

# Red Hall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103784
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	286755
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Carrington

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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	388
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dennis Beard
<b>Headteacher</b>	Brian Dent
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2003
<b>School address</b>	Zoar Street Lower Gornal Dudley DY3 2PA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 813850
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 816851

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Red Hall is larger than most other primary schools. Nearly all the pupils live in the area around the school, where some families live in challenging social and economic circumstances. They come mainly from White British backgrounds and very few speak English as an additional language. A fifth of the pupils have learning difficulties, which is above average. There are a small number of looked after children and children from asylum-seeking families. The attainment of children when they start school is below average. The school is based in three buildings that are separated by a main road.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Red Hall is a good school that cares about its pupils. It is well organised, managed and led, and provides a good quality education where pupils thrive and achieve well. Standards are a little above average when pupils leave Year 6. Pupils make good progress from their below average starting points. This starts in the Foundation Stage, where children progress well due to the effectiveness of the teaching. The personal development of the pupils is one of the school's main successes and is good. Pupils are polite, friendly and caring. Their behaviour is outstanding, as is their enjoyment of learning. They work very well together and are mature, sensible and enthusiastic learners. They say that learning is fun and interesting. There is much laughter in school. Pupils are cared for well. Dependable and rigorous systems are in place to ensure they are safeguarded thoroughly. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who may be vulnerable are given watchful attention and their work is carefully planned to ensure they make good progress. The pupils support each other well. The quality of teaching is good. There is some outstanding teaching, which has been recognised nationally. Lessons flow briskly, work is generally well matched to the needs of different groups and teaching assistants give expert support to their pupils. There is imaginative and innovative use of information and communication technology (ICT), which encourages the pupils to investigate, solve problems and to find original ways to present their ideas. The curriculum is good and is being improved well to provide a carefully balanced education for the pupils. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is at an early stage of development and is the main area for improvement at present. The many strengths of the school and successes of the pupils are the result of secure and good quality leadership and management. There are well honed systems in place to track pupils' progress and to check the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher gives first rate leadership. He has high expectations of staff and pupils and knows exactly what he wants the school to achieve. He shares the leadership of the school most effectively with the staff. They, in turn, take their duties seriously, work hard and ensure that the pupils get a good deal. Governors are alert and check that decisions are the right ones to improve the school's work. The adults in school know its strengths and areas for improvement well. School self-evaluation is accurate. There is good capacity to maintain the school's consistent track record of effective improvement and to turn what is already good into outstanding provision. This is echoed by the parents, who have extremely positive views of the school. 'Since attending Red Hall our daughter has blossomed into an outgoing, eager to learn child who enjoys school' is a typical view of parents.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Devise a programme of work that reflects the challenges pupils with special gifts and talents even further and inspires all to reach for their best.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils abilities are encouraged to learn well and to make good progress. This they do. Pupils mostly start school with below average standards and leave Year 6 at a just above average level. There is little variation in their results for English, mathematics and science. Children in the Foundation Stage are eager learners. Their starting level in communication, language and literacy is lower than it is in mathematical development. The children make good progress because they are taught well and have ample opportunities to decide things for themselves.

