

INSPECTION REPORT

**RAINFORD BROOK LODGE COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rainford

LEA area: St Helens

Unique reference number: 104780

Headteacher: Mrs P A Davenport

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Tyrer
23101

Dates of inspection: 30th Sept – 1st Oct 2002

Inspection number: 246411

Short inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rufford Road Rainford St Helens Merseyside
Postcode:	WA11 8XJ
Telephone number:	(01744) 678816
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M A Selway
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Rainford ward of St Helens and has 216 pupils on roll of whom 110 are boys and 106 are girls. The school, which is average in size, has no nursery and pupils enter the Foundation Stage in the reception class. The school population is almost entirely white and no pupils have English as a second language. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average and the proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well below the national average. Similarly the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is below average. Pupils have a range of special needs including receptive, emotional and behavioural difficulties. The attainment of children on entry to the school is generally above average and most pupils appear to have an advantageous socio-economic home background.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school with a very good level of effectiveness and one which continues to provide good value for money. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good and this contributes significantly to the high standards that pupils achieve. Teaching and learning are good overall and the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. The school is careful to ensure that pupils of differing abilities are catered for so that all pupils make good progress. Those pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for and supported and boys and girls achieve very well, regardless of gender.

What the school does well

- Pupils are achieving very well and standards are high.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to school.
- The quality of teaching enables pupils to experience a rich curriculum and in so doing, reach and maintain high standards.
- The school works well with parents and they regard the school highly.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good.

What could be improved

- The school currently has an unacceptably large budget surplus.
- The governing body needs to provide written risk assessments where they currently do not exist.
- The school needs to provide a separate, secure play space for children in the Foundation Stage as shown in the plans already commissioned.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a good improvement since the time of its last inspection in 1997. The quality of teaching has improved as have standards reached by pupils aged 11. The key issues from the previous inspection report have been successfully addressed.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	B	A	A	A
mathematics	C	A	A	B
science	C	A	A	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The attainment of pupils' aged 11 in National Curriculum tests in 2001 in English, mathematics and science was well above average. When compared with similar schools this performance was well above average in English, was above average for mathematics and was average for science. Over time the overall attainment of pupils has been consistently higher than the national average and the achievement of pupils has improved at rates similar to those seen nationally. Pupils aged seven reached standards that were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics in National Curriculum tests in 2001. When compared with similar schools this performance was well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. The attainment of pupils aged seven over time has always been well above average and occasionally has been very high (in the top five per cent). Inspection shows that children coming into the Reception class are doing so with levels of attainment that are higher than expected and by making good progress reach and often exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils aged seven are achieving very well and are on target to maintain the previous high levels seen in national tests. Pupils in Year 6 are also performing at well above average levels in English, mathematics and science. The school has set challenging but realistic targets for pupils taking National Curriculum tests in 2003.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak appreciatively about it.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Teachers manage large classes well and behaviour around the school is relaxed and ordered.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils co-operate well, are eager to assume responsibility and carry out tasks efficiently.
Attendance	Good. It is above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and teachers are good at teaching basic skills. They have very good subject knowledge and form strong and effective relationships with their pupils. They know the differing levels of achievement of their pupils well and are careful to provide effectively for them. Boys and girls are both well provided for and pupils with special educational needs have good support in the form of individual education plans. Because teaching is good, pupils are keen learners who enjoy the success they are achieving.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school is offering a rich curriculum that meets the requirement to teach the National Curriculum and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. These pupils are quickly identified and supported and there is good involvement of parents in this process.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The school's rich curriculum gives many opportunities for enhancing personal development and the school is careful to provide pupils with good role models.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Effective assessment procedures enable teachers to know how well their pupils are doing and other procedures such as those for child protection are well understood. The governing body has not produced a full set of written risk assessments.

The curriculum is enhanced through joint community initiatives and a good range of extra-curricular activity.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The skills of the headteacher are primarily responsible for the high standards that the school achieves and she is very well supported by all staff, including those with management roles.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is committed and effective and has a good range of expertise at its disposal.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. There are good procedures for monitoring standards and evaluating outcomes.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is generally well allocated in response to the school development plan but there is a need to utilise more of the budget surplus thus bringing it to an acceptable level.

The school is careful to ensure that it achieves the best value when tendering for goods and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children like school. • That the teaching is good. • That the school has high expectations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That their children are getting the right amount of homework. • That they are well informed about progress.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That their children are making good progress. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• That the school works closely with parents.• The range of activities outside lessons. |
|---|--|

The inspection team agrees with the favourable views of the school that parents hold. It is felt that in the contentious area of homework, the school is striking an appropriate balance. The inspection team feels that parents are well informed and that the school does work both closely, and well with them. The school is providing a good range of extra-curricular activity that contributes favourably to pupils' personal development.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Pupils are achieving very well and standards are high.

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the Reception class with levels of attainment that are generally higher than average. Because of good teaching they make good progress and by the time they are ready to enter Year 1 will have reached and often exceeded the level expected for their age. Continued good teaching ensures that good progress continues to be made so that by the end of Key Stage 1 at age seven, pupils are attaining at levels well above expectation in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The very good teaching in the next phase ensures that the high standards are maintained so that, for example, pupils in Year 5 are displaying levels of achievement that are very high (as indeed they did when tested at age seven).
2. The attainment of pupils aged seven in National Curriculum tests in 2001 was above average in reading, writing and mathematics and was very high in science when assessed by teachers. This performance was above average in writing and mathematics and was well above average in reading when compared with a group of similar schools. Attainment has been consistently high in all three subjects over time and is also consistent with what was seen during the inspection.
3. In 2001, Key Stage 2 pupils aged 11, achieved well above average results in English, mathematics and science in National Curriculum tests. In comparison with similar schools this performance was well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Attainment over time has always exceeded the national average and the rate of improvement has broadly kept pace with that seen nationally.
4. By way of exemplifying the high standards achieved, pupils in Year 5 wrote opening sentences for a story in such a way as to link the characters and the setting. There were many high quality responses such as “ Zackarie Woodcock stepped into the mystery mirror and fell down into a swirling pool full of magical spells and bubbling tubes and this is how it happened.” Pupils aged 11 are reading at well above average levels. They read popular and demanding works and can talk with understanding about what they are reading. They have a good understanding of how libraries work and can use non-fiction sources for information. Pupils use fractions, decimals and percentages and can show their interrelationships. They work accurately with numbers to two decimal places and can multiply and divide large numbers. They have an understanding of the basic rules of probability and a good knowledge of early geometry. In science they are able to suggest the form an investigation might take into, for example, forces. They carry out the experiment to a high level of accuracy and achieve consistent results. In so doing they show good levels of co-operation.
5. Inspection further shows that the school is careful to analyse the performance of its pupils and so is enabled to provide for their needs. As a result, pupils of differing abilities are all seen to be progressing at favourable rates. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Those pupils who have special educational needs are well provided for and care is taken to ensure that individual education plans are provided where appropriate.

Pupils have excellent attitudes to school.

6. Inspection confirms the views of parents that their children like school. Pupils are well behaved and form very good relationships with each other and with staff. Many factors contribute to their excellent attitudes, not least amongst them being the good provision for personal development that the school makes. Pupils are given good opportunities for spiritual development through their music and singing. Visitors to school assembly give good opportunities for reflection and for considering the lives of others.
7. Staff ensure that pupils understand their moral and social obligations to one another and society

at large through sessions like “Circle Time”. They provide very good models of care. Staff show that they respect pupils in the way in which they provide high quality educational experiences for them and the way in which they meet the needs of individuals. As a result, pupils feel valued and confident. They are proud of their school and are eloquent advocates on its behalf.

8. Pupils respond well to the many opportunities that the curriculum offers for the development of a broad cultural understanding, for example, through music lessons and the opportunity to perform and sing in the orchestra and choir. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular and extra mural activities many of which impact in part on their cultural development.

The quality of teaching enables pupils to experience a rich curriculum and in so doing, reach and maintain high standards.

9. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. It is good in the reception year and for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and is very good for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the last inspection but none was seen this time. The proportion of very good and better teaching has almost doubled so that just over half of all teaching that was observed falls into those categories. Improvements in teaching have been influenced by several factors including the school’s approach to assessment, the introduction of initiatives for teaching literacy and numeracy and the school’s systematic approach to monitoring teaching in the classroom.
10. The teaching of communication, language and literacy to pupils in the Reception class and of English to other pupils is good, as is the teaching of mathematics. The skills of numeracy and literacy are well taught and teachers are good at teaching pupils basic skills. Teachers know and understand very well the subject material that they are handling. This enables them to take full advantage of the school’s very good information and communication technology facilities, for example, in teaching a maths lesson about operations using large numbers. The teacher showed a good knowledge of how to use the school’s hardware and in particular, its interactive white board and also of the content of the software program that was being used. The result was a very good lesson that challenged and excited a class of very able pupils.
11. Teachers have a very good picture of the attainment of their pupils and so are able to plan lessons that will meet their differing needs. This knowledge also manifests itself, for example in the way teachers put questions to different pupils. Teachers are also able to deploy support well within the classroom and make good plans for how classroom assistants will work. Pupils who have special educational needs are identified and good provision is made for them. The school’s intention to provide more classroom support will assist in this respect and particularly so where pupils are experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties.
12. Teachers are good at making lesson objectives clear and so are able to return to them at the end of a session with a view to establishing within pupils’ minds how effectively they have been learning. Whilst the pace of lessons is often very demanding it is suitably matched to pupils’ achievement and within lessons pupils are given good opportunities to reflect on what they are doing and to show and explain their thinking to others. Because there is respect for the efforts and feelings of individuals, pupils feel able to express themselves openly and in the knowledge that what they say will be valued by those to whom they are speaking.
13. Relationships are very good and pupils respond very well to the infectious enthusiasm of their teachers. The pupils know and understand that staff work hard for them and care for them. As a result pupils are cooperative and take a positive interest in what they are learning. In conversation they say clearly that they like coming to school.

