



Richardson Dees Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108596
LEA North Tyneside
Inspection number 278005
Inspection dates 26 September 2005 to 27 September 2005
Reporting inspector Geoffrey Cooper

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	High Street East
School category	Community		Wallsend
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Tyne and Wear, NE28 7RT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 2007256
Number on roll	280	Fax number	0191 2007396
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Paul Gilroy
Date of previous inspection	1 May 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Deborah Myers

Age group 3 to 11	Inspection dates 26 September 2005 - 27 September 2005	Inspection number 278005
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by a team of three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Richardson Dees Primary School is larger than most schools of its type. It admits boys and girls from the age of 3 to 11. It is set in an urban area which national and local data define as underprivileged. The area is one of high unemployment and few adults have had higher education. A larger than usual proportion of pupils is entitled to a free school meal. A rather higher than usual number of pupils is identified as having educational needs because they have not acquired basic learning skills. Most pupils come from a white British background. The school contains a relatively small number of pupils from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, including pupils who are refugees and asylum seekers. Some pupils are at an early stage of acquiring the English language. At present, the school is led by an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, pending the appointment of a new headteacher. The early skills and knowledge of children when they enter school are well below those expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

School effectiveness is satisfactory overall. It is not as strong as the school believes but at present the arrangements for self-evaluation are not as rigorous as they need to be. The school's main strengths are the progress pupils make during their time in school, their personal development, curricular provision and the school's care, guidance and support for pupils. Pupils do not always make enough progress because the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding, so that children make rapid progress. While aspects of leadership and management are strong, there are some outstanding issues which need to be addressed and not all the staff have been through the process of performance management – checking how well teachers are doing so that improvements can be made. Balancing school weaknesses with the successful outcomes for pupils, the school provides satisfactory value for money. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Given the skills, experience and sense of vision of the current leadership, the school is well placed to improve further.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- To raise standards and to improve progress and learning, the school should:
- establish a procedure for the regular review, evaluation and development of teaching
- give subject leaders the opportunity to monitor all aspects of their area of responsibility.
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Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

By the age of 11, standards are in line with national averages. Standards on entry are well below those expected, and so overall progress is good. Inspectors agree with the school's view that achievement is good. By the end of the Reception Year, children have made very good progress, and by the end of Year 2 standards are below average. Test results here have fallen over the last three years; however, the school's actions are beginning to reverse this trend. Good progress is made as pupils move through the school, but it varies from year to year. It accelerates towards the end of pupils' time in school and this is why they achieve standards in line with those expected nationally. The school ensures that all its pupils get off to a good start in their education, whatever their starting point. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those learning to speak English make good progress because they receive good support. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress, but some pupils' needs are not identified. Standards in writing are higher than those in reading. This is a good response to a key issue of the previous inspection. Good opportunities are provided to improve

the quality of writing, including a writing club for boys. The use of information and communications technology (ICT) skills has improved. The standards achieved by boys and girls vary, but without a regular pattern. As soon as the variation is identified by the school's effective tracking system, gender difference is addressed through enrichment activities and after school clubs. Achievement in science is marginally below the achievement in English and mathematics, because in some classes the school does not plan for investigations and practical activities that challenge thinking. Standards have improved overall since the previous inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good, a strength maintained since the previous inspection. There are indications that behaviour had declined since the previous inspection. However, staff, governors and pupils agree that strong recent action has brought about a great deal of improvement. Pupils enjoy coming to school and demonstrate positive attitudes and good behaviour. Their self-esteem is raised in many ways, for example, through the praise given by adults in lessons and around the school. During a Year 6 residential experience, pupils worked successfully on team building exercises, facing their fears. One pupil commented, 'We did brave things'. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds treat each other with respect. They are keen to take a wide range of roles and responsibilities, including helping in the nursery, and working as playground buddies and door monitors. Good community links see pupils demonstrating their skills in concerts and celebrations. The school is committed to making sure that pupils benefit from a healthy lifestyle. Close liaison between teachers and learning support assistants helps pupils to achieve emotional well-being and acquire the basic skills calculated to prepare them for adult life. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection because good procedures are now in place. This helps to promote child safety.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although inconsistencies exist, there are strengths in both. The school creates a stimulating environment for learners, who are well behaved and have positive attitudes to lessons. Good relationships are enjoyed with adults in the classroom and most pupils focus well on their tasks. A small number find it difficult to pay attention and this affects their progress. Consistent qualities in teaching are effective planning, behaviour management and the way support is organised and managed for different groups. This is especially the case for pupils with identified learning needs and for vulnerable pupils. Teaching for the younger children and for pupils towards the end of their time in school is consistently good. Exemplary

