

Reddish Vale Children's Centre

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	106018
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	287385
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Steve Isherwood HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Graham
Headteacher	Ms R Lord
Date of previous school inspection	5 March 2001
School address	Reddish Vale Road Reddish Stockport Cheshire SK5 7EU
Telephone number	0161 480 6713
Fax number	0161 476 1561

Age group	3–5
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Amended Report Addendum

Reddish Vale Children's Centre - originally Reddish Vale Early Years Centre

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

Reddish Vale Children's Centre serves an area of mixed housing. It was registered as an Early Excellence Centre in 1997 and was designated a Children's Centre in 2006. The vast majority of children are of White British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic groups. A small minority of children are at an early stage of learning to speak English. When children enter the nursery their attainment is below that expected for their age, particularly in language and communication. The Centre runs a wide range of early years provision supporting families in the school and local community.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

'My child adores attending. Every day, even at weekends and during holidays she asks if she can go. She has come on in leaps and bounds'. This sentiment, expressed by one parent and echoed overwhelmingly by others is the essence of what makes Reddish Vale a good Children's Centre with several outstanding features. Children cannot wait to get there in the morning. They achieve well in all areas of learning and make excellent progress in their personal and social development. They feel safe and secure and are happy and enthusiastic learners. This is because of good teaching and exceptionally high standards of care and support for each individual child. This is a Centre with a strong family feel, and a caring nurturing ethos, where every child is encouraged to succeed and grow in confidence and self-esteem. All staff work effectively together to ensure that children and their families are extremely well supported. Relationships are second to none. As a result, children behave extremely well, have positive attitudes to learning and show tolerance and respect for one another. They have an excellent awareness of eating healthily and eagerly take part in a wide range of physical activities to exercise and keep themselves fit and active. The Centre is well thought of in the local community and there are highly effective partnerships with parents, schools and other agencies. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and as a consequence, and along with its other strengths, the Centre has good potential to improve further.

Given their low starting points children, achieve well. They make good progress from the moment they enter the Nursery. This is because curriculum experiences are well planned to capture their interest, every second counts and learning is fun. Every day begins with a strong sense of care and belonging. Staff have expert knowledge of each individual and are skilled in getting children to talk about their emotions and concerns. Adults question children well and are effective in encouraging children to share and work together. As a result, children are keen to succeed, are proud of their efforts and are willing and enthusiastic about taking part in new experiences. Learning is enriched by many visitors who talk to the children about their work. These activities enhance the good curriculum and contribute well to children's enjoyment.

The success of the Centre is underpinned by strong and dedicated leadership from the headteacher, who has shown great resolve in leading staff through a period of much change and disruption. Her sense of purpose is based on a crystal clear vision of a caring and stimulating environment in which each child enjoys learning and achieves their full potential. She has been very successful in convincing staff and governors of this vision and is determined to ensure that the Centre is forward thinking and reflective. As a consequence, the leadership team, including governors, is confidently poised to push the Centre on and have a good awareness of where further improvements are required. For example, senior staff have correctly identified that there are inconsistencies in the interaction of teacher-led and child-chosen activities and also, systems for assessing and recording children's progress are not rigorous enough.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use data from assessments more rigorously to extend learning and check more closely on how well children are achieving.
- Develop greater consistency in the interaction of teacher-led and child-chosen activities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children's current work, as well as the Centre's data, shows children make good progress from their often low starting points in all six areas of learning. Due to good teaching and outstanding care and support most children meet and some exceed national expectations by the time they leave. For example, the older children have made their own pop-up books with illustrations and simple print. They know how to write their name and some keywords.

All children make outstanding progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because of highly effective questioning by staff which helps them to understand their feelings and emotions. High quality communication with parents and other agencies extends learning and contributes well to this.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are identified early, activities are appropriate and support is extremely good.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and contributes significantly to the good progress they make. Children settle very quickly, have excellent attitudes to learning and successfully acquire high levels of confidence and self help skills. They take on responsibilities such as tidying up, wait their turn and show respect for others. Their behaviour is exemplary. This is because of exceptionally strong relationships, high expectations and consistent praise and encouragement from all staff. Children are very happy in their work, play extremely well with each other and show a real keenness to discover and find out about new things. As a result, children are engrossed in their learning as they play, have many opportunities to experience success and show high levels of interest and enthusiasm in their tasks.

Children have an extremely good awareness of how to keep fit and healthy, by eating healthy snacks and by taking regular exercise. This is very effective because parents are encouraged to continue this work at home. Children have well developed ideas about safe practices and are well prepared for the move to primary school.

