

The Redstart Primary School

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136926
Local authority	N/a
Inspection number	397487
Inspection dates	9–10 May 2012
Lead inspector	Hugh Protherough

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	483
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Eric van den Barselaar
Principal	Suzanne Flack
Date of previous school inspection	N/a
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

Inspection team

Hugh Protherough

Additional inspector

Lynne Bradbury

Additional inspector

Fran Ashworth

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with one day's notice. The inspectors observed teaching in every class with a particular focus on pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Eighteen teachers were observed teaching as well as the work of teaching assistants. Twenty-eight lessons and parts of lessons were visited, totalling 12 hours and 40 minutes. The inspectors met with parents, members of the governing body and members of staff. They spoke with pupils about their work and listened to some read. The inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the academy's work, and looked at its self-evaluation, improvement plan, staff planning, safeguarding arrangements and records of behaviour and racist incidents. Inspectors took account of the 198 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, a proportion that is above the national average.

Information about the school

The academy has increased in size since it was inspected as a previous school and is much larger than the average primary. The great majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs (supported by school action plus or a statement) is below average. This includes those with speech and language and emotional and behavioural difficulties. A larger than average number of pupils are admitted at times other than the start of the school year.

The school was granted academy status in July 2011. The governors manage an early years centre for children aged three or more. This provision was included as part of the inspection.

The 2011 results met the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It is not good because despite sustaining many of the strengths identified in the previous report the quality of teaching is too variable. As a result pupils make only satisfactory progress and their attainment remains broadly average. Schools whose effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit from an inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.
- Results in the Year 6 national tests show that pupils have made satisfactory progress from their starting points and attain standards in English and mathematics that are broadly average. Although current work in Year 6 books shows an improving picture, inspectors' analysis of pupils' work in other year groups and observations of their learning show that progress is not always as rapid elsewhere. However, progress is excellent in Nursery and Reception.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage gives children rich and varied experiences that whet their appetite for learning and prepare them well for Year 1. Elsewhere teaching lacks consistency and despite some pockets of good practice, too much is satisfactory to ensure more rapid progress. This is particularly the case when tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities, or when teachers talk for too long and limit opportunities for independent working.
- Behaviour is exemplary and pupils of all ages show excellent consideration for each other, the staff and visitors to the academy. Without exception pupils say they feel safe and well cared for. They enjoy school and demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning.
- The leadership of teaching and management of performance are satisfactory rather than good because of some weaknesses in the way the academy plans for improvement and checks that plans have been successful. As a result, some things have improved, such as writing, but not all teaching has improved enough. The curriculum is broad and provides particularly well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of teaching across the academy so that it is good in all classes by ensuring:
 - work in lessons is always closely matched to pupils' individual abilities, especially the more able
 - teachers do not talk for too long and slow the pace of learning
 - increased opportunities for pupils to apply their very well-developed personal qualities through independent working.
- Increase the effectiveness of leaders, governors and middle managers by ensuring greater detail in planning for school improvement, so that new initiatives are evaluated with rigour and the extent of success determined by incisive analysis of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Although the majority of children starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage arrive with levels of achievement broadly in line with those expected for their age, the academy's detailed assessments reveal an increasing number do not. This is particularly the case in respect of children's personal, social and emotional skills and communication, language and literacy development. As a result of exemplary provision in both Nursery and Reception classes, children are now making excellent progress across each of the areas of learning. Children work enthusiastically in indoor and outdoor classrooms. They are inquisitive about the world and enjoy practical activities such as growing vegetables. Children speak confidently with visitors and are eager to share their work. Most have made a good start to learning the sounds of letters and are beginning to apply this to simple texts. Those with additional needs or delays in learning are swiftly identified and provision successfully modified to ensure they are helped to catch up.

