

Ryedene Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	114949
Local Authority	Essex
Inspection number	378969
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	221
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Greenwood
Headteacher	Kevin Furlong
Date of previous school inspection	26 April 2007
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 12 lessons taught by seven different members of staff. Inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body and with staff and pupils. They looked at pupils' books, records of their progress, teachers' lesson planning, playtime activities and the school's documentation, which included records of teaching and the main improvement plan. Responses to inspection questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and by 48 parents and carers were also considered.

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

- The team looked at the consistency of progress which pupils make, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2, and at the impact of the high level of pupil mobility upon the overall outcomes.
- It considered the extent to which staff use assessment information effectively to plan challenging work to enable all pupils, particularly those identified as lower attainers, to make good progress.
- It explored the effectiveness of senior leaders and managers and the governing body in developing the school's capacity to make improvements.

Information about the school

Ryedene Community Primary School is an average-sized primary school which serves an urban community on the southern edge of Basildon. There is a high level of pupil mobility, as pupils join and leave the school other than at the usual entry and exit points. Pupils are predominantly White British, although enrolment in recent years has become increasingly ethnically diverse. However, very few pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school offers a breakfast club which is managed by the governing body.

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

Ryedene Community Primary School provides a good education. The school has sustained a good pace of improvement since its last inspection. Pupils' achievement and personal development are good. From low entry points when they enter Nursery, pupils' attainment is broadly average by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Parents and carers value the good quality care and have good opportunities to find out how to support their children's learning. Pupils greatly enjoy school and feel very safe. They are well behaved, have positive attitudes to learning and have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles.

The school successfully addresses children's personal and social needs in the Nursery. Children make satisfactory progress in developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage, although their attainment when they leave Reception remains well below average. Attainment by the end of Reception improved considerably in 2011. However, classroom activities are not yet sufficiently challenging, nor is outdoor learning sufficiently well planned or managed to ensure that children develop their basic skills more rapidly and consistently. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress accelerates as a result of good teaching. In consequence, overall progress is good. For some year groups, including those who left Year 6 in 2011, progress is outstanding. This level of progress is achieved despite high levels of pupil mobility. For example, only one-tenth of the pupils in the current Year 6 entered school at the beginning of Reception. In addition, while most pupils attend well and persistent absence has been on a downward trend, there is a small, but stubborn, core of relatively poor attendees who have an impact on overall attendance and, to a lesser extent, on outcomes. However, the school works very hard with these pupils to mitigate against the impact of absence on their learning. The recent focus on the attainment of hitherto underperforming White British boys has had a considerable impact, virtually eliminating the typical deficits in their learning. By the end of Year 6, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in English and mathematics is mostly in line with the national average. Almost all pupils make the expected two levels of progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with more complex physical and cognitive needs, are well supported and make good progress – as do the few pupils who speak English as an additional language.

The school has an effective system for setting individual academic targets and pupils' self-evaluation skills are well developed. Teachers' marking is thorough and consistent in quality and provides pupils with clear guidance as to the next steps in

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learning. The curriculum is functional and supports the development of basic skills satisfactorily, although extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities are mostly good and contribute well to pupils' good personal development.

Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders rigorously track pupils' progress, thereby maintaining a close oversight of their progress. The governing body has a secure understanding of its role, although the extent to which it holds school leaders to account is variable. School self-evaluation is accurate. Overall, the school has good capacity for improvement because school leaders have a convincing record of sustained success in sometimes challenging circumstances, enabling pupils to make consistently good and often outstanding progress. There is also a clear determination to acknowledge and tackle issues and to sustain the pace of improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Embed and build upon recent improvements in Early Years Foundation Stage provision to ensure that:
 - progress is greater and attainment is raised further across the areas of learning, but particularly in the key areas of communication and literacy and in mathematics
 - all children, particularly those identified as the more able, receive greater challenge in their learning
 - learning opportunities in the outdoor area are better managed and have greater impact.
- Work closely with parents and carers to improve the attendance of the small group of pupils whose current patterns of attendance give cause for concern, so that persistent absence is eliminated and overall school attendance consistently exceeds 94%.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Well-planned and briskly-paced lessons challenge pupils and stimulate learning well. For example, in a Year 1 design and technology lesson, challenging activities, such as using construction brick structures while blindfold or building a straw house with paper shreds, elicited an exceptional level of engagement from pupils who were totally engrossed in their learning. All adults present were effective in promoting pupils' spoken language as they discussed what they were doing. The development of communication skills was also a key feature of a good Year 2 science lesson where pupils were encouraged to justify their decisions around reversible and irreversible changes. In a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils had studied 'Oliver Twist' and were working in role to interview Fagin. The astuteness of the questioning demonstrated pupils' empathy with the feelings of others and also their well-developed vocabulary. In Year 6, pupils were encouraged to engage with the underlying mood of their own writing. They listened to a poet reading his work, discussed the oral devices which

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could be used to draw out the emotional resonances of the piece and, finally, spent time work and rehearsing aloud outdoors before attempting a public presentation of their own poems. This approach, which built well upon pupils' growing maturity, enabled them to achieve quality presentations.

Pupils' personal development is a strength. Pupils demonstrate mature attitudes to learning and to relationships with others. The school council gives pupils an awareness of the democratic process. In addition, they undertake many jobs within the school and have close links with a number of community groups locally. Good social skills and secure basic skills ensure that pupils are satisfactorily prepared for later life. While pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is securely good, the multicultural aspects of cultural development are not so consistently evident.

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	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Pupils are well motivated to learn and relationships within the classroom are consistently good. Staff use questioning effectively to explore pupils' understanding and extend their learning. The curriculum is generally well adapted for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and the effectiveness of support staff has been enhanced through specialist training. Pupil progress meetings, rigorous tracking systems and the further development of assessment practices contribute to the accurate evaluation of pupils' learning needs. Planning to meet individual needs is mostly well judged, so that the proportion of

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

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pupils, from low starting points, who reach the higher level in tests at the end of Year 6 is close to the national average. That said, provision for more-able pupils in some lessons is not so consistently evident. Individual learning targets have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own writing, and that of others, have been effectively developed.

The curriculum is carefully shaped to meet pupils' needs, in that it has a primary focus on the basic skills within English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Cross-curricular skills, particularly in writing, are promoted effectively. These are supported by regular themed days. There are good opportunities for art and design, music and physical development and also for more-able pupils to work on stimulating activities which draw upon the school's external partnerships, including those with a national motor manufacturer. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, however, provision for outdoor learning is not fully developed. Personal, social, health and citizenship education has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. A good range of special events, visits, enrichment activities and satisfactory extra-curricular provision all make an important contribution to pupils' learning and enjoyment.

Staff are very responsive to pupils' needs. A full-time learning mentor helps to raise the attainment of pupils whose circumstances lead the school to consider them vulnerable. Transition arrangements are good. The school works well with external agencies to support pupils who need additional help. There is good practice, evident in case studies, in supporting the health, social and behavioural needs of pupils in challenging circumstances. The breakfast club makes satisfactory provision for the welfare of pupils prior to the start of the school day.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher sets a clear sense of direction for the school and has established an ethos that supports good learning and progress. As a result, provision and progress, particularly in Years 1 to 6, have steadily improved. The senior leadership team is a cohesive group, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The headteacher maintains a detailed oversight of current priorities, supported by regular monitoring of lessons and extremely detailed analysis of performance data. Thorough tracking systems support staff in monitoring pupils' progress. Accurate self-evaluation ensures that the priorities identified in the school development plan are appropriate. Key

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subject leaders monitor progress and check the quality of teaching and learning. The school promotes equality of opportunity well and does not tolerate discrimination of any kind. Highly effective leadership of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for those who speak English as an additional language ensures that these pupils make consistently good progress.

As a whole, the governing body is very supportive. Its members' knowledge and skills in the interpretation of performance data are satisfactory and improving. When necessary, the governing body has shaped the direction of the school. However, they remain rather dependent upon the headteacher's interpretation of information and do not always do enough to challenge the school in relation to the overall direction of progress, or to shape its vision. Statutory responsibilities are met, including those for safeguarding. The governing body ensures that safeguarding practice is good, with thorough record-keeping and consistent application of robust procedures.

Links and partnerships with agencies ensure good support for pupils who have specific needs. Community cohesion is well promoted in relation to diverse faiths and lifestyles through the curriculum so that pupils develop secure understanding of these. The school also provides pupils with good opportunities to contribute to the wider community, especially through local links, which are well developed. However, the promotion of community cohesion is only satisfactory because little has been done to build a closer engagement with other groups nationally or internationally so as to increase pupils' first-hand experiences of others from backgrounds different to their own.

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

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The school has been working, with external support, to improve aspects of its Early Years Foundation Stage provision and environment. This input, together with changes in organisation and day-to-day practice, contributed to a marked rise in children's attainment last year. Welfare arrangements are good and children receive sensitive, caring support. Well-planned induction arrangements contribute to an effective partnership with parents and carers and ensure that children feel safe. Children understand daily routines, behave well and relationships with adults and with other children are good.

Provision is sound, overall. Nursery experience is strongly focused on meeting children's personal and social needs. They gain confidence and develop their personal and social skills well. However, most children still enter Reception at levels well below those expected. Satisfactory teaching supports sound progress overall, although the integration of Nursery and Reception children for much of the day is demanding for the staff, particularly in providing an appropriate level of challenge for the wide range of learning needs within this relatively large group. There are, in consequence, missed opportunities to engage children's attention and promote learning, particularly in the outdoor area. Some aspects of the curriculum, including sounds and letters, are carefully planned for and taught effectively. However, staff do not always make sufficient use of the information they hold on children's progress to inform the next steps in learning. This contributes to a relatively slow pace of learning for some children, particularly the more able. Overall, there is a satisfactory balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities, although some activities, particularly in the outdoor area, do not take sufficient account of children's existing knowledge and consequently lack focus, leading to limited learning. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported satisfactorily.

Observational records provide a mostly accurate picture of children's learning and attainment. The school maintains assessment files which track the progress of individual children and are shared with parents and carers. The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the learning, development and welfare requirements and form a cohesive team.

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

A relatively low proportion of parents and carers responded to the survey. However, almost all of those who did respond are extremely happy with the school and with

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the care it provides for their children. They feel that the school engages well with parents and carers and that their children greatly enjoy attending. One said, 'My child feels very happy, safe and secure at school and says that it feels like home. She cannot wait to tell me everything on the way home.' In the comments appended to the questionnaires, parents and carers were particularly positive about the level and high quality of support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ryedene 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 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 221 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	34	71	13	27	1	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	34	71	12	25	2	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	56	19	40	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	54	20	42	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	63	18	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	48	22	46	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	46	23	48	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)	23	48	21	44	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	23	48	24	50	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	48	23	48	1	2	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	52	21	44	1	2	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	24	50	22	46	1	2	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	63	16	33	2	4	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ryedene Community Primary School, Basildon, SS16 4SY

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, hearing your views and spending time in lessons. We found that yours is a good school. These are the things we liked best.

- You have good attitudes to learning and make good progress – particularly those of you who are older.
- Teaching and learning are good in most lessons.
- You feel very safe in school and you behave well.
- You undertake lots of jobs, make a good contribution to the school and have good links with the local community.
- Staff care for you and support you well.
- You understand the importance of eating healthily and staying fit.
- The provision for visits, clubs and after-school activities is good.
- The leadership of the school and partnerships with other schools are good.

So that you do even better, we have asked the school to do the following things:

- to continue to improve the quality of outdoor learning for the youngest children and to ensure that they are given lots of challenging activities, both outdoors and in the classroom, so that they learn more quickly
- to work closely with parents and carers to improve the attendance of those of you who do not come to school frequently enough.

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

Yours sincerely

George Logan
Lead inspector

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