

Radcliffe Hall CE/Methodist Controlled Primary School

Bury Street, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 2GB

Inspection dates 3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Notice to improve	4
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The issues raised at the last inspection have been successfully resolved.
- Throughout the school, pupils' progress in reading, writing and mathematics has improved rapidly over the past 18 months, successfully reversing a history of underachievement.
- The quality of teaching is good overall with some that is outstanding.
- Pupils behave well, have good attitudes to learning and feel safe.
- Leaders and managers, including members of the governing body, have resolutely focused on improving the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.
- Attainment is rising.
- Leadership and management, including governance, have successfully steered the school out of a notice to improve to a judgement of good. The quality of governance has improved.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough of the teaching is outstanding.
- The re-organised provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 1 has led to a lack of clarity in linking play-based activities to direct teaching sessions.
- Despite the good progress made, pupils' attainment in writing, is not high enough.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed all teachers teach. Most lesson observations lasted an hour; with inspectors observing learning, scrutinising pupils' work, looking at pupils' progress information and talking to pupils. Inspectors talked directly with approximately 50 pupils in small groups and one large group.
- Meetings were held with the Chair of the Governing Body, the headteacher, deputy headteacher, middle managers, all teachers and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and heard pupils from Years 1, 2, 4 and 6 read.
- The team looked at a range of the school's documentation, including safeguarding arrangements, attendance data, strategic improvement plans, minutes of governing body meetings and professional management arrangements.
- Parents' views were taken into account from six respondents to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and from the school's analysis of an internal parental questionnaire. Inspectors spoke to parents in the school playground at the start and end of the school day. Responses from 14 staff questionnaires were taken into account.

Inspection team

Eileen Mulgrew, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Neil Dixon

Additional inspector

Robert Pye

Additional inspector

Full report

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

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized primary school.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is below average, as is the percentage who speak English as an additional language. A variety of languages are represented in the school.
- A third of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs who are supported by school action is about average. The proportion supported by school action plus or a statement is slightly above the average.
- The school meets the current government floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to outstanding by:
 - ensuring all staff know what the key features of outstanding teaching are
 - using best practice on-site to model outstanding features to colleagues
 - provide training on the use of effective questioning techniques
 - embedding the recently revised curriculum.
- Raise standards further in writing by:
 - maintain the good rate of progress throughout the school
 - ensuring high quality play-based activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 flow from direct teaching sessions and include more opportunities for early writing.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good.

- Since the last inspection pupils' achievement has improved at Radcliffe Hall primary school.
- Unvalidated results show that pupils in Year 6 who left the school in 2012 achieved well in reading, writing and mathematics, due to accelerated progress over the course of the year. All pupils in this year group made the expected progress for their age with a significant proportion making better than expected progress. From low starting points this represented outstanding progress.
- As a result, there was a rise in attainment. In English and mathematics, 88.5% reached the expected Level 4 while half of the year group reached the higher Level 5+ in English and almost two thirds in mathematics. This reversed the trend of previous underachievement.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs, pupils in receipt of the pupil premium and minority ethnic pupils achieved similarly well. This reflects the school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all groups of pupils.
- For all current year groups progress is good. Progress in reading is strongest, followed by mathematics, then writing.
- Pupils enjoy reading and visiting the newly re-furnished library which is stocked with books which interest pupils. One pupil confidently used the reference section to locate a book by his favourite author. A few older girls commented that they liked to reach the target of reading five pages a night and recording their thoughts in their 'reading journals.'
- Pupils' mathematical language has improved and older pupils can recall number facts more accurately and pupils enjoy problem-solving activities.
- Pupils' handwriting and spelling skills are benefitting from the focus on these two aspects and pupils' workbooks show the increased pride and care pupils take in their work. Work on developing pupils' vocabulary is contributing to the improvement in writing. Despite the good progress made, attainment in writing is not high enough.
- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage focuses on cultivating children's personal skills and providing opportunities for speaking and listening, creating a solid base for the development of early reading. However, there is scope for pupils to use early writing skills across all areas of learning.
- Pupils' skills in reading, writing and mathematics together with their social and personal qualities mean they are well-prepared for the next stage of their education.

The quality of teaching is good.