Although most parents feel that their children are doing well, inspection evidence suggests they could be achieving more. By the end of Year 6 attainment is slightly above average, although the difference is not statistically significant, and pupils make satisfactory progress, similar to pupils nationally. The academy has improved girls' attainment in mathematics. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and work productively, especially when tasks are challenging. For instance, Year 6 pupils responded with skill and maturity when asked to evaluate the quality of each other's writing, making sensible suggestions about how to develop tension within a story. Year 4 pupils working in the Forest School showed excellent interpersonal skills when discussing the dynamics of working as a group and good commitment to a diverse range of tasks well suited to their interests and aptitudes. Pupils achieve less when work is not sufficiently

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challenging for all abilities. For example, although Year 3 pupils had clearly enjoyed the story of *The Twits*, they all faced a similar task to practise the use of connectives. Pupils worked diligently to copy out the start of their sentences, but this took a considerable time and there was limited scope for independent writing, especially for those of higher ability.

By the end of Year 2, standards of reading are slightly above average. Most pupils are able to use a variety of skills to help them with unfamiliar words, for example their knowledge of the sounds of letters (phonics). They know a little about features of books such as contents and index, but are less knowledgeable about authors. Attitudes to reading in Key Stage 2 are positive. By the end of Year 6, pupils are reading an increasing range and variety of texts and talk intelligently about their preferences. Although most are confident in how to search for information on the internet, their knowledge of how to retrieve information from books is less secure.

The academy has secure systems to identify any pupil with additional needs. A range of 'catch-up' activities supports the progress of those who are struggling to read, write or count, and their progress over the year is satisfactory.

Quality of teaching

Parents and carers have confidence in the way their children are taught. Inspection evidence indicates that teaching in Years 1 to 6 is more variable than in Nursery and Reception and is satisfactory overall.

A key strength of the teaching in Early Years Foundation Stage is the rigorous approach taken by staff in assessing the levels at which the children are working and identifying precisely the next steps they need to take in their learning. Adults observe carefully and question astutely. As a result, children are consistently challenged and make brisk progress across each of the areas of learning.

In Years 1 to 6, teaching is never less than satisfactory because teachers have successfully established a positive ethos that encourages pupils to work hard. Lesson planning ensures that pupils are clear about what they are expected to learn. In the good lessons the openings are brisk and well paced, with teachers frequently making effective use of new technologies that capture pupils' interest. Teachers' questioning probes pupils' understanding and encourages them to speak at length.

Staff training has included a focus on the need to ensure work is always closely matched to pupils' abilities. This is not yet a consistent feature in all lessons so more-able pupils are sometimes marking time. While most teachers strike a balance between talk and independent working, in a minority of lessons they talk for too long so learning slows and pupils do well to remain attentive. The curriculum is effectively enhanced by activities such as Forest School but the opportunities for independent working provided here are less in evidence in lessons in classrooms.

Teachers plan appropriately for disabled pupils and those with special educational

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needs. They benefit from the work of teaching assistants, some of whom are skilled in supporting their specific learning needs within the class. A variety of additional provision, including one-to-one teaching and a nurture group, provides particularly well for their social and emotional needs. The impact on their academic progress is satisfactory.

Marking and feedback to pupils have improved since the last inspection, especially in upper Key Stage 2 where most pupils know the levels they are working at and what they need to do to improve. There are examples of good oral feedback in Key Stage 1, but the marking of work is less consistent.

In Reception, the teaching of phonics is outstanding because the sessions are lively, brisk and well matched to the range of children's abilities. In Years 1 and 2, although pupils are grouped by ability, numbers are large. Teachers do their best to make the sessions enjoyable, for instance by encouraging pupils to spot specific sounds within a story. They model sounds accurately and have a secure knowledge of what needs to be taught and when. However, group activities do not always provide pupils with enough challenge, especially the more able, and then the pace of learning slows.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The staff team work extremely effectively with pupils in establishing consistent expectations for considerate behaviour and mutual respect. Older pupils are very effectively encouraged to help the younger ones at break and lunchtimes and take pride in accepting this additional responsibility. As a result pupils' behaviour is exemplary. Pupils have extremely positive attitudes to learning and show high levels of engagement, courtesy and cooperation both in class and around the school. Those with special educational needs, for example speech and language or emotional and behavioural difficulties, are successfully supported and contribute positively to the school community. Pupils who join the academy part-way through their education are welcomed and helped to settle very well.