The school works well with parents and they regard the school highly.

14. The school provides parents with good quality information in the form of its brochure and via the governors’ annual report. The school seeks parental opinion and informs them through regular

newsletters. Very good opportunities exist for parental involvement in school life such as the joint design/technology initiative with St Helens' College. Parents are active in raising funding for the school and their activities provide good social events for the community. Parents are given good opportunities to learn about the progress their children are making and the written progress reports they receive are of good quality. The school's open access policy means that parents feel confident in approaching the school and in responding to requests from the school.

15. The school offers good support to parents through its parent and toddler provision that is very enthusiastically taken up and also through pre and post school clubs. For their part, parents ensure that their children attend regularly and punctually and support the school through the home school contract. Where pupils have special educational needs parents are keen to participate in the review process and the newest parents co-operate with the school in the completion of its baseline testing for children as they enter the Reception class.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are very good.

16. The last report noted that the headteacher gave a very strong, positive and effective lead to the school and this remains the case today. The deputy who had then just recently been appointed now functions very effectively as a member of the school's senior management team.
17. The school development plan gives a very good insight into the lead that is being given and shows clear and purposeful planning and prioritisation. The governing body encompasses many areas of expertise and works well in support of the headteacher although governors have not produced written risk assessments that cover all aspects of school life.
18. The outcome of the school's very good leadership and management is that standards are high. The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils are achieving very well not just in the main areas of the curriculum such as English and mathematics but across a wide range of subjects. Monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom has led to improved standards of teaching. The school ethos is very strong and there is a sense of partnership and ownership throughout. There is a strong commitment to maintaining and raising standards not only of an academic nature but also in areas that relate to the personal development of pupils.
19. The school's caring ethos is also exemplified in its commitment to continuing professional development of staff and the way in which newly qualified teachers are effectively supported.
20. The school's funds are generally well managed and the budget is suitably linked to the school's development plan. The school is aware that it is carrying too large a budget surplus and has drawn up plans that will reduce it to an acceptable level.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The school currently has an unacceptably large budget surplus.

21. The school is aware that its budget surplus is too high and that it should not be seeking to buttress itself against the results of anticipated falling rolls in this way. Having said that, the school does generally use its funding to good effect as witnessed by the high standards achieved. Because of the way extra funding is allocated to the school the governing body can itself be the recipient of unexpected amounts which often arrive at short notice. The governing body does well to incorporate such extra funding into its overall budget and effectively amend school development plans. There are plans to show that the surplus can be utilised in a reasonable time. These plans include the development of a secure outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage and the provision of greater levels of support for teachers in the classroom.

The governing body needs to provide written risk assessments where they currently do not exist.

22. A fire risk assessment is in place. The correct forms are used for school trips and these reflect the need for supervision and the caretaker uses a basic risk assessment checklist for building management and maintenance. The governing body is currently using a basic sheet for informing maintenance and repair but this lacks detail about completion times or information about who is to carry them out. The governing body now needs to ensure that risk assessments are written for all areas of school life, updated with any changes to the site and buildings and used as working documents to inform practice, repairs and maintenance.

The school needs to provide a separate, secure play space for children in the Foundation Stage, as shown in the plans already commissioned.

23. At present no such provision exists but ambitious plans have been drawn up to address the issue. The school should commit some of its budget surplus to this project whether it be ultimately planned for completion in one phase or as a project to be completed over time. At present older pupils play with the younger children and whilst they take great care with them there is a need to provide the younger children with a discrete space of their own. The plans, on completion, will also add greatly to the quality of provision for outdoor activity across the curriculum, for children of this age.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards and enhance learning opportunities for pupils the governing body and senior management of the school should:

- (1) bring the budget surplus to an acceptable level within a reasonable time;
(see paragraph 21)
- (2) instigate a review and produce written risk assessments in all relevant areas;
(see paragraph 22)
- (3) in accordance with plans the school should provide children in the Reception class with a secure play area of their own.
(see paragraph 23)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	6	5	2	0	0	0
Percentage	13	40	33	13	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than six percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	216
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	12	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11
	Girls	11	12
	Total	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11
	Girls	11	12
	Total	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	17	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	15
	Girls	16	17
	Total	31	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (92)	86 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	14
	Girls	16	16
	Total	32	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (89)	83 (89)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	214	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	30.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	98.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	448,402
Total expenditure	454,369
Expenditure per pupil	2,113
Balance brought forward from previous year	79,855
Balance carried forward to next year	85,822

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	197
Number of questionnaires returned	80

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	34	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	41	1	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	57	2	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	43	20	3	3
The teaching is good.	54	45	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	21	56	17	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	41	6	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	37	1	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	51	15	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	53	0	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	52	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	43	17	6	10