- The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is good with some that is outstanding. The school has responded well to all aspects of practice that needed improvement.
- As a result, most pupils and groups of pupils, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, and those for whom the pupil premium provides support are making good progress.
- Very good relationships between adults and pupils ensure that there is a positive climate for learning. Staff have successfully created attractive learning environments with 'working walls' which display aids to support pupils in their learning.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Good-quality teaching and the well-planned curriculum encourages the development of skills across all subjects. Although questioning techniques are used to reshape tasks and probe pupils' understanding, there is an opportunity for teachers to use this method even more skilfully.
- Lessons are well-planned and structured with pupils' differing abilities in mind. Information on

pupils' progress from the 'assertive mentoring' technique is used to match activities to the needs of pupils. Each pupil discusses their progress, behaviour, attitudes and attendance with the teacher and then sets targets for improvement.

- As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the next steps in their learning, the targets they are working on and older pupils know the National Curriculum level they are working at.
- Teaching assistants work closely with teachers to ensure the needs of all pupils are met. Well-matched and targeted intervention programmes ensure that pupils who are not making the progress they should be supported to successfully catch up on their learning.
- Marking of pupils' work is regular and affirms their efforts. The system of using 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' has become embedded into the school and pupils engage with this process. Marking is linked to the learning objective so pupils know exactly what they have achieved in a piece of work and how to improve it further.
- Provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Year 1 has been recently re-organised. This has led to a lack of clarity about how children's independent learning activities link to the direct-teaching sessions.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good.

- Pupils are very sociable, friendly and welcoming. They express positive attitudes towards their learning and their school, considering that the staff are there 'to look after us'. They are polite, courteous and know right from wrong.
- Inspectors observed pupils working and playing well together, both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils are aware of the wide diversity in the ethnicity among their friends and respect differences readily. As a result, the school is a harmonious community.
- Pupils understand the code of conduct (displayed in each classroom) 'as it helps to keep us safe'. They recognise that the rules are based on 'respect' and how to care for each other. Posters and sayings, such as 'show racism the red card' remind pupils of the school's expectations.
- Almost all pupils talked to during the inspection indicated that most pupils behave well most of the time. A few pupils felt that some pupils could misbehave sometimes but felt confident that the teacher would sort it out by using the school's well-understood behaviour policy. Pupils appreciated the rewards such as stickers, certificates and prizes they receive for good behaviour.
- Pupils confirm that they feel safe in school. Through the planned curriculum and assemblies, pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying, including racist and cyber bullying.
- Pupils talked to during the inspection consider incidences of bullying are rare. Pupils explained that they would help each other to sort out worries, know what to do if they are being bullied and confident that any issues would be dealt with effectively.
- A couple of parents and carers who responded to Parent View were not convinced that behaviour or bullying issues are sorted effectively. Other parents and carers, who talked to inspectors, and the responses to the school's own survey (July 2012), supported pupils' views. The school's detailed records provide clear evidence of the effective strategies that are used to tackle any incidents of poor behaviour or bullying that may occur.
- Attendance is average but improving.

The leadership and management are good.

- The school lost no time in responding to the 'notice to improve' judgement given at the last inspection. The rapid improvement in all aspects of the school's work is a direct result of the commitment and determination of the headteacher to raise standards and eradicate

underachievement. This vision is shared by governors and staff.

- The systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching has paid dividends. Senior leaders observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' workbooks and regularly analyse pupils' progress information to inform their judgements. They provide individual feedback so staff know what to improve and follow-up visits are made to evaluate success.
 - Rigorous performance management arrangements coupled with well-targeted training and support has raised staff expectations. They want to improve and have engaged fully with local authority-sourced training. Staff are held accountable for pupils' achievement through regular meetings about their progress.
 - Leaders and managers know what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Strategic planning, which is well-informed by the detailed analysis of a range of data, steers the school forward. Middle leaders take responsibility for operational plans which indicate the precise action to be taken. The enhancement of middle leader roles has been recognised as an area to develop further over this year.
 - The well-organised curriculum is designed with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Specific themes are used to link subjects together in a meaningful way and provide opportunities for the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum is enriched with, for example, a variety of clubs and residential visits.
 - The school celebrates its rich diversity; discrimination is not tolerated, and fosters good relations with parents, carers and the local community. For example, during the inspection pupils attended a harvest festival at the local Church and collected gifts for the homeless.
 - Good partnerships with parents and external agencies support pupils' learning. For example:
 - a local business provides volunteers to hear pupils read
 - parents and carers willingly painted the library
 - engagement with the good local authority support in the drive to improve achievement.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - has made a significant contribution to the recent improvement in the school
 - ensures that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements
 - increasingly holds senior leaders to account makes level-headed decisions on the allocation of finances, including how the pupil premium funding is spent.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105330
Local authority	Bury
Inspection number	385846

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	290
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Eileen Jones
Headteacher	Reverend Denise Luke
Date of previous school inspection	8 June 2011
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