



# The Ridge Primary School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103805  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 276994  
**Inspection dates** 9 May 2006 to 10 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Gregory Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Wollaston
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 11		Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 3NF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818800
<b>Number on roll</b>	197	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818801
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr M Crump
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	26 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs D A Hudson

<b>Age group</b> 5 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9 May 2006 - 10 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276994
-----------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

The Ridge Primary School is situated close to Stourbridge in the West Midlands. Most children are from White British backgrounds. Eleven per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. In addition, 17% of pupils are identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities. These figures are broadly in line with the national picture.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This school knows itself well and provides a good quality education, giving good value for money. Effective leadership in the Foundation Stage promotes good progress, with standards by the end of the Reception year that are at the level expected for the pupils' age. Thereafter, most children continue to make good progress and achieve well.

There is a real family atmosphere, with each child included and valued. One pupil commented, 'This school would make you feel welcome no matter what your colour or where you come from.' The pupils' good attitudes and well developed social skills, including a keen awareness of others, stand them in good stead for their future economic well-being. As one parent commented, 'They have gained valuable social skills and a maturity beyond their years that has prepared them well for their secondary education.'

Leadership and management are good and have enabled the school to identify pertinent priorities such as improving writing and raising even further the achievement of higher attaining pupils - especially those who are gifted and talented. The setting and monitoring of the pupils' targets for improvement, though effective, are not as rigorous as they could be as pupils are not always sure how to improve. The governing body is fully involved in the school. Governors make an effective contribution through their links with curriculum areas. The chair of governors is both supportive and challenging. The school has responded well to most of the key issues from its previous inspection report and is well placed to make further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the standard of children's writing by offering more exciting opportunities that stimulate children to write in a wide range of contexts.
- Ensure that pupils are consistently aware of targets to improve their work.
- Provide greater challenges for higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented so that they achieve as highly as they possibly can.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

All children, whatever their background or ability, do well during their time at The Ridge Primary. The pupils come into Reception ready to learn. They make good progress and when they enter Year 1, they have standards that are in line with what is expected for children of their age. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils reach standards that are just above the national average. Results in reading and mathematics have been better than is the case in writing. However, the number of children attaining at the highest level in writing and mathematics is not as good as it could be. The school acknowledges that pupils did not achieve as well as they could in writing because there were too few opportunities in the past for them to write at length. Effective strategies

are now in place to address this. The school generally attains slightly better results than the national averages in the Key Stage 2 tests. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 usually make good progress, especially in mathematics, where they make significant gains in their understanding and generally meet challenging targets. However, the standard of writing from some of the most able pupils is not as good as it should be and prevents them from attaining the highest level in English. In lessons, there is some lack of challenge for these pupils.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Children develop good personal qualities during their time at the school. They get great pleasure from coming to school, have good attendance, and achieve well; this ensures that they are suitably prepared for the next stage of their education. They offer and discuss opinions confidently and work well independently. A strong ethos of caring for others underpins pupils' work. Links with local industries help pupils acquire good skills to support their future economic well-being.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children show an informed awareness of their own cultural traditions, and have a sound knowledge of others'. Drawing on a strong ethos, the children quickly learn right from wrong and so their behaviour and relationships with each other are good. All children understand the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of regular exercise. They appreciate the zero tolerance of bullying.

The pupils make a good contribution to their school and the local community. Pupils are enthusiastic, fully involved in all aspects of school life and enjoy taking responsibility. For example, children are proud to be members of the school council. They understand that they are elected to help other children and suggest improvements to school life. They appreciate what adults do for them. One pupil said, 'It makes me proud when adults trust me.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' expectations are mostly high, with the work pitched at the right level and building on what the pupils know and can do. In these cases, teachers know what they want the children to learn and make it clear to them. As a result, the pupils are motivated, try hard, and make good progress in developing the skills needed for future learning and achievement. However, in some instances the teaching does not build well enough on what the pupils already know. It does not always take sufficient account of individual learning needs, especially for those pupils who have special gifts and talents as the work is not always sufficiently challenging to meet their needs. As a result, the pace of learning is sometimes slow

for these children. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to the pupils' learning because they are well informed and usefully employed.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. The school promotes well the children's awareness of safety issues and a healthy lifestyle and has the Healthy Schools award. A wide range of visits and visitors help to make learning enjoyable and relevant to everyday life. Themed weeks and special programmes such as 'Time to Aspire' fire the children's imagination and promote independent learning. More opportunities such as these are needed to stimulate children to write. The use of film clips, for example, provides a good way for pupils to learn how to structure a script, how to speak well and how to manage a production. Information and communication technology supports learning well in subjects such as music. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning and increases their confidence. Pupils enjoy these and support them well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The quality of care, guidance and support is good overall. Pupils have strong and trusting relationships with adults. These support learning and personal development very well. The pupils appreciate being secure and learning in a place free from bullying. They are clear and confident about whom they can turn to for help. Academic guidance is overall satisfactory. There are some good examples of target setting and analytical marking, but these are inconsistent across the school. Not all pupils are involved in setting their own targets to reflect their perceived needs. Children in the Foundation Stage are well supported. This gives them a good start to their full time education.

Procedures for child protection are robust and the school takes health and safety issues seriously. Most parents are confident that their children are cared for well. Pupils express a similar view. Good behaviour management systems result in good relationships throughout the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership of the headteacher is quietly determined and, since her appointment, she has tackled weaknesses with commitment and rigour. The school's self-evaluation is refreshingly honest and accurate, with the governors recognising it as a valuable means of directing the school's continued development. Governors are well informed and actively involved in the school's drive for improvement. There is a strong focus on achievement, with high aspirations for the success of all the pupils. This has had a positive impact on raising standards in mathematics and science, but has not yet had the desired effect of increasing the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in writing. The collegial style of management ensures that everyone is involved in decision-making. The headteacher

listens to and consults staff, governors, parents and children so that all feel involved in their school. She is keen to develop the leadership potential of all the staff and gives them appropriate responsibilities to which they respond well. As a result, staff are well motivated and keen to improve the school and have good capacity to do so. Effective leadership of mathematics has had a clear impact on standards in recent years. The much newer leaders of subjects have a secure understanding of what actions are needed to raise standards further at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's procedures for monitoring teaching and tracking pupils' progress are effective. Both are becoming more rigorous and robust as the result of the work of the new headteacher, ably supported by her deputy.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly towards us during our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you and your teachers about how well you are doing. We thought you would like to know what we have said about your school, which we think is a good school.

You behave very well and you are kind and considerate to each other. In lessons, we think you listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and you try hard. You really enjoy coming to school and your attendance is better than in lots of other schools. You have told us you feel safe and secure. We think you know the importance of staying healthy and taking regular exercise.

You told us about your recent election campaign to become members of your school council and explained how this helped you understand how our government works. You know about important things about your own culture and some of you understand what is like to be part of someone else's culture through visits to their homes. Your teachers look after you well and listen to what you have to say. They work hard to help you learn.

We have made some suggestions to help the school get even better. By the end of Year 6, many of you do well in the tests but we have suggested to your teachers that some of you could do even better, especially in your writing. We have asked the teachers to help you write stories, poems, and reports better through more exciting opportunities. When you have completed a piece of work, we would like your teachers to write in your books how you could make it even better.

Many things are good about your school and you, together with your teachers, can make it even better. Please keep working hard and doing the best you can. We wish you well in the future.

Jacqueline Wordsworth Her Majesty's Inspector