

Raddlebarn Primary School

Gristhorpe Road, Birmingham, B29 7TD

Inspection dates 7–8 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because they are well taught by well trained staff who know how to get the best out of every child.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school. They make good progress from their starting points because they are, in most lessons, given work that is demanding and makes them think hard.
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 has improved for three years in a row as a result of improvements in teaching.
- Most teaching is good across the school, and teachers usually keep a close check on pupils' understanding.
- Pupils are courteous and well behaved. Good manners and considerate behaviour are taught well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and behaviour is very well managed by all teachers in the school.
- Pupils feel happy and very safe. This view is fully supported by parents and carers.
- The headteacher, the senior team, and governors are fully committed to providing an excellent education for all pupils. Their actions have raised standards and improved the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work set does not always get the best out of pupils because just occasionally it is either too easy or too hard. When this happens, pupils' progress slows.
- Teachers' marking does not always lead to prompt improvements in pupils' work.
- Teachers do not always make the best use of extra adults employed in their classrooms.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 25 lessons, four of which were jointly observed with senior leaders. In addition, inspectors made other short visits to lessons and to learning areas in the course of their observations of pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They also listened to pupils read.
- Inspectors took account of the 123 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke informally to parents as they brought their children to school.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, governors, senior and subject leaders, and teaching staff. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority.
- The information from 21 staff questionnaires was taken into consideration.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school, and looked at pupils' books and at a number of documents, including the school's own data, self-evaluation and monitoring of how well pupils are making progress. They also checked planning documents, records of checks on the quality of teaching, and records of behaviour, attendance and punctuality, as well as documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Simon Blackburn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Stuart Ransom	Additional Inspector
Lynda Townsend	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is much larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for support through the pupil premium additional funding is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average but the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is average.
- About half of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, a higher proportion than average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of pupils who join the school at times other than at the start of a school year or Key Stage is larger than average.
- The school runs a before and after school club, called 'Funshine', which provides extended learning and snacks to children. This was part of the inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and achievement to outstanding by ensuring that:
 - pupils are always given activities which are set at the best level to accelerate their progress and that there are no occasions when work is too hard or too easy for them
 - teachers' marking leads to improvements in pupils' work
 - teaching assistants support pupils' learning more effectively.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and her senior team provide strong leadership that inspires the staff team to work together to help pupils succeed. As a result, there is a strong sense of purposefulness throughout the school.
- The regular and diligent checks on the quality of teaching carried out by senior and middle leaders has consolidated its quality since the previous inspection. Observations of teaching are checked closely against work in pupils' books and assessment information to ensure judgements are accurate. The school is confident in its accuracy of assessment because its judgements are checked by the local authority and validated by other external agencies and teachers from local schools.
- Leaders make sure every pupil has an equal chance to succeed, whatever their ability or background. Senior and middle leaders work with teachers to carefully track the progress of all pupils. These pupil progress meetings are rigorous examinations of what has gone well and what has not worked so successfully in the teaching for groups of pupils and individuals, and particularly for those pupils who speak English as an additional language and those entitled to additional funding. Teachers take responsibility for compiling the information for these meetings and take the lead in selecting appropriate interventions. This has led to faster progress for these pupils.
- Pupils are grouped by ability in mathematics and this helps teachers to set harder work for the more able. In English, mixed ability groups are used but the individual targets pupils have ensure they know exactly what they are aiming at in their learning.
- Senior and middle leaders have a clear understanding about what is going well and what needs to improve. They evaluate the work carried out to help pupils catch up in their learning very effectively to make sure it is leading to quick improvements.
- Leaders set staff challenging targets and help teachers meet them through a wide range of training opportunities.
- The senior leadership team has been very successful in developing the skills of the faculty and phase leaders. They have produced clear and well focused improvement plans to improve teaching, assessment and behaviour and they regularly monitor the progress they are making towards measurable goals.
- Pupils who join the school in the middle of the year or key stage make an excellent start because welcome and induction processes are very effective. Inspectors confirmed the comments of parents who felt that pupils for whom English is an additional language are particularly well supported by their induction programme and are rapidly integrated into the school and able to learn effectively in all their subjects.
- There is a wide range of subjects taught in the school and the school is well on with developing new plans for assessing pupils' progress. Pupils' own questions about topics shape what they will learn and the 'hands-on' approach that teachers take. For example pupils made gas masks to experience life during the First World War and models of volcanoes for homework in geography.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well through the good examples set by staff, links with the community, sharing each others' cultures and work in lessons and assemblies. The school actively promotes respect and tolerance, fosters good relations and ensures there is no discrimination. Good manners are promoted very strongly and successfully from when children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet current requirements. Adults working in school are checked for their suitability and training on how to keep the pupils safe is up to date.

- Most parents who responded to Parent View or who spoke to inspectors as they dropped their children off for school were positive about every aspect of their child’s education and care at the school. A number of parents were particularly keen to tell inspectors how the school had gone out of it’s way to help parents deal with settling–in difficulties or support their family through difficult times.
- Sports premium funding is spent effectively in a number of effective ways; teachers’ confidence in teaching PE skills is developed as they work with sports coaches to teach their classes, new sports have been introduced which have increased the number of girls and pupils from minority ethnic groups taking part in exercise and the school has ensured that all pupils have learnt to swim.
- The ‘Funshine’ before and after school club is well led and managed and provides a safe and spacious additional learning opportunity to children. Children are encouraged to get involved in a wide range of activities including art and construction, completing homework and riding bikes on the playground. Supervision levels are good and the staff have the correct food hygiene and first aid qualifications.
- The local authority supports new teachers in the school effectively and ensures that senior and middle leaders have the opportunity to meet with other leaders from local schools to share best practice.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body’s checks on the work of the school are well organised and systematic. Governors engage in regular dialogue with faculty and phase leaders as well as external consultants and local authority advisers. They have a good understanding of the data about pupils’ achievement and question leaders rigorously about areas that cause them concern. Governors play an active role in setting the strategic direction of the school and contribute to the school’s self-evaluation through their visits to the school. They know about the quality of teaching and have supported the headteacher in making difficult decisions in eradicating weaker teaching. They use their individual expertise well to support the school with various projects, including overseeing the building of a new teaching block. The governors ensure school funds, including the primary school sports funding and pupil premium, are used effectively to help pupils achieve well.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Consequently, lunchtimes and breaks are very pleasant social occasions.
- Most parents who have responded to Parent View agree that the school makes sure that its children are well behaved and the pupils themselves agree. Pupils feel that the systems the school has put in place to improve behaviour and promote friendly relations have been very successful. For example, Year 6 pupils were confident that the ‘friendship bench’ works and stops children being lonely and that the ‘worry box’ that is opened by the learning mentor ensures that their views are listened to.
- Staff are also very positive about the behaviour of pupils and the consistent approach taken by all adults in the school has ensured that behaviour has improved over time. There has been a reduction in recorded behavioural incidents and a large reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions over the last two years.
- Pupils love coming to school and attendance has improved over the last two years as a result. The school works very well with families to reduce the number of long term absences.
- Pupils’ attitudes to learning are also very positive. They listen well and respond to teachers’ instructions. However, pupils sometimes lose concentration during lessons, particularly when the work set for them is at the wrong level.

Safety

- The school’s work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. Safeguarding policies are comprehensive and procedures are fully endorsed by all members of staff.