Most parents and carers hold highly positive views about behaviour and safety at the academy. The academy's records show instances of misbehaviour and bullying of any type are extremely rare. Pupils reflect intelligently about behaviour around the school. They are confident about how to respond to inappropriate behaviour and trust the staff to take appropriate action if they ever feel concerned or worried.

Conversations with pupils and their questionnaire responses show that they feel highly secure at school. They understand potentially unsafe situations very clearly and have a strong awareness of how to keep each other safe. Over the past year attendance has risen and is above the national average.

Leadership and management

The academy responded positively to the previous inspection report. The Early Years Foundation Stage has continued to improve and provision is now outstanding. The

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attainment gap between reading and writing has been successfully addressed. Marking is more consistent, especially in Years 4 to 6 where pupils regularly write responses to their teachers' comments. These improvements demonstrate a committed response and the capacity to improve further. However, the profile of pupils' progress remains uneven as a result of inconsistencies in teaching. Senior staff accurately evaluate the quality of individual lessons, but staff training and performance management have yet to ensure teaching that is consistently good enough to sustain good progress in all classes.

Plans for school improvement identify appropriate initiatives and the overall profile of leadership and management, including governance, is satisfactory. However, some planning lacks sufficient detail. The way that success is to be measured is not clear enough, especially in terms of the impact strategies have on pupils' learning and progress. This in turn impedes the capacity of middle managers and individual staff members to be clear about what success looks like and how they are to be held to account. Middle leaders are knowledgeable and have benefitted from training specific to their subject and management needs. They can point to successful developments but again are not always able to demonstrate their impact on raising attainment. They recognise this and are rightly making changes to ensure more consistent approaches to assessment.

The governing body ensures that the academy takes effective action to promote equality and eliminate discrimination. Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs and pupils whose home circumstances have made them vulnerable are swiftly identified and supported. The headteacher and staff work productively with other agencies, for example education welfare, to support the specific needs of individual pupils and their families. The academy continues to adopt thorough and effective approaches to all aspects of risk assessment and the safeguarding of pupils.

The curriculum is broad, balanced and satisfactorily matched to pupils' needs and interests. It provides particularly well for pupils' personal development. Activities, for example Forest School and Redstart University, enhance pupils' learning and are further supported by an excellent variety of extra-curricular activities which provide well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



11 May 2012

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Redstart Primary School, Chard TA20 1SD

Thank you very much for your friendly welcome during the recent inspection of your school. It was a pleasure to meet you all and to see your school community getting on so well together, even during the wet lunchtimes! Thank you to those who filled in questionnaires or talked to us. You told us you feel safe and we agree that the staff take excellent care of you. We think that the way you behave, respect each other and talk intelligently about the things that are important to you is outstanding.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are doing really well. You make the most of all the exciting opportunities that the adults provide for you. We know this because we saw you working really hard: weeding the garden, looking for newts in the pond and sharing your reading and writing. Thank you for telling me about the dinosaurs, showing me where Chard is on the map and especially for singing your aeroplane song so professionally.

Those of you in Years 1 to 6 benefit from lots of exciting activities, for example The Forest School and Redstart University. Since the last time the inspectors visited your academy, Year 6 results in the national tests have continued to be slightly above the national average. Having looked at your work and watched and spoken with you in lessons, we think you can do even better, so we have judged your academy to be satisfactory rather than better. In order for this to happen we have asked the teachers to make sure that the work they set you is not too easy, nor too hard, but always gets you thinking! We want them to avoid talking for too long so you start doing your own work more quickly, and to make sure that you have more opportunities to work independently.

The Principal, governors and senior staff have lots of exciting plans to make the school even better. We have asked them make sure that they keep a close check on how these developments are helping you to make faster progress in your learning.

We hope you enjoy the remainder of the summer term.

Yours sincerely

Hugh Protherough
Lead inspector

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