



Riverside Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120092
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280729
Inspection dates 21 February 2006 to 22 February 2006
Reporting inspector Michael Barron AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Wanlip Lane
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leicestershire LE4 4JU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2107373
Number on roll	511	Fax number	0116 2107373
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr David Bark
Date of previous inspection	4 October 1999	Headteacher	Mr Mike Hatfield - Acting Head

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Riverside Community Primary School serves the community of Birstall. It is much larger than most primary schools and caters for a mix of children from social and private housing in an area of average deprivation for Leicestershire. Over a fifth of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds but all speak English fluently. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below the national average. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The school recently received the Health Promoting Schools Award and the Investors in People Award. The learning environment has recently benefited from the addition of new classrooms. The school has experienced changes in leadership since the last inspection. The school has been led and managed by a number of heads and acting heads and currently an acting headteacher who has been in post since January 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Riverside is a satisfactory school; a view shared by the school itself, and gives sound value for money. Pupils make sound progress as a result of satisfactory teaching, although the quality varies between different year groups. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good and the personal development of children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Staff ensure that pupils are safe and well looked after. Pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in the views of parents, who value the quality of care and help given to their children. Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are well below average, especially in social and language skills. Good teaching and a wellplanned curriculum ensure they make good progress in learning. Standards further up the school are broadly average but the quality of pupils' handwriting is a weakness. Further, the rate of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are variable. Work is not always matched to individual needs, even though the school carries out rigorous assessments of pupils' progress, because this information is not always used effectively by staff when planning further work. The quality of marking is also variable and does not give pupils sufficient information about how to improve. As a result pupils do not always make the progress they are capable of. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has recently been through a period of turbulence and standards slipped after the last inspection. However the school is working hard and effectively to improve this situation. School improvement planning is focused on the correct areas but rigorous monitoring of teaching has not yet been in place long enough to ensure consistently good teaching and progress in all years. The school is well aware of those areas in need of improvement if standards are to rise and has the capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use more rigorous monitoring of teaching to ensure that planning considers the needs of pupils of different abilities so that work consistently provides the right level of challenge.
- Improve the quality of handwriting by adopting a more consistent approach to developing pupils' handwriting skills.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking to ensure that all pupils understand how to improve their work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall for all groups of pupils, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those pupils with additional learning needs. Pupils reach broadly average standards by the time they leave. However, the progress they make is inconsistent and is significantly better Reception and Year 5 than in other year groups. This is because assessment and target setting are used much more effectively in these year groups to ensure that pupils make better progress. Children enter the reception classes with well below average levels of skills and knowledge and make good progress to reach just below average standards by the time they start in

Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 to reach average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. However the overall quality of handwriting throughout the school is below that expected and the school's handwriting policy is not implemented consistently in all classes. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is more variable but satisfactory overall. More able pupils in some year groups do not always make adequate progress as they are not given sufficiently challenging work, particularly in writing and in mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 6. In 2005 the targets set for pupils in English and mathematics in the national tests in Year 6 were missed. However pupils are on course to achieve the realistic targets set this year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Moral and social development has a high profile and this results in pupils enjoying school and working hard in lessons. The personal development of children in Reception is a strength and these children quickly adapt to school routines and expectations. Pupils throughout the school behave well both in class and when playing outside. Their spiritual development is encouraged well, for example in moments of reflection in assemblies. Pupils have also developed a good awareness of the variety of cultural heritages represented in the school and further afield. Rates of attendance are average. Pupils have good awareness of safe practices. They feel secure and are comfortable when approaching adults with their problems. They know what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, though work to ensure that packed lunches are as healthy as school lunches is ongoing! Pupils make a good contribution to the community. They readily take on responsibilities. Year 6 pupils say that they enjoy looking after the youngest children at lunchtime. The learning of basic skills, which helps to prepare pupils for their future, is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall but is too variable in quality to ensure that pupils learn at a consistently good rate. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because work is well planned to meet children's different needs. Good relationships throughout the school mean that pupils want to please adults and try hard. The teaching of reading is well planned and so pupils do well in all years. However, pupils' learning is not consistently supported by the precise use of assessment to establish realistic and challenging targets in writing. Teaching in Year 5 is much more successful in promoting progress in writing and mathematics because work is pitched at the right level. Marking is helpful and well focused on targets so pupils know what they are aiming for. In other year groups, marking is not always helpful in guiding pupils to understand how to improve. It does not always link well to the individual targets set for improvement. In

mathematics, more able pupils often do the same work as others and so lack the challenge necessary for them to make good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school's curriculum is satisfactory. Older pupils are given opportunities to learn French and they talk enthusiastically about the school's improvement to its ICT provision. However opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills and develop their handwriting in other subject areas are limited. Theme weeks, visits and visitors to the school all help to bring learning to life. Pupils have regular opportunities to participate in lunchtime and after-school activities, including sports clubs. Whilst the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage has improved since the previous inspection, the outdoor facilities remain an area for further development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall, with some good features. Care of pupils is good. There are robust arrangements for child protection. Pupils feel safe and secure and enjoy learning. The school council gives pupils a say in decisions about school life and pupils appreciate this. They know who to turn to if they have problems and comment that they are confident that adults will resolve difficulties. Most pupils of all abilities know what their learning targets are but guidance for pupils to reach them is not as consistent as it should be and this affects achievement. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities get the help they need to make satisfactory progress when supported by teaching assistants. However this level of support varies and is at its best when lesson planning takes more careful account of targets in individual education plans.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher is leading the school efficiently during this period of transition. He is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher. Together, in a short space of time, they have analysed and evaluated provision and have developed a firm understanding of what needs to be improved in order to raise pupils' achievement. For example, by matching work more closely to pupils' different abilities. As a result school improvement planning contains relevant and achievable targets aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning. However many of these initiatives are still at an early stage, including more rigorous use of monitoring. This is evident in the variation in the quality of teaching and learning between year groups and the subsequent variations in pupils' achievement. Resources are used efficiently throughout the school and the leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good. This has helped ensure children in the reception classes make effective steps in learning, preparing them well for the

next stage of their education. Governors support the acting headteacher and the school effectively. They are a stabilising factor, are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and offer a good level of challenge and support when appropriate.

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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	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	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	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	2	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

Dear Pupils Thank you for making us feel very welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed coming into your lessons and looking at your work. We especially enjoyed talking to some of you about your school. Here are some of the things we like about your school:

- Children like coming to school and work well in class.
- Teachers really try to make sure the youngest children in the school settle in very well.
- Your behaviour is particularly good.
- Your teachers take very good care of you and work hard to make sure you enjoy your lessons.

We think your headteacher and teachers can do some things to make your school even better:

- We have asked them to try to make sure that the work they give you to do is not too hard or too easy.
- We want them to help you to improve your handwriting.
- Finally we have asked your teachers to make sure that you are given more help on how to improve your work.

Both myself and the other inspectors wish you the very best for your future. Yours sincerely Michael Barron (Lead Inspector) Alexandra House 33 Kingsway London WC2B 6SE T 0207 421 6800 F 0207 421 6707 www.ofsted.gov.uk