By the time they join Year 1 they have not reached all of their learning goals, but they have made good progress towards them. Although many pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not reach the expected standards, they make good progress. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 accelerate in their learning, and their progress becomes quite rapid by the end of Year 4, which is maintained to the end of Year 6. Each year there are a very few pupils who do not achieve quite as well as the others. In 2006, these included a few of the pupils with learning difficulties and the very small number from mixed race White–Black Caribbean backgrounds. The school had previously identified this possibility and worked effectively to close the gap, though it was not totally filled. This year the progress of these groups matches that of the others. At present the school cannot be fully certain that pupils with special gifts or talents are as successful as they could be.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Red Hall helps the pupils develop into pleasant, friendly children who work together well and support each other with pride. The personal, social and emotional development of children in the Foundation Stage is good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. Pupils say that 'teachers make our work fun, they teach us in different ways and they help us to learn about new things'. Most pupils are eager to be in school because they are caught up in the excitement of learning. Whilst most pupils try hard to maintain full attendance, a few have many absences, which means the overall attendance rate is below average. The school has effective systems to improve attendance. Pupils have good knowledge of keeping healthy and safe. When asked if they are healthy, a few answer 'no'. They can explain why this is the case, focusing on their diet or lack of physical exercise. Pupils are very aware of the dangers posed by the main road that divides the school buildings. They reflect that if bullying does occur, it is dealt with instantly and totally. The local community is well recognised by the pupils. They enjoy finding out the views of long-time residents of the village and learning about how it differed in the past. 'There was less colour in the streets then' was an astute comment by one boy. Pupils are prepared well for each stage of their education from Nursery into secondary school. They are also set up well for life outside school. Pupils across the school build good basic skills, especially in ICT, and cheerfully work in teams or accept responsibility.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Some of the teaching is outstanding. This applies throughout the school. The 'Inspire' workshops for all parents enable them to sample the many qualities of teaching and to make their own judgements of its quality. Parents pay fulsome tribute to teaching, particularly in the Foundation Stage. They are not wrong in their assessment. It is clearly of consistent good quality and has strengths in its challenge for pupils and adventurous mix of activities that encourage children's good progress. Whilst the pupils in Years 1 to 6 are mature and sensible learners, there are times when these strengths are not exploited fully to ensure pupils make choices, self-evaluate their work and suggest ways in which it can be improved. The school has identified the development of independent learning as a priority and has started to improve the opportunities for pupils to become even more self-reliant. In other respects, usually teaching meets the needs of the pupils and enables them to do well because learning is practical and lively, and based on imaginative teaching.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is stimulating and involving for all pupils, in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 to 6. Pupils respond well to the different activities provided and make good progress because of their practical, hands-on experience. The school is working effectively to develop pupils' creativity in all subjects, not least in ICT and English. The use of individual themes to plan the Foundation Stage curriculum is being extended to other years in order to strengthen achievement. There is a very good programme of out of school activities that pupils are keen to join. These are often run by members of the community, which enables the school to offer a broader range of activities than is usual. The school is yet to complete its provision for pupils with special gifts and talents. These pupils have been identified and some additional activities planned for them, although the programme to inspire them to even better things is not complete.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care shown by staff for their pupils' personal development is committed and very effective. Due concern is given to pupils who may be vulnerable in some way. They are supported well so that they can learn as effectively as other pupils. Systems to vet the adults working in school and to ensure rigorous child protection are strong. Children in the Foundation Stage are given good guidance and support to enable them to make a promising start to their learning. Academic guidance is based on good procedures to assess pupils' standards and track their progress. The 'Pupil Progress' books containing samples of work are particularly valuable as a record of how effectively skills and knowledge are being developed. Challenging targets are set for pupils and they work well to meet them. Opportunities for pupils to self-assess their own progress or to suggest ways to improve are not consistent across the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a well established system of devolved leadership and management in school that allows staff to contribute effectively in setting priorities and targets, and checking that they are met. There is a strong team ethos, led excellently by the headteacher, and the separate sites are not allowed to detract from the unity of approach. There are ample opportunities for successes to be celebrated and improvement opportunities to be seized. The fact that staff are valued rubs off on the pupils. There is an infectious desire to do well. Good improvement since the 2003 inspection is testament to the school's potential to do even better. All leaders, including the governors, are committed to 'raising the bar' to ensure pupils' achievement is maximised. Development planning is thorough and based on the careful and realistic evaluation of school performance. The refurbishment of the 19th century buildings, lifting the attendance rate, improving provision for gifted and talented pupils, refining the well established performance management cycle and building pupils' independence in learning are tasks for leaders still to complete.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<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	1
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
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	2
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.

## Annex A

**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	1
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**

- 27 April 2007 Dear Pupils Red Hall Primary School, Lower Gornal, Dudley, DY2 3PA Thank you for the warm and polite welcome you gave me when I visited your school earlier this week. I enjoyed meeting you, visiting your lessons and listening to your ideas about your school. You helped me to decide many things. The most important is the fact that you go to a good school. I have written about this in my report, which I hope some of you will read. The other main things in the report are:
  - you make good progress in your work and reach slightly above average standards
  - you are extremely well behaved, really enjoy your learning and get on well together
  - you are taught well and your work is interesting and fun
  - you are well looked after and cared for
  - your headteacher leads the school extremely well and wants you to do your best and your teachers work hard to make sure that you do
- children in Nursery and Reception make a good start to their education. I think there is one main area where improvement can be made:
- Your school should encourage those of you with special gifts or talents to do as well as possible. I am sure you will want to help your teachers make this improvement. You can do this by telling them how well you are learning and whether you think you can improve anything. Good luck with your work. Yours sincerely David Carrington Lead inspector