



# Raddlebarn Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 103246  
**Local Authority** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 286604  
**Inspection dates** 5–6 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Anthony Dobell

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Gristhorpe Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Birmingham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11		B29 7TD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4720062
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	373	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4724662
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	R Woods
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Fiona Chamberlain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 June 2001		

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This large primary school serves an ethnically diverse community. Children's levels of understanding and learning skills are well below average when they join the Nursery. The proportion of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above average and almost half of these pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. An above average number of pupils join and leave the school mid-year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school in which pupils make good progress. Standards are average overall but are rising as a result of good teaching that is purposeful and focused. Very good systems are in place for tracking pupils' progress and giving them targets to improve their work. Pupils have a clear understanding of these systems. As one Year 3 pupil explained, 'target cards are for you to improve whatever you're not good at'.

Astute and vigorous leadership from the headteacher and her colleagues has enabled the school to improve well since its previous inspection. All have been involved in an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and areas for development. This has enabled the school to introduce initiatives which are clearly rooted in a determination to raise standards. Pupils' reading skills have improved well but there is scope for further improvement in writing, particularly in the range of vocabulary that pupils use. In mathematics, pupils have good skills in using numbers but have difficulty in interpreting data and struggle to solve 'real-life' problems expressed in words. Teachers appreciate the initiatives which have already been introduced and feel that they are fully involved in improving the school.

Pupils' good personal development starts with good provision in the Nursery and Reception classes and the good care that they enjoy. It also results from a good curriculum which gives them a wide range of learning experiences. A Year 1 pupil said, 'we do quite a lot of subjects and teachers make it fun.' The range of visits, visitors, clubs and activities is outstanding and the school's musical tradition is particularly strong. Pupils' involvement in the community and the local area is also outstanding. They are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for later life.

The school's links with parents are a particular strength and the overwhelming majority of parents express strong support for the school. A parent of a newly arrived Nursery child said, 'I can't praise them enough; he's much more grown up already and can't wait to come to school.' Parents appreciate the way the school helps them through, for example, the curriculum workshops on literacy and numeracy, which help them to support their children's learning at home. The 'Friends Association' is active and enthusiastic, raising valuable funds to improve the quality of learning and helping to keep the school at the heart of the community.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Encourage pupils to use more adventurous vocabulary in their written work to raise standards in writing.
- Raise standards further in mathematics, particularly in handling data and in interpreting problems expressed in words.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good. Children enter the Nursery with levels of understanding which are well below average. They make good progress in Nursery and Reception because the school concentrates on learning through practical, first hand experiences. Children develop learning skills systematically but these are still below average when they enter Year 1.

Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 1 to 6. The school's work over the last 18 months to help pupils to understand how well they are doing and how to improve is underpinning this good progress. In recent years, standards in the national tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 have been broadly average. However, recent initiatives are enabling pupils to make better progress now and standards are rising, most noticeably in reading. Careful analysis of pupils' work has led the school, sensibly, to target writing and mathematics for improvement, and this is beginning to raise standards, although there is scope for further improvement.

Effective support from teachers and teaching assistants gives all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language, a good understanding of how to improve their work. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are supported well and make rapid progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Good attendance and punctuality show that pupils enjoy school. They behave well in and out of class and there is no evidence of bullying. A pupil in Year 2 said, 'I like school because of behaviour. Most people have really good behaviour.' Pupils relate well to each other and to adults and feel valued for what they can offer. They enjoy responsibilities, for example, on the school council. Those joining the school mid-year settle quickly because they are welcomed. They make good progress. Pupils become confident and articulate young people.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school successfully celebrates the diversity of its community through 'multicultural weeks'. Pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong and of safe practices, including the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and substance abuse.

Effective personal development and pupils' sense of well-being give them the confidence to try hard with their work. This helps them to achieve well.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Good teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Challenging learning activities are carefully graded so that pupils at different stages of learning make progress from their existing levels of understanding. Teachers are beginning to provide opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as history, geography and science, but much of this work is at an early stage. Pupils appreciate teachers' efforts to make learning enjoyable. A pupil in Year 4 said, 'The work's just right so that you move up to the next level: you get an equal amount of work and fun.' Teachers and teaching assistants are very aware of the needs of different groups in the school, particularly those at an early stage of learning English, and ensure that they get the support to enable them to make progress at the same rate as other pupils.

Effective learning is rooted in pupils' good awareness of their current levels of work and how to improve. Marking is conscientious and comments show pupils how to raise their standards. Very good use of interactive whiteboards in lessons engages pupils' interest and motivates them to concentrate well.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school's curriculum is good and meets all requirements. It is enriched by community links, for example, with Aston Villa Football Club, which motivate pupils very effectively so that they work with real enthusiasm. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education which successfully promotes care for others and safety and health awareness. A very good range of visits and visitors, including residential visits, increases pupils' confidence and makes learning more realistic. There is scope for developing further the use of learning in one subject to support learning in another.

The range of out-of-school clubs and activities is outstanding. Pupils and parents appreciate these opportunities, and especially the school's very high quality music. This, and a range of sports, helps to give pupils learning experiences of real quality which, in turn, promote good progress.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. There are good arrangements for first-aid, child protection and health and safety. Pupils feel secure and valued and this supports their personal development and good progress. Assessment arrangements are very thorough and used well to guide teaching. Pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve. Teachers and teaching assistants work effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and those at an early stage of learning English so that their

confidence increases and they achieve well. The school is able to call on outside agencies where necessary to ensure that all pupils get support of good quality.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good at all levels and are centred in a determination to drive up standards. The headteacher, with the full support of her colleagues, has worked extremely hard to analyse what the school does well and where it can improve. Precise weaknesses have been identified and strategies developed to raise standards, which are beginning to have a good impact.

Two major factors have resulted in good improvements in the school's performance. These are the development of highly effective systems for assessing pupils' standards and progress and the involvement of all staff. Teachers are very clear about their roles in driving up standards and appreciate the good quality professional development designed to help them to do this. Governors have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and areas for development and offer an independent view on how it can move forward. There is a clear unity of purpose throughout the school and a feeling of optimism and purpose. The school is in a good position to improve further.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us into your school, being so friendly and polite, and telling us about your learning and your lives in the school. We think that yours is a good school in many ways.

### **What we liked about the school**

- You work with enthusiasm and make good progress.
- You are happy in school, attend regularly and enjoy all your activities.
- Your teachers try very hard to make your lessons interesting.
- You behave sensibly, get on well together and are kind to each other.
- You know how important it is to keep safe and healthy.
- You enjoy opportunities to take responsibilities and carry them out well.
- Your headteacher and teachers are trying hard to make the school even better.

### **What we have asked the school to do**

- To help you to make your written work even better by using more exciting vocabulary.
- To help you to use your good knowledge of numbers to solve problems expressed in words and to present and interpret data in graphs and charts.

We enjoyed our two days in your school very much and wish you well for the future.