



The Redhills Combined Community School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 113084
LEA Devon
Inspection number 279091
Inspection dates 11 October 2005 to 12 October 2005
Reporting inspector David Clegg RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Landhayes Road
School category	Community		Redhills
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Exeter, Devon EX4 2BY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01392 255 555
Number on roll	346	Fax number	01392 211 605
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs L Sylvester
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	Headteacher	Mr Jeremy Doyle

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 11 October 2005 - 12 October 2005	Inspection number 279091
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school with 346 pupils aged from four to 11 years. The proportion of pupils that is eligible for free school meals is higher than average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average.

A new headteacher has been in post for one year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory education and sound value for money. This is the view of the school itself and the inspection confirmed that this is accurate. Children start school with skills below the level of those often found for their age. They make a sound start in the reception classes and successfully build on the skills they bring to school. However, by the time they start Year 1, the majority have not reached the standards usually found at that stage.

In Years 1 to 6, pupils make steady progress and the rate of progress is improving. However, standards in literacy and numeracy are still below the national average throughout the school. Some of the older pupils, particularly in Year 6, are still behind where they should be because they underachieved in previous year groups. There is too much variation in the quality of teaching, resulting in some pupils, especially those who have a good level of knowledge, not doing as well as they should.

Satisfactory leadership and management are increasingly effective and have brought about recent improvements. These have been based on an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Improvements include better attendance and a better system for tracking how well individual pupils are doing. However, not enough use is made of some of this information, particularly by middle managers, to drive further improvements. This is due to weaknesses in how some subjects are led and managed. This was a weakness at the last inspection and it is an area that still needs some work. The headteacher's high aspirations and determination to improve are not evident at all management levels. This slows the rate of improvements.

Not enough is done to evaluate and improve the quality of teaching. This is one reason why there is too much variation in the quality of lessons.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raising teachers' expectations of what pupils will achieve and making sure that all lessons meet the needs of pupils
- Improving subject leadership and management and ensure that everyone has a sharper focus on raising standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils broadly achieve as they should, although there is some variation in the rate of progress that they make as they move through the school. Children start Year 1 with below-average skills, particularly in writing. In Years 1 and 2 they make steady progress. However, too many higher-attaining pupils could make better progress, particularly in mathematics, if teaching was more demanding.

In Years 3 to 6, pupils are now making steady progress. However, this has not always been the case. Year 6 pupils have not made the progress they should have done in previous year groups and so have arrived in Year 6 behind where they need to be. In

the past this has meant that some pupils, who attained average results in tests at the end of Year 2, did not meet average standards in Year 6. Despite the fact that progress is often good in Year 6, pupils still have some considerable catching up to do if they are to achieve as well as they should. There is an emerging pattern, in national tests at the end of Year 6, of girls doing significantly better than the boys in English and mathematics.

The inspection noted particularly high standards in art. One reason for this is because the subject is very well led. The subject leader aspires to high standards and ensures that art has a high profile. The improved ICT equipment and sensible management have resulted in better standards of work in this subject.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' social, moral, cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. The school successfully helps pupils to grow and mature. They get on well with others and have a good sense of right and wrong. Pupils' cultural awareness is promoted well through their work in art and music.

Pupils enjoy school and speak enthusiastically about their work and activities. They behave well and most pupils work hard and apply themselves. Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection because of the determined action taken by the school. These steps have included working closely with the Education Welfare Services.

Pupils feel safe and they take seriously what the school tells them about how to keep themselves safe. The older pupils know how important diet and exercise is in keeping themselves healthy. Relationships are constructive and harmonious. The training of a group of pupils as 'peaceful warriors' is extremely successful. They learn negotiation and conciliation skills that help to keep a sense of well-being amongst pupils themselves.

Pupils have been consulted about some important decisions, such as the appointment of the headteacher and the range of books needed for the new school library. The school sensibly has plans to make this consultation more formal and systematic.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory but the quality varies too much. There is good teaching that moves pupils on, but in contrast there is weak teaching that is not meeting the needs of all pupils. In some lessons the teaching is lively and grabs pupils' attention. Teachers' enthusiasm in these better lessons is infectious and pupils are switched on to work and are very keen to learn. Teachers use good ways to keep pupils thinking. For instance, in a very successful Year 6 lesson, the teacher insisted that pupils talk to their 'partners' about what they were doing and then explain it to the rest of the class.

This meant that all pupils had to think hard. Work is carefully matched to take into account what pupils already know and understand. This means that children of different abilities are all working at the right level and making progress.

In the weaker lessons, work is not carefully matched to pupils' ability. This, too often, results in some pupils doing work that is too easy and not making as much progress as they could. Some teaching lacks ambition and fails to enthuse pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils get a reasonable range of opportunities both inside and outside of lessons. In lessons the work given to pupils is generally adequate but seldom inspiring. It meets the needs of most pupils, although some work is not hard enough for those who are more capable and this slows their progress. The school is getting better at identifying those pupils who need more help and is making good use of some special programmes to make sure that these pupils make up lost ground.

The opportunities outside lessons are appreciated by pupils. Several Year 6 children commented that the after-school clubs were one of the best things about the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils trust their teachers and feel able to talk to particular adults about any problems they might have. Those with learning difficulties benefit from good support from teaching assistants in lessons. Pupils who are experiencing difficult circumstances are looked after well and receive the special attention they need.

There are secure and up-to-date procedures to make sure any potential risks to children are dealt with quickly.

The weakness in this aspect is the inconsistency in how well pupils are supported in their learning. Pupils are not consistently set challenging targets and are not helped enough to have insights into their own progress or achievements. Consequently they do not know how well they are progressing and achieving.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and deputy head have a clear focus on raising standards and improving quality. This focus is beginning to bring about improvements. This is evident, for instance, in the improved attendance and the better rate of progress across Years 3 to 6. A significant move forward has been the establishing of a good system to check on the progress pupils make each year. This is proving useful in identifying pupils who may not be making enough progress and who may need extra help.

The leadership and management of some subjects are weak and do not make a sufficient contribution to pushing up achievement levels. There is a lack of understanding,

particularly in English and mathematics, about how information about pupils' progress can be used to drive improvements. This is compounded by too little evaluation and improvement of teaching and the curriculum by middle managers. Too often, low standards are explained with reference to the abilities of pupils without reference to the quality of teaching they might receive. However, it is evident that high expectations and determined and enthusiastic leadership can lead to pupils achieving well, as is the case in art.

Parents are generally positive about the work of the school but there is no regular seeking of parents' views. Consequently, parents do not inform the way the school might develop. The school recognises this and is putting in place a more regular form of consultation.

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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?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	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	No	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	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

Redhills Primary School Redhills Exeter EX4 2BY

13 October 2005

Dear Pupils

You may remember that we visited your school quite recently to look at the work that you are doing and how you are helped to learn. We talked to some of you and you gave us lots of information about the school. We thought that you might like to know what we thought at the end of our visit.

Things we liked about your school

You behave well and work well together

Those of you who have responsibilities take these seriously and carry them out well

Some of your art work is very good

You enjoy extra activities such as the after-school clubs and opportunities to learn music and perform, for example, in the choir

Your headteacher and deputy headteacher are working hard to make the school a good place to be.

To make your school even better, we have suggested to staff and governors that

Some lessons could be livelier and help some of you to learn faster

The information about how well you do in tests could be used more by all teachers to check that you are doing as well as you should in lessons.

Best wishes to you all and thank you again for your help.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Clegg Lead Inspector