



Richardson Endowed Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112853
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289439
Inspection dates 11–12 January 2007
Reporting inspector Trevor Watts

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Smalley, Smalley
Age range of pupils	5–11		Ilkeston, Derbyshire DE7 6EF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 880317
Number on roll (school)	161	Fax number	
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr Richard Singleton
		Headteacher	Mr David Smith
Date of previous school inspection	10 March 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5–11	11–12 January 2007	289439

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a small semi-rural school. Almost all pupils are White British, and all have English as their home language. In some year groups there are many more boys than girls. The area is one of very mixed socio-economic circumstances, which overall are around the national average. Relatively few pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, although this varies considerably from year to year.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection confirms the school's view that it provides a good education for pupils' personal and academic development. Foundation Stage provision is good. Children enter the Foundation Year with skills that are very variable, but generally around the nationally expected level. They settle well in the Reception class, make good progress as a result of good teaching and a good curriculum, and attain their early learning goals by the time they join Year 1.

Pupils progress well all through school, and leave Year 6 attