

Rivington Foundation Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119509
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	379821
Inspection dates	15–16 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Nigel Cromey-Hawke

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	106
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Frank Yates
Headteacher	Mrs L Case
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in 10 lessons, observing five teachers and all classes. They also held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, pupils, parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at a wide range of documentation including; development planning, pupils' work, safeguarding arrangements, self-evaluation records, policies and performance data. Questionnaires from 87 parents and carers, 63 pupils and 15 staff were scrutinised.

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

- Whether achievement is consistently at least good across all key stages.
- How challenging teaching is across all areas of the school.
- Whether the school's self-evaluation practices are well developed and used effectively to identify priorities.

Information about the school

Almost all pupils in this smaller than average-sized rural primary school are of White British heritage and all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, but the number with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well-below average. The school has a wide variety of curriculum awards, as well as the Leading Parent Partnership Award and Eco Silver Award. The school provides a breakfast club each morning. There is an independently managed pre- and after-school facility on site that is subject to a separate report, which can be found on the Ofsted website.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is an outstanding school. It makes a considerable difference to the lives of the young people in its care. The vast majority of parents and carers who returned the inspection survey are highly supportive of its work.

Despite a dip in attainment two years ago, the school has recovered its past levels of outstanding performance in key areas. Children enter the Reception class with basic skills levels that vary year on year, but are broadly typical for their age. They make excellent progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage because of outstanding provision, welfare arrangements and leadership and management. Attainment by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 is high and learning and progress across Key Stages 1 and 2 are good. Progress for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also good, due to the extra support they receive. Achievement is, therefore, outstanding.

Teaching is good overall, with some that is outstanding. Brisk pace and challenge, varied and often-practical activities, effective use of assessment and lively teaching are characteristics of the best lessons. The curriculum is outstanding and matches pupils' needs closely. It provides pupils with many exciting experiences and opportunities to learn about the world. The provision within the curriculum for more-able and talented pupils is a particular strength of the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Behaviour is exemplary, pupils enjoy school thoroughly and, as a result, attendance is high and punctuality first-rate. Pupils are prepared exceptionally well for the next stage in their learning. Care, guidance and support are outstanding, reflecting the high levels of commitment and skill among the staff. Consequently, pupils say they feel extremely safe in school.

Senior leaders and managers provide outstanding direction and drive for the school. Self-evaluation is accurate and has improved the focus upon the key priorities for the school. The priorities are tackled through the school's detailed development plan. Subject leaders are less effective in drawing up action plans for their subjects that are focused sharply on improving outcomes for pupils. They do not monitor the impact of change as closely as they should. Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding, as is partnership working. Governance is good and, given the outcomes, the school provides excellent value for money. Actions to overcome weaknesses have been concerted and largely effective and, as such, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is good.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the leadership and management of subjects by:
 - ensuring subject development plans are focused more sharply on what needs to be done to bring about improvement
 - monitoring and evaluating more closely the impact of actions on raising attainment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

Attainment is high and achievement is outstanding. In the vast majority of lessons, learning is good and sometimes outstanding, especially in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils are well engaged as a result of the good and sometimes excellent teaching. Almost all pupils acquire knowledge, develop understanding and learn and practise their skills well. They are keen to succeed and work at a good pace. Attainment by the time pupils leave in Year 6 has been consistently high in the large majority of cases since the last inspection. Variable progress between classes has been tackled, with more stability in staffing, and pupils have largely regained lost ground. Most pupils now make at least good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress also because of the additional support they receive. Inspection evidence and school tracking data show that attainment for current groups is high and that most pupils are on track to meet the challenging targets the school has set.

Pupils say they feel extremely safe in the school and enjoy their learning. As a result, their attendance is high and behaviour excellent. The new resources for information and communication technology are leading to pupils having highly developed skills in this area. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. The extent to which pupils take part in the daily life of the school is also good, acting as buddies, within the active school and Eco Councils and being involved in the local community. Their involvement in decisions about their own learning is less developed, however. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and is reflected in the warm, friendly and cooperative atmosphere within the school, where learning is valued highly. Consequently, pupils are prepared very well for the next stage in their learning.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
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	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and use of assessment to support learning is good overall. There is some outstanding practice, but also a very small amount that is satisfactory. The school has an excellent support and training programme in place to tackle the variation and ensure consistency in practice. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use this and different teaching methods successfully to make learning interesting and relevant. Challenge for more-able pupils is particularly good, through lively and animated teaching. The use of small groups working together and talking partners within the mixed-age classes is often very well developed, helping promote pupils' language skills and confidence. Pupils have clear targets for improvement, know them well and, as a result, they are highly effective in shaping their learning. Assessment and tracking systems are good and the school is using the information gathered effectively to gain a clear understanding of pupils' progress and achievement, especially of the increasing number of pupils entering the school with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Good marking and feedback are provided and these help pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

The curriculum is outstanding and helps promote high outcomes. Many memorable experiences and rich opportunities for learning are provided. The curriculum is reviewed constantly to meet the changing needs of pupils and provides highly tailored interventions for a wide range of groups of pupils. The school has been at the forefront of successful curriculum design and innovation for some years, especially in the provision for gifted and able pupils. The provision for modern foreign languages, philosophy for children, science and heritage education is extensive and contributes significantly to pupils' understanding of the diversity of the world. The school has gained national recognition for its technology programme. Cross-curricular provision is outstanding and there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities that are very well supported.

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

The care, guidance and support provided by the school are outstanding. The success of the provision is seen in the often-excellent progress pupils make in developing their personal skills by the time they leave the school. The vast majority of pupils enter the school from the pre-school provision, so there is seamless transition, often assisted further by older pupils supporting newcomers and younger children. Many pupils get a good start to their day in school in the very popular breakfast club. The often-considerable practical needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are met well by the school, despite the physical limitations of the school building. The school's work with families, pupils and a wide range of outside agencies to sustain the learning, development and well-being of pupils is deeply embedded at all levels in the school. Attendance is monitored very well and has risen to high levels over the last two years as a result of the school's efforts.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and other leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for the school and have been highly successful in pursuing it. As a result, morale is very high and belief in the school's success permeates all levels of the school. Self-evaluation and monitoring practices by senior leaders are highly developed. The monitoring role of subject leaders is improving, but is not yet as strong as that of the senior leaders and this leads to plans lacking sufficient detail and sharpness of focus. As a result, the implementation of actions and the evaluation of impact are less effective.

The promotion of equal opportunities is good, but the school recognises that it still has work to do in consolidating the past weaker progress in one year group. There is no evidence of discrimination within the school, reflecting the school's high expectations and levels of care and guidance. Helped by a comprehensive audit, the promotion of community cohesion is good. The school is very conscious of its relatively isolated rural location and has extended pupils' understanding of the wider world through the curriculum. Direct contact with pupils from other cultures and ways of life is made through links with schools of different types within the region and there is a 'pen pal' arrangement with a school in Malaysia. The school works extremely well with a wide range of partners to support pupils in their learning and leads significant partnerships for the identification and provision for gifted and able pupils and the use of modern foreign languages in schools. Engagement with parents and carers is also outstanding, reflecting the school's award in this area.

Safeguarding practices are good, with the school managing the potential difficulties of access presented by the elderly building and its woodland setting well. The effective governing body knows the school well through its regular visits and extensive involvement in school life and is increasingly supporting and challenging the school's continued drive for improvement.

These are the grades for the leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
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	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

The school works in an innovative and highly successful partnership with the on-site pre-school provider in combining their Nursery with the school's Reception Year provision. Any children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage setting from outside that arrangement are supported very well through very good induction arrangements. As a result, children settle happily into the very safe environment of the Reception class and make excellent progress across the vast majority of areas of learning. That includes any children who may be vulnerable due to their circumstances and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is because of the excellent teaching and levels of care provided. The teaching of letters and sounds is imaginative and effective and led in one case to children devising written clues for finding a toy elephant hiding in the school grounds. That was followed up by an exciting hunt for the animal, which was linked to observation skills and the recognition of shapes, colours and textures within the natural environment. Children's learning is assessed and recorded very thoroughly and the data used to plan the next stage in their learning. Parents and carers are informed very well about their children's welfare and progress. Many contribute records of their children's home experiences to the excellent learning journey folders that staff compile for every child. Children within the Reception Year are also involved in weekly planning of their learning activities. There has been considerable development of the outdoor learning area since the last inspection and it contributes very successfully to children's learning. By the time they leave, children play and work together very well. All major aspects of provision are outstanding. Leadership and management are excellent ensuring the high quality of provision is sustained and extended. Staff training is outstanding, with the Early Years Foundation Stage leader contributing to area-wide training of other professionals. Safeguarding practices are good, reflecting whole-school practices.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

A large number of parents and carers returned the inspection questionnaire and the very large majority of them are very happy with most aspects of the school. They consider it provides a safe and caring environment for their children and that it is led and managed well. A few expressed concerns over how effectively the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspection evidence indicates that this aspect of the school's work is at least good and that, overall, behaviour is excellent.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rivington Foundation 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 inspector received 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 106 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	74	20	26	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	45	59	29	38	1	1	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	37	49	37	49	2	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	39	51	32	42	4	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	45	59	28	37	3	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	43	57	28	37	4	5	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	55	32	42	1	1	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)	40	53	33	43	3	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	50	34	45	3	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	49	28	37	8	11	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	50	33	43	3	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	47	62	26	34	1	1	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	70	21	28	1	1	1	1

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:	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. ■ 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.



17 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rivington Foundation Primary School, Bolton, BL6 7SE

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave me and my colleague when we inspected your school recently. You were very friendly, polite and enthusiastic about what you do. You told us a lot of interesting things about your school and you are clearly very proud of it.

Rivington Foundation Primary is an outstanding school. You get an excellent start to your learning in the Reception class and make very good progress there as a result of the outstanding teaching and care you receive. The mainly good and sometimes outstanding teaching in the main school and the excellent range of subjects that you cover in lessons mean that you leave at the end of Year 6 with high levels of attainment. Well done! Those of you who find learning difficult make good progress also because of the outstanding levels of care provided by the school. You say you feel very safe in school and you have a well-developed sense of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle and your involvement in school and community life is good. Your behaviour is excellent and your attendance high. Well done!

Your spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is outstanding and, as a result, you are very well prepared for the next stage in your learning. The headteacher, the governing body and staff work very well together to make your school successful, helped by excellent working with partner organisations. I have asked the school to improve even further by including more detail and focus on attainment within the action plans to raise attainment in subjects, so that they can be put into place more effectively. You can help by telling your teachers how best you learn and letting them know if you have any problems. I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Cromey-Hawke
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

