



Ravensdale Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112759
LEA City of Derby LEA
Inspection number 279009
Inspection dates 17 October 2005 to 18 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. George Knights LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Devonshire Drive
School category	Community		DE3 9HE
Age range of pupils	4 to 9		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 513 862
Number on roll	201	Fax number	01332 513 862
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Peter Price
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Carole Presbury

Age group 4 to 9	Inspection dates 17 October 2005 - 18 October 2005	Inspection number 279009
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Pupils join this school when they are four years old. They do so with good number skills and the language skills expected for their age. Most pupils are of white British heritage. A small number are from minority ethnic groups, mostly from the Indian sub-continent, but only four do not have English as their first language. The proportion who have special educational needs is below average, but the percentage who have statements of special educational need is above average. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds, most living in owner-occupied housing in Mickleover, to the west of Derby. There are just over 200 on roll, making this of average size for an infant school. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school shares a site with its partner junior school, with which it forms strong links.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Ravensdale Infant School provides its pupils with a sound education and has some significant strengths. Quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are good. Children under five make a good start to their education and, by the time they are ready to move into Year 1, become confident learners. This helps to ensure that they continue to achieve well so that, by the end of Year 2, they reach well above average standards. Pupils are well cared for, valued and treated as individuals, and this means that their personal development is good. The support for pupils with statements of special educational need is very effective, ensuring that these pupils make good progress. The school's informal monitoring of its work has enabled it to be clear about what it does well, but evaluation strategies are not robust enough to enable the school to identify in detail the priorities for improvement. Review of the quality of teaching and assessment, for instance, is not rigorous enough to support further improvement in these aspects of teachers' work. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. Good achievement has been maintained and some progress has been made in dealing with the key issues identified in the previous report. However, more needs to be done on curriculum management and planning and on incorporating information and communication technology into learning. The school's capacity to improve further is adequate and the school currently gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop and implement a programme of rigorous monitoring and evaluation of both teaching and the assessment of pupils' work. - Improve curriculum planning and coordination. - Ensure that all aspects of information and communication technology are taught and that information and communication technology is used to support learning in other subjects.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' overall achievement is good. Teachers ensure that children settle quickly into good routines in the Foundation Stage. They thus quickly gain in confidence and enjoy coming to school. They become effective learners and, because of good teaching in the Foundation Stage, they achieve well. Many exceed their expected learning goals and, when they move into Year 1, their overall attainment is well above average. Pupils successfully build on this secure base as they move through Years 1 and 2. Achievement in these two years is satisfactory and, as a result, by the time pupils transfer to the junior school standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. When small variations in the performance of girls and boys occur the school develops successful strategies to deal with these. There are no significant differences in the achievement of different groups of pupils so that those who have, for instance, statements of special educational need make similar progress to that of other pupils.

The school meets the challenging targets it sets for itself for pupils' performance in national assessments at the end of Year 2.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are fostered well. On entry to the Foundation Stage, children are ready to learn and quickly develop confidence to try out new activities and ideas. They continue to grow and mature as they move through the school so that, by Year 2, they have a strongly developed sense of right and wrong. They think carefully about others and help them whenever they can. Charity collections are an illustration of how pupils are gaining well in their social awareness by showing concern for others in the wider community. Some examples were observed of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds supporting one another very well, for instance when working on an activity in groups. In assemblies and lessons pupils successfully develop their spiritual awareness, for instance when considering their feeling in response to different pieces of music. They reflect on issues in school or the wider world and put forward their points of view. As yet there is no forum such as a school council so they can do this formally, but this is an identified priority for action in the school. Children's well-developed numeracy and language skills, coupled with the way they successfully organise themselves and their equipment, provide a secure foundation for their future economic well-being. Pupils are very polite, they get on with one another very well and they listen to, and appreciate, the other person's point of view. In lessons they work hard, enjoy learning and generally have good concentration. Occasionally, some find it hard to listen, become restless and talk when the teacher is talking, although this is dealt with swiftly by staff. Behaviour is good and pupils say there is little bullying. They are confident that any occasional 'nastiness' will be sorted out speedily by their teachers. They know how to keep safe and to stay healthy, something which they say the school strongly promotes. As at the time of the previous inspection, pupils have limited knowledge of cultures other than their own, though the school celebrates some festivals from other cultures and religions. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils arrive punctually.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The school judges teaching and learning to be good, based on an informal programme of monitoring visits to classrooms. Whilst a significant amount of teaching is good, the lack of a clear system for identifying best practice, in order to share it, or areas where improvement is needed, means that there is inconsistency in the quality of teaching, especially in Years 1 and 2. Children learn well in the Foundation Stage because teaching there is good. Teachers quickly establish good relationships with their pupils and adopt a carefully structured approach to organising a wide range of activities. Lessons are frequently lively, challenging and

