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	81	4	15	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Reckleford Community School and Children's Centre, Yeovil BA21 4ET

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team on our recent visit. Your views helped us make out judgements. This letter is to tell you what we found.

You enjoy school and your behaviour, learning and progress are good. You told us that you feel safe in school. Your achievements overall are satisfactory and your school gives you a sound education. In addition:

- the acting headteacher, staff and governors work hard to make sure all of you do as well as you can
- your school looks after you well
- those of you with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress
- those of you at the early stages of learning to speak English make good progress because of the support you receive
- the school's leaders and managers know how you are doing
- teaching has improved and lessons are interesting
- your lessons give you some opportunities to be creative
- your parents and carers are encouraged to help you continue learning at home.

I have asked your teachers to make sure they assess you and talk about your learning during lessons. I have also asked adults in the Nursery and Reception classes to work more closely together by planning activities for you to share. Finally, I have asked the acting headteacher, staff and governors to monitor teaching and learning very carefully.

I am confident that you will do all you can by continuing to work hard on making your literacy and numeracy skills even better.

Yours sincerely

Jane Neech Her Majesty's 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.