

# Rode Heath Primary School

Heath Avenue, Rode Heath, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST7 3RY

**Inspection dates** 30 April–1 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well in all subjects. Standards reached by pupils in both English and mathematics are above the national average.
- Teaching is typically at least good, and much is outstanding. The quality of teaching is improving.
- Teachers' marking is very detailed, and clearly shows pupils how to improve their work.
- Pupils with disabilities or who have special educational needs are well taught and supported, so they make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of interesting lessons, visits and other experiences.
- Reading is taught successfully. Pupils enjoy reading for pleasure.
- Pupils have the chance to write at length in different subjects, so they develop their writing skills very well.
- Pupils enjoy school, feel safe and behave exceptionally well. They are proud of their school, and want to do well.
- The school is well led and managed by the able headteacher, who is well supported by effective senior leaders. They have a clear idea of how to improve the school, and they are successfully doing so.
- The governing body is effective in holding the school to account, and in challenging school leaders to improve the school further.
- The school has excellent relationships with parents, who are highly supportive of the school and its leaders.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small amount of teaching still requires improvement. In some lessons more-able pupils are not given work that is hard enough, or the chance to learn for themselves by investigating topics without help from the teacher.
- School leaders have not, in the past, checked the progress of all groups of pupils precisely enough to give the help needed so that all groups of pupils can make rapid progress. As a result, rates of progress have fluctuated.
- The school does not plan well enough for pupils to develop a knowledge and understanding of people from different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 14 part-lessons, including three which were joint observations carried out with the headteacher. All classes and teachers were seen. Inspectors also carried out a number of shorter visits to observe pupils at work. They attended an assembly, listened to children read and looked at pupils' work.
- Meetings were held with staff, including school leaders and other teachers with positions of responsibility. Inspectors met with two groups of pupils, and talked informally to pupils at break and lunchtimes. Inspectors also met with governors and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke to a number of parents informally, and met several at a parents' breakfast held in school. Inspectors took into account the 102 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire of parents (Parent View), and looked at the results of the school's own survey of parents. They also considered the 17 staff questionnaires they received.
- Inspectors looked at documents including the school's plans for improvement, records of the quality of teaching, school information on pupils' progress and nationally published results. They looked at records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and at how well the school keeps pupils safe.
- All pupils from the Reception class and from Year 1 were out of school, on a visit, on the first day of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Mike Phipps, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Steve Rigby

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage class for Reception-aged children.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is lower than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.) Almost all of these supported pupils in this school are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than average. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school at times other than the start of the Reception year is above average.
- A privately run breakfast club and after-school club operates on the school site. It is separately inspected, so it was not included in this inspection.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher was appointed in September 2011.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching so that more is outstanding by ensuring that lessons are planned in which:
  - more-able pupils are given tasks which are difficult enough to make them think hard
  - pupils are given the chance to learn by exploring and investigating topics for themselves, without being directed by the teacher.
- Check carefully the progress made by different groups of pupils in each subject and year group so that help can be given to enable all pupils to make rapid progress.
- Provide more chances for pupils to learn about people from different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds, so they are better prepared to live in a culturally diverse society.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Achievement across the school is good. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in a range of subjects.
- Children start school with levels of skills and understanding broadly in line with those expected for children of their age. They make good progress in the Reception class, so that by the time they start Key Stage 1 their skills are above the levels expected for their age.
- Pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is at least good, and is sometimes outstanding. By the end of Year 2 their standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above national figures, often significantly so.
- The standards reached by pupils in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 are above national averages, often significantly so.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well taught and supported. Any problems are identified early and extra help is quickly given. This means these pupils achieve well and make good and sometimes outstanding progress.
- Pupils are encouraged to write at length in different subjects, for example in history and science as well as in literacy lessons. As a result, they develop their writing skills well, and standards of writing across the school are high.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make) is a strong feature of the school, with Year 1 pupils performing better than their peers nationally. Pupils are encouraged to read books which are carefully matched to their ability. As a result, standards of reading are high. Most pupils read well by Year 2. They enjoy reading for pleasure, and by Year 6 can talk about their favourite books and authors.
- Pupils achieve well in mathematics. The proportions of pupils who reach and exceed the expected levels are both significantly higher than national figures.
- The number of pupils supported by the pupil premium in each year group is very small. Many of them are also disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Across the school pupils known to be eligible for free school meals achieve standards which are higher than similar pupils nationally. They are around two terms behind the other pupils in school in English, and around one term behind in mathematics. This gap is closing steadily, underlining the school's effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Pupils' achievement is not outstanding because of inconsistencies in the progress made by some groups of pupils in certain subjects and years. For example, in 2012 boys made less progress in reading than girls. In 2011 fewer pupils reached the higher levels in mathematics than in English. Rates of progress are slower in the early years of Key Stage 2 than in other year groups in school.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is typically at least good, and is often outstanding. Much teaching seen by inspectors was outstanding, but a small minority of lessons observed had teaching which required improvement.
- Teachers take great care with their marking, which is consistently good across all years. Pupils benefit from helpful and detailed comments that clearly show them how to improve their work.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good. In one lesson, Reception-aged children made excellent progress in linking letters and sounds because they responded very positively to the teacher and to the teaching assistant, in a very well-planned session using excellent resources.
- In the best lessons, tasks are matched very precisely to the individual needs and abilities of pupils. In an outstanding mathematics lesson on percentages, for example, Year 6 pupils worked

in three groups. Lower-ability pupils had work that was planned for them individually, middle-ability pupils effectively practised and developed their skills while higher-ability pupils used their skills to solve a problem. As a result, all pupils made excellent progress.

