

Rode Heath Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111159
Local Authority	Cheshire
Inspection number	288876
Inspection date	9 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Judith Tolley

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	145
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Ian Stevenson
Headteacher	Mrs A Gill
Date of previous school inspection	8 May 2001
School address	Heath Avenue Rode Heath Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire ST7 3RY
Telephone number	01270 872914
Fax number	01270 872243

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. Pupils are of predominantly White British heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is also below average. The school has won four national awards for information and communication technology, the Curriculum Award, and the ActiveMark for sports provision.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. Standards are high and pupils' achievement is excellent. Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They take great pride in their work and in their school. They are enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy their learning because of the very wide range of opportunities they are given to extend their learning both within the classroom and in the wider community. All this happens in an atmosphere of mutual respect. Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to take responsibility and to help one another and they treat this very seriously. They work in close partnership with each other and their teachers in evaluating and improving their standards of work. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent as a result of the encouragement they are given for reflection and expression. The curriculum is excellent, designed to take every opportunity to engage pupils' interest, meet their needs and enrich their learning. Pupils are given very high standards of care, guidance and support and, as a result, become confident and articulate young people. They have clear views of how they can contribute to improving their environment. They make a valuable contribution to the community and play an important role in shaping their school. They value the support they are given that enables them to achieve their best. They are prepared very well indeed for the next stage in learning and to take their place in the wider world.

Achievement throughout the school is outstanding. Children make excellent progress in the Foundation Stage so that they begin Key Stage 1 with confidence. By the ages of 7 and 11 standards are exceptionally high. Assessment information is used very effectively to track pupils' progress and set challenging yet realistic targets. Pupils themselves have a very thorough understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Outstanding teaching, coupled with pupils' very positive attitudes towards learning, ensure that they attain high standards and make excellent progress from their slightly above average starting points. Pupils rise to the high level of challenge in lessons because activities are interesting and they are given the support they need to do their best.

Leadership and management are exemplary. Rigorous analysis of information about pupils' progress leads to the school having an accurate understanding of its effectiveness and very effective improvement planning. There has been excellent improvement since the last inspection. Very high standards have been maintained year on year as a result of outstanding direction by the headteacher and the determination, shared by staff and pupils, to achieve excellence in all aspects of the school's work. The role of middle leaders is being developed very effectively. The capacity to improve further is excellent. Governors are very supportive of the school and act very effectively as critical friends. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- There are no significant areas for improvement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Achievement is outstanding in the Reception year and throughout Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards are exceptionally high. The 2006 test results were well above average for both key stages and pupils' achievement was significantly above expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been consistently much higher than average for the last four years. The school's action to improve writing has resulted in sustained improvement across all subjects and standards

seen in the inspection were very high. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make the same outstanding progress as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' ability to evaluate their own work and their close collaboration with their teachers to improve it are ringing endorsements of their outstanding personal development during their time at Rode Heath. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school as their good attendance rates indicate. They display a high level of maturity in their respect and consideration of others, and their concern for the environment. They participate in decision making, for example through the school council and the Eco Team, with the same enthusiasm that they show for the wide range of activities available for them beyond the confines of the classroom. They are keen to listen to each other and delight in celebrating their own achievements and those of others. They are confident and skilled at demonstrating to others what they have learned. The pupils have an exceptional understanding of their place in world and the responsibility that that brings.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

As a result of frequent opportunities to work collaboratively, solve problems and investigate ideas for themselves, pupils become very effective learners. They respond with enthusiasm and vigour, many going way beyond what is required of them. They say that learning is fun. Structured play and opportunities for pupils not only to share what they have learned but also to show how they have learned it increase their confidence and their independence as they go through the school. Teachers use resources such as information and communication technology and video facilities very effectively, to allow pupils to develop their skills. Pupils therefore increase their understanding not only of what to learn but how to learn. The use of assessment in furthering pupils' learning is exemplary. Pupils themselves take a leading role in the process of evaluating their own work and in identifying what they can improve and how they can do it.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides a very rich curriculum which enables all pupils to achieve highly, to pursue their interests and to develop their skills. Opportunities for linking work across a range of subjects are very effectively exploited so that pupils both learn and hone their skills in literacy, mathematics and research through activities which motivate and interest them. The very wide range of out-of-school activities such as sports, music, dance, trips and residential visits further enrich pupils' experience and are spoken about with excitement and enthusiasm by the pupils. The staff are working towards ensuring greater continuity in developing pupils' investigative skills from the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6. As a result, increased opportunities are planned for children to move from exploring ideas through play in the Reception class towards more formal investigation in Years 3 to 6.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

A determination that each pupil should achieve their best is at the heart of the outstanding care, guidance and support found in this school. Pupils acknowledge that bullying is rare and, like all their concerns, is always dealt with swiftly and effectively. There are procedures in place to ensure that pupils are safe and the school follows national guidelines to ensure the safe recruitment of staff. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities benefit from excellent support, enabling them to make the same outstanding progress as their peers. Pupils' academic progress is tracked rigorously and action is taken where necessary to ensure that all pupils are provided with an appropriate challenge so that they achieve their best. Pupils are fully involved in tracking and planning their progress towards their individual targets; they have a very clear understanding of how to improve their work. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress and are fully involved in their education. Pupils have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe as a result of the guidance they are given.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides exemplary leadership. An honest and accurate evaluation of the school's work is the basis for continuing debate and planning for improvement. All staff are involved in this process. Staff are encouraged to explore and develop best practice from both home and abroad. The role of middle leaders in the evaluation process is being successfully developed. There is a shared commitment to strive continually for excellence through sharing and developing expertise in every aspect of school life. The school works very effectively with partner institutions and the wider community to this end.

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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>	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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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?	1
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	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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 Rode Heath Primary School, Rode Heath, ST7 3RY

Thank you for making me feel so welcome when I visited your school recently. I thoroughly enjoyed talking to you and hearing your views. I was particularly impressed by your concern for the environment and by the way you work together with each other and with your teachers to make the school as good as it is. I very much enjoyed listening to you explaining what you had learned to others during assembly and seeing how much you enjoy activities such as music and dance.

I am sure you will be delighted, but not surprised, to hear that your school is an outstanding one. You all work very hard indeed and make excellent progress. By the time you leave the school you reach much higher standards in English, mathematics and science than children in most schools. This is because the staff are good at helping you to learn and because you are enthusiastic about learning new things. You take your work very seriously. I was particularly impressed by the way you help one another to improve your work in lessons.

You are looked after very well and your behaviour is excellent. You all get on very well with each other and with your teachers. You told me how much you appreciate the way the teachers listen to your views and help you do your best. You play an important role in helping the school make decisions, for example through the school council and the Eco Team. You are good at explaining your ideas and are right to be proud of your achievements.

Your lessons are interesting and I noticed how much you enjoy playing and working together to solve problems and how good you are at doing this. Your teachers also work together very well and are always trying to find more interesting ways for you to learn. You can help them by continuing to work hard and do your best.

I hope you carry on enjoying your learning and doing such good work. I wish you every success in the future.