support is given to children in the nursery and Reception classes to help them overcome a considerable early learning disadvantage. The oldest pupils in the school make rapid progress, enabling them to gain standards that are better than those expected for the school's context. There are instances in other parts of the school where the pace and challenge found in some lessons are missing in others. Here, progress slows. The school takes the view that teaching is good but inspectors believe it is satisfactory overall. There is little current school support for the review, evaluation and development of teaching, other than that for newly qualified teachers. Therefore, it is difficult for the school to be precise about the overall quality of teaching and to know how to improve it. Newly qualified teachers are well supported.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The good curriculum is a strength maintained since the previous inspection. A wide range of curriculum activities and enrichment broaden the experiences of pupils. Provision meets statutory requirements and planning is good. National guidance is well used. Visits and visitors are arranged to make activities more interesting and stimulating, exemplified by a recent visit to the Stephenson Railway museum. Provision for children in nursery and reception classes is outstanding. This is the shared view of the school and inspectors. A good range of opportunities for pupils' personal development ensures they grow in maturity and self-confidence, enjoying their time in school. The personal development curriculum makes a positive contribution, supporting pupils in staying healthy. Opportunities are provided to acquire good personal and social skills. For example, older pupils use well developed skills working as playground buddies supporting younger pupils. This enables the younger pupils to feel safe at breaktime and lunchtime. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to make progress in the acquisition of basic skills, both academic and personal, in preparation for the next stage of education and for adult life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Inspectors agree with the school that this is a strength maintained since the previous inspection. A rigorous tracking system and good pastoral support help pupils to make effective progress during their time in school. Good support is given to pupils in vulnerable groups. Target setting is securely in place and targets are shared with parents and pupils. However, pupils do not always understand what they need to do to improve. Secure procedures cover requirements regarding child protection and health and safety. The acting headteacher is particularly well informed and is very clear about handling incidents as they arise. Staff are trained in the necessary procedures. Policies and procedures ensure the school complies with requirements to provide education for sex and relationships and to avoid drug abuse. The school has few incidents of bullying. Staff regard this as the successful outcome of recent changes. The efficient exchange of information about pupils' academic and personal progress means that pupils moving from one year group to another receive

very good support. Effective procedures are used to listen to and act on the views of parents and pupils. The recently reconstituted school council is a good example of the willingness of pupils to share the responsibility for discussing school improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Great strides have been made in recent weeks, given the vigorous leadership and sense of vision of the acting headteacher and senior managers. In particular, behaviour is acknowledged to have improved a great deal. The strengths of school provision for learners lie in the outstanding work of the Foundation Unit, in the overall quality of care, support and guidance and the successful outcomes in pupils' personal development and well-being. However, weaknesses exist, which current leadership and management have not had time to deal with: the regular review, evaluation and development of teaching have not taken place. Governors have not been kept informed about these weaknesses. The school is not clear and precise enough in its evaluation of its own standards and provision. Well established procedures mean that subject leaders have had the opportunity to monitor planning and the outcomes of lessons. No systematic opportunities have been provided for them to see lessons in their subject, however, putting them in a weak position to make improvements. This important key issue of the previous inspection has not been dealt with. Action has been taken to tackle other deficiencies from the previous inspection report. Satisfactory overall improvement includes better ICT and library provision, and better use of pupils' skills, particularly in writing and ICT. Efficient strategies for planning school improvement give a secure base for managing change. There are weaknesses still to address. Long-term leadership and management have not been as good as the school believes. However, the skills and experience of the current staff and the commitment of leaders put the school in a good position to make the necessary improvements.

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Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	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	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

How well do learners achieve?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	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	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	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	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

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Richardson Dees Primary School
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28 September 2005

Dear Children,

Thank you for helping with the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons, with the school council and buddies. We liked the school dinners we ate alongside you. Now that the inspection is finished we would like to tell you what we have found out.

Here are things that are really strong and good in your school.

Your behaviour and your interest in lessons are good and help you to become good learners.

Because you are efficient learners, you make good progress and your work gets better and better.

Your attendance has improved in recent years, making you better learners.

Your school cares really well for you and gives you plenty of opportunities for learning.

Your school is working hard to make things even better for you. We agree with what you have said, and what adults have said, about behaviour being much better recently.

We know that you have a good sense of how to be responsible; to yourself, towards others and towards the jobs you are given. This is preparing you well for adult life.

In some classes, you are not helped to make as much progress as you could. We have asked your teachers to keep a close eye on this, to try to make learning and progress equally good all through the school. You can help by trying hard at all times.

Thank you for making us welcome in school and for being fun to be with.

Geoff Cooper and the inspection team

ANNEX B