- Teachers often use questioning very effectively. In an outstanding Year 2 mathematics lesson, for instance, the teacher's skilful questions very successfully probed and supported pupils' understanding of halving and doubling shapes, objects and numbers.
- In the best lessons pupils are encouraged to think hard. In a Year 5 science lesson, for example, pupils made outstanding progress working in groups to investigate how plants and animals can be classified. Pupils were able to explain and discuss their ideas and were keen to respond to the teacher's searching questions.
- In some lessons where the pace of learning is slower, pupils, and especially the more able, are not given work that is hard enough. In a Year 4 English lesson, for example, more-able pupils had to listen to a long explanation and were not able to move on quickly enough to think for themselves and work on their own. This limited their progress.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are outstanding

- Pupils say they are happy at school, a view strongly supported by parents. Pupils are extremely proud of their school and are keen to learn. They are considerate, and treat adults and each other with respect.
- Attitudes to learning are always very positive. Pupils are highly motivated to succeed. They enjoy learning new things, answering questions and offering opinions in class. They cooperate well, and can concentrate on their work for extended periods of time.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school is exemplary. Movement around the school is calm and orderly. Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong because the school promotes their moral development very well. Pupils understand what behaviour is expected of them, and respond well to the school's system of rewards. The school's consequences relating to bad behaviour are rarely needed.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel safe in school. They are taught how to keep themselves safe, and have a good understanding of potential dangers posed, for example, by the internet.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying such as name-calling and cyber-bullying. They told inspectors that bullying in school is very rare. School records confirm this. Pupils know who to report bullying to, and are confident it will be dealt with effectively if they tell an adult.
- Pupils' attendance is above average and improving. Very few pupils are persistently absent or late.
- Parents are confident that their children will be well looked after. They rightly think that pupils' behaviour in school is exemplary. Questionnaires indicate that staff also feel that pupils' behaviour is excellent.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The school is well led and managed by an able and ambitious leadership team. Its members know the school well, and have a clear idea of what needs to be improved to make the school outstanding. As a result, the quality of teaching is rising and the school is improving.
- Systems for managing teachers' performance have been used well to raise the quality of teaching. These are closely linked to teachers' salary progression.
- Teachers in charge of key subjects are effective in raising the standard of teaching and pupils' achievement in their subjects.
- The school has excellent relationships with parents. Almost all speak very highly of the school and its leaders.
- The school's curriculum provides pupils with a wide range of interesting lessons, visits and other experiences. It meets the needs of different pupils well, and lets them develop their information

and communication technology, literacy and numeracy skills across all subjects. There is a good range of clubs and activities for pupils at lunchtime and after school.

- School leaders are committed to equality of opportunity. They make sure that discrimination is not tolerated.
- Extra funding from the pupil premium has been spent effectively on one-to-one tuition, on additional teaching assistant support and on making sure that supported pupils can take part in trips and residential visits.
- The school has received a limited level of support from the local authority, as the school was judged to be outstanding at its last inspection. The local authority feels that school leaders have strong capacity to improve the school further. Inspectors also judge this to be the case.
- The school does not plan in enough detail how to teach pupils about people from different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. This means that some pupils are not as well prepared as they could be to live and work in a culturally diverse society.
- School leaders have not in the past checked the progress of all groups of pupils precisely enough. This meant that the help given to pupils was not always effective in enabling all groups to make consistently rapid progress. School leaders are aware of this, and are now checking pupils' progress more carefully.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are ambitious to improve the school. They have a good understanding of what is happening in school, and of the quality of teaching. They have a working knowledge of how teachers' performance is managed and how this is linked to their salary progression. They have a clear idea of the school's strengths and its areas for improvement, but are not greatly involved in setting the school's priorities for improvement. The governing body is effective in holding the school to account, and in challenging school leaders to improve the school further. They are increasingly well informed about the performance of the school compared to other schools nationally. Governors oversee the budget well and know how extra funds from the pupil premium are spent. They are keen to improve their skills and several governors have undertaken further training.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	111159
<b>Local authority</b>	Cheshire East
<b>Inspection number</b>	413264

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	191
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Gregory
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carl Leech
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 May 2007
<b>Telephone number</b>	01270 685320
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