- Pupils have a very well developed awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. They understand fully the different forms of bullying, including the use of discriminatory language, how to prevent them and what to do if they occur.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, including when using the internet. They are able to assess the risk associated with their actions. Regular lessons on rail and road safety and 'stranger danger' enable them to recognise the dangers and explain how to stay safe.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Their use of questioning is a particular strength. Teachers use questions to check and develop pupils' understanding and are not afraid to probe and wait for answers. The pupils too have the expectation that they will be asked a question that is going to be challenging and that they must do their best to answer.
- Questions often make pupils think hard about feelings and support their social and moral development. One example, among several, was in Year 6 when questions pursued pupils' views about how evacuees must have felt during the war. Insisting on grammatically correct answers improved pupils' literacy skills.
- Teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage is consistently good and children make good progress as a result. They also benefit from excellent learning environments and stimulating themes within which all adults encourage them to talk about their learning.
- Teachers use resources well to help pupils understand their learning, particularly in mathematics where they pupils enjoy manipulating objects to help in their problem solving. Teachers are skilled at providing worked examples that help pupils to structure their own work and apply their understanding to new situations.
- The school has a marking policy that is used consistently by all teachers. When it is most effective, pupils are given clear next steps to improve their work and the time to complete these in class. They use a different coloured pen to do this so the teacher can see that they have used their advice. Sometimes, the instructions given are not clear enough for the pupil to make a start on the correction or changes or the comment does not demand any additional work from the pupil. As a result, improvements are not made.
- Teachers know their pupils well and usually use assessment and marking information to plan lessons that challenge them with difficult tasks and activities. Occasionally, this is not the case and pupils are given work that is either too difficult or too easy for them and as a result they make slower progress.
- The support given to pupils who speak English as an additional language is very well planned and has a rapid impact on their ability to join in with lessons and enjoy their learning in a range of subjects. Teachers have developed good strategies to help these pupils and also make sure that pupils make friends quickly and share their culture and life experiences.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and those who receive additional government funding are generally supported well in their learning by good quality planning to meet their needs and help from other adults in the classroom. Very occasionally, teaching assistants are not used well to support pupils' learning and this slows down progress.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong which means they are able to plan learning which capture the pupils' interest and imagination. The teaching of phonics (letters and the sounds they make) is consistently good. Pupils are helped to apply what they have learned to their reading and writing in other subjects.
- Parents recognise the good quality of teaching in the school.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress across the school.
- When children start school they have skills that are below what is typically expected for their age. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the end of Reception are well prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 have improved for three years in a row and in 2014 were above national averages for the first time. At Key Stage 2, following a dip in achievement in 2013, results improved again in 2014. Pupils made better progress over the Key Stage in reading, writing and mathematics than in the previous year.
- The school's results of the national screening check in phonics (letters and the sounds they make) have improved rapidly over time. While results in 2013 were below the national average for disadvantaged pupils and for boys, the most recent phonics scores are higher than the national averages.
- The school is successfully narrowing the gap in attainment between pupils eligible for the pupil premium funding and other pupils. There are currently gaps in performance of approximately three terms in mathematics, two terms in reading and one term in writing at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2013, disadvantaged pupils were 4 terms behind other pupils in the school in mathematics and about 2 terms behind in reading and writing. Compared to all pupils nationally they were 4 terms behind in mathematics, 3 terms behind in reading and 1 term behind in writing. The funding is used to provide smaller groups for focused teaching in Year 6 as well as one-to-one teaching and the support of a learning mentor.
- The most able pupils make good progress by the end of Year 6 and the proportion achieving the highest Level 6 (the standard of a 14-year-old) is in line with the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. . These pupils respond well to activities that make them think hard and solve difficult problems, both on their own and in groups, and the school caters for these needs well.
- Tracking data for pupils currently in the school shows that pupils in all year groups are making good progress.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs are successfully meeting challenging targets. They make good progress because their needs are assessed accurately and the support they are offered is carefully tailored to meet their needs.

The early years provision is good

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children settle quickly because they are taught well by well trained staff who have a clear understanding of how to get the very best out of every child. The children make good progress and quickly catch up with the skills and abilities that are typical of other children of their age. By the end of their year in Reception, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development is close to the national average, so that they are well prepared for Year 1.
- Children's progress is tracked rigorously across both nursery and reception classes so that any gaps in development can be addressed and staff can work intensively with those children to help them improve.
- Teachers and other adults have high expectations and challenge the children well. Learning has depth and breadth across all the areas of learning and staff work expertly to help children develop the characteristics of effective learning.
- There is a very happy atmosphere in lessons and behaviour is good. The staff have high expectations of children's good manners and courtesy and as a result children learn and play together extremely positively.

- Teachers make accurate assessments of children’s learning, including on entry to the Foundation Stage and with the partnership of parents. They use this information well to meet the needs of individual children, including those who are disabled or who have special educational needs.

- The outdoor area is well resourced and is a stimulating learning environment where children can practise their skills and develop their numeracy and literacy with real life situations. For example, children were keen to talk about the characters they had drawn and written about on a very long piece of paper during the afternoon before going inside to quietly tidy up.

- The provision is well led and managed. The Foundation Stage Leader works well in a team with the headteacher and has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. Planned actions are monitored carefully so that they can check they are having the desired impact on achievement.

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	103246
Local authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	444137

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	480
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lorraine Loveland-Armour
Headteacher	Fiona Chamberlain
Date of previous school inspection	2 March 2010
Telephone number	0121 4720062
Fax number	0121 4724662
Email address	enquiry@radlbarn.bham.sch.uk

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