



Ridgeway Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119983
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280703
Inspection dates 8 November 2005 to 9 November 2005
Reporting inspector Barbara Crane RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Ridgeway
School category	Community		Market Harborough
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leicestershire LE16 7HQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01858 465800
Number on roll	310	Fax number	01858 461 849
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr P Rowbotham
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Fox

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

This is an average sized primary school in which all but a very few pupils come from white British backgrounds. A broadly average number of pupils are entitled to free school meals and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. Pupils' attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year, but is currently average. Pupil mobility levels are high. A new headteacher took up post just over a year ago.

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's view that its effectiveness is satisfactory is confirmed by the inspection. Value for money is satisfactory. Pupils develop a good sense of responsibility and concern for others. They are well looked after and enjoy good relationships with each other and with adults. The school has a good partnership with parents and listens to their views about how it can do better.

Children in Reception receive a really good start because teaching is good. This ensures that they achieve well and reach standards above the level expected for their age. Whilst achievement, teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6, there are variations that affect the pupils' progress. This is because assessment information is not used enough to make sure that pupils get work at the right level. This particularly affects more capable pupils who are not sufficiently challenged in their studies. Standards are average, overall, by the time pupils leave the school, with strengths in reading and science and weaknesses in writing that the school is tackling.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The headteacher is giving a good lead in helping key staff to build skills in checking how well things are going. This is important because policies are not yet fully in place to ensure that practice is consistent throughout the school. Governors give the school good support. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection and the school has secure capacity to further improve because it knows what it needs to work on next.

What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards in writing and widen opportunities for pupils to use writing skills in other subjects
- ensure that teachers make better use of assessment to meet the needs of all pupils, particularly those who are more capable
- ensure that people's skills in checking the school's work continue to develop and that guidance provided is followed consistently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Reception children make good progress because their different needs are recognised and well catered for. By the start of Year 1, standards are above average and children have acquired a good range of skills to set them up for the future.

Pupils' achievement in the rest of the school is satisfactory and standards are average overall in Year 6. Pupils make particularly good progress in reading, and standards are above average because work is well matched to pupils' abilities. While Year 1 and 2 pupils do well in writing, standards are not good enough in writing for the older and more capable pupils. Punctuation and spelling are weaknesses and there is not enough detail to enliven written work. Additionally, pupils in Years 1 to 6 do not receive sufficient opportunities to extend their skills in writing in other subjects. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities usually get adequate support and make satisfactory

progress, but there are a few times when they are faced with work that is too difficult for them to meet with success.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. This reflects the hard work put in by the staff to make pupils' experiences of school enjoyable. Relationships between adults and pupils are good in every part of the school. Pupils new to school are given a warm welcome and quickly make new friends. Attendance is good and pupils are happy at school. They clearly like working and playing together and get on very well. Pupils' behaviour is good and they willingly take on responsibilities. Year 6 pupils say that their first responsibility is to set a good example for younger pupils and they do this well. Pupils decide which charities to support and are involved in community events. The school council is proud of the way in which it gathers classmates' views and works to improve things in the school. Pupils understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They drink plenty of water during the day because, as one pupil put it, 'Water refreshes your brain and helps you to learn'. Pupils love the range of equipment on the playground, such as the Trim Trail, to keep active. Pupils know how to keep safe and what to do to make sensible decisions about their actions.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some strengths. Children in Reception benefit from good teaching that ensures work is well matched to personal learning needs. Children blossom because of the sensitive support they receive and they are eager to learn. Good links are established with parents so that they help with learning at home. This positive home-school partnership continues through the school. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 shows much more variation in quality. Some teaching is very good but in other lessons insufficient account is taken of assessments to adapt work for pupils of different abilities. This results in work set that is sometimes too easy or too difficult for pupils. Expectations of what more able pupils can do are not consistently high. Marking does not always help pupils to understand how to improve their work and there are too few opportunities for pupils to review their own progress, especially in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities are reasonably well catered for and this assists their satisfactory progress. There is some good work done by teaching assistants but, at times, a lack of guidance leaves them unsure about how to better assist the learners they support.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with some strengths. There is a good curriculum for children in Reception and there are stimulating activities through which they can explore and learn for themselves. The school's initiative to improve the pupils' use of information and communication technology has been successful. Each class has an email address, for example, so that information can be received from the school council. A good range of activities is provided outside normal lessons that many pupils enjoy. The school has the Activemark award that recognises its provision of sporting activities, and after-school clubs such as cross-country are very popular. Musical and dramatic activities are also well attended.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There is a good day-to-day level of care extended to pupils so that they feel secure. Pupils say that 'people are nice' and that they are certain that adults will help them if they cannot sort out difficulties that arise in daily school life. Child protection procedures are secure and the school looks carefully at how it can make the environment safe for pupils. There are plenty of chances for pupils to learn about what is needed to keep safe and healthy, such as visits from the Life Education Van. The support and guidance given to pupils to help them develop good personal qualities is more effective than that given to help them do their best in their work. Whilst the school has worked hard to put in place systems for assessing and tracking progress, these are not yet being used consistently to assist all pupils in reaching higher levels. The school has forged good partnerships with others, for example local health services, to assist pupils' well-being.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and have some good features. The headteacher has provided a clear direction for improvement, based on the wide ranging review of the situation he found after his appointment. The school knows what it needs to work on next and so is in a good position to improve. It has already moved forward on several fronts and has met with success in improving provision for reception children and also on improving boys' writing. Initiatives in other areas, such setting targets based on assessments and raising expectations of more able pupils are in place. However, these are not yet having an impact on work in every classroom and so are not yet fully bearing fruit. The school is also working to improve key people's skills in self-evaluation and monitoring provision and checking on the quality of the work in the areas for which they are responsible. Some members of the school management team are relatively inexperienced and are learning fast. Rigorous monitoring is assisting satisfactory teaching to improve further. However, there is more to do in raising standards in writing and making better use of marking and to

aid progress. At times, expected practice is not made clear and is therefore not carried out consistently and this is hampering otherwise satisfactory improvement.

Governance is good. Governors ask challenging questions of the school because they understand what it is aiming for and how it intends to get there. The school seeks pupils' and parents' views and takes these into account. This has resulted, for example, in improvements to the outdoor facilities for play.

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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?	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	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	2	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	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?	3	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	3	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	2	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

Thank you for talking to us and showing us your work when we visited your school. We are pleased to hear that you like school and that the grown-ups are kind and look after you well. We were happy to hear that there are plenty of things for you to take part in, such as cross-country and music. You behave well and help each other, and are especially welcoming to children who are new to school. You know what you have to do to keep safe and healthy and we are glad that you use the equipment and areas on the playground to help you keep fit.

We think that lessons are sometimes a bit too easy for some of you and too hard for others and that you need to do more writing in some subjects. The people in charge of the school are working hard to make things at school even better for you. We have asked them to tell you how well you are reaching your personal targets when your work is marked and what you need to do to move up a level. We have also suggested that things like this need to be happening in the same way in every classroom.