Attendance is good. Although not statutory, the Centre correctly considers it important to encourage regular attendance which impacts positively on achievement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good, which means that children make good progress and achieve well. This is because of high expectations. Staff have detailed knowledge of each individual and all children are encouraged to grow in confidence and self-esteem.

There are however, missed opportunities to move all children on in their development. On occasions, some staff do too much for children and some groups are left too long without adult

input. As a consequence, some children are not always challenged or extended to move on to the next step in their learning.

Staff are skilled in planning a wide range of imaginative and small group activities for all learners which successfully increase their skills across all areas of the curriculum and engages their interest to good effect. As a result, children are motivated to try hard and present themselves as keen and enthusiastic learners. However, not all staff are fully aware of the number of different skills that children can learn from each activity which means that the progress children make is not always recognised. Observations of children's learning are not routinely planned and systems for measuring and recording achievement lack rigour.

Information is used well to identify the needs of children who have learning difficulties, which ensures that they make good progress and achieve as well as they can.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and is appropriate to the needs of the children. It takes good account of the six areas of learning with a strong focus on learning through first-hand practical experiences. Children are consistently provided with a range of good quality activities both inside and outdoors, where a good emphasis is given to the development of physical skills through a range of climbing and adventurous activities.

Learning is enriched by visits from members of the fire and ambulance services and from the local police force. These themes of 'People who help us' have led to many purposeful and exciting activities, including pictures, posters and role-play opportunities. A good focus is given to ensuring that the children use a range of information and communication technology (ICT) equipment and develop skills in using computer programs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The Centre takes exceptionally good care of all children. All staff are highly responsive to the needs of each individual child and the level of support provided to families is outstanding. All members of the nursery community are valued, cared for and treated with great respect. Careful attention is given to the needs of vulnerable children through regular reviews with parents and other professionals. Communication between home and the Centre is second to none and parents are successfully encouraged to play a full and active role in supporting their children's learning. The dedicated way that staff engage with parents of children with learning difficulties is hugely effective in allaying their fears, concerns and anxieties. An extensive programme of work for parents, backed up by highly effective links with other agencies, has developed parents understanding of how children learn and can best achieve.

Staff are exceptionally caring and individuals are very well supported when they are distressed or unhappy. For example, the key worker and family group systems are highly successful in developing strong and trusting relationships so that children are confident to approach staff with worries or concerns and know that solutions will be found.

The Centre has correctly identified the need to introduce a more consistent approach to the assessment of children's progress and enable staff to be more precise about planning the next steps of children's learning.

All required procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of all children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides strong leadership, works tirelessly to support all children and is leading the Centre in the right direction. She is passionate about children's learning and has shown great resilience in leading staff through a number of difficult circumstances and a period of rapid change for the Centre. She is well supported by an equally committed team of staff and governors who share her vision and sense of purpose. As a result, morale is high, teamwork is strong and staff are open and receptive to new ideas.

The leadership team, although newly established is not complacent. They have a good understanding of what needs to be reviewed and where further improvements are required.

The Centre's improvement plan is underpinned by a clear commitment to raising achievement and contains a good range of relevant priorities with appropriate actions which are well understood by all staff. As a result, there is a clear view of the way ahead and this, combined with a restructuring of the leadership team and good improvement since the last inspection, indicates good capacity to improve further. The governing body plays an important part in supporting the Centre and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Its members are very committed and are becoming increasingly confident in their role as improvement partners by asking questions and acting upon advice.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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

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

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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

Inspection of Reddish Vale Children's Centre, Stockport, SK5 7EU.

I really enjoyed my visit to your nursery. I know how much you all like coming every day. Some of your mums and dads told me that you would even like to be there at the weekends and during holiday times. Thank you for helping me and letting me join in your play and read a story. Thank you also for being so friendly and for telling me about things you are learning. I loved the way that you know how to keep safe by signing in and putting your photo on the wall. One girl was very helpful in showing me how you do this. It was wonderful to see what a happy time you all have and how excited you get when you haven't seen one of your friends for while.

I think your nursery is good and there are some things that are very, very good.

You behave very well and I could see how much you enjoy playing outside. One boy was very pleased to show me how you use the ladder on the climbing frame. It's really good that you all take turns and help one another to cross from side to side.

You are doing really well with your learning and your teachers look after you very well. Along with your mums and dads, they make sure that you know how to stay fit and healthy. Your teachers plan good things for you to do to help you learn and be ready for your next school. Ms Lord does her job very well and is always trying to make the nursery even better. To help her do this, I have asked if she could make sure that all of you get help when you need it and that some of you do more things for yourselves. I have also asked if your teachers could look more closely at how well you are learning.

You are a credit to your mums and dads and carers. I can see why your teachers enjoy working with you every day. Keep trying hard. I wish you and your families all the best for the future.