engaging so children enjoy their activities and become confident learners. Careful attention is paid to the needs of each individual so that all can succeed. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is variable in quality but is satisfactory overall. Teachers often plan interesting activities but are not always clear enough about what they intend pupils to learn from them. Because pupils have developed good learning skills earlier, they enjoy these lessons and gain considerably from them, but their learning is not always as effective as it could be. Teachers assess pupils' work adequately in mathematics and English but, generally, assessment is not used well enough to match tasks to the needs of individuals. Where different tasks are set for groups of pupils they are often based on the age of the pupils, rather than on how far their learning has progressed. Throughout the school, the teaching of pupils who have statements of special educational need is good. Teachers' careful planning and the very effective work of teaching assistants who help these pupils ensure that they learn well and play a full part in all lessons. Care, too, is paid to ensuring that pupils for whom English is not their first language are able to play a full part in lessons and hence to learn as well as other pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The range of opportunities that pupils have to learn is satisfactory. Pupils are well prepared for their next school because there is an important focus on enabling them to get the best from their learning. This starts in the Foundation Stage, where the well-planned curriculum ensures that children develop the skills of working independently from the outset. It also enables children to find out how to stay healthy and safe, and prepares them well for later life. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 provides pupils with a varied range of experiences which interests them and meets their needs. Topics are carefully chosen and links are made between subjects. Planning in history is good, enabling a range and depth of study. Planning in other subjects, with the exception of English and mathematics, is limited. Topic planning pays good attention to the activities pupils are to experience, but is not specific enough about what it is intended pupils will learn. In turn, this does not support clear planning of individual lessons. The coordination and planning of the curriculum needed improving at the time of the previous inspection and this is still the case. There has been some improvement in provision for information and communication technology (ICT) since the previous inspection, but this has not been good enough. Although classes are now taught ICT, not all aspects of the subject are fully covered and applications of ICT are not adequately used to support learning in other subjects. Personal, social and health education are well promoted informally through the daily life of the school and more formally through lessons, which also include religious education. The school has achieved a Healthy Schools' Award. Activities outside lessons, such as a French club, drama and sporting activities have increased and are good.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school recognises the need to care, support and guide pupils well and they correctly identify this as an aspect of the school where they are particularly successful. Parents, too, appreciate the success of the school in this important area. Pupils are very sensitively looked after and supported in the school's caring 'family' atmosphere. This is evident from the very beginning of pupils' time in the school. Induction arrangements are good, ensuring that children feel safe and secure. In turn, this means that parents quickly develop confidence in the school. Several useful devices, such as the 'Bag of Worries' story, are used to help pupils feel safe and secure when they have anxieties. Governors take an active role in ensuring that the school is a safe place to learn. All the staff know the children and their families well and take a considerable personal interest in them. They make sure that the children are kept safe and secure during lessons and at playtimes. The procedures for child protection are satisfactory. Support for pupils who have learning difficulties is strong, and the school has good relationships with external professionals, which aid pupils' development. In Years 1 and 2, the arrangements for the monitoring and assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics are satisfactory. However, the assessment of pupils' progress in other subjects is not consistently detailed or systematic enough to enable teachers to give clear guidance to pupils on how they could improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The school successfully aims to create a happy, supportive atmosphere in which pupils and staff are valued, cared for and respected. Teachers and support staff work well together as a team, providing mutual support and encouragement. A good balance is struck in securing both the personal development and achievement of pupils. Good work is undertaken to ensure that all pupils are fully integrated into the school family and enjoy full equality of opportunity. A range of informal strategies for monitoring what is happening in the school is successful in ensuring that there are no major gaps in provision. However, arrangements for self-evaluation lack the rigour necessary to identify particular strengths that could be shared more widely or aspects of the school's work that need to be improved. Consequently, long-term plans do not focus on the most important things necessary for the school to develop further. For instance, enhancing the management and planning of the curriculum and improving provision for information and communication technology are clear priorities but are not included in the school's current plans for improvement. The school has the capacity to improve but current arrangements for review and planning are not focused sharply enough on the main priorities. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Staff and pupils know the routines well and this encourages confidence and mutual trust. Teachers and support staff are experienced and organisation of classes and groups is designed to match needs to resources available. Governors are supportive of the school, playing a valuable role as critical friends. They ensure that resources are managed properly

and, together with the headteacher, check that the school meets its statutory requirements. Their wider monitoring of the school's work, too, is informal and hence they have not kept a tight enough hand on ensuring that key improvements have been made.

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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	2	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	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

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?	3	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	3	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

We would like to thank you all very much for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We really enjoyed coming to your lessons, joining you in assembly and watching you play together. Thank you for talking to us about your work and telling us all the things you like about the school. We think that there are many good things about your school. Your teachers help you to get off to a good start and they try to make your lessons interesting, so that you enjoy your learning and do well. You behave well and you get on well together. We particularly liked the way you cared for and helped one another. You obviously feel very happy and safe in school and this is because your teachers and helpers care for you, get to know you well and make sure that you get the support you need. There are three things that the school needs to do to help you do even better. Your teachers need to make sure that all your lessons are as good as the best ones. They also need to organise and plan the topics you learn in ways that let you get the most out of them, and they need to help you to use computers more in your lessons. Our very best wishes to you. We both hope that you all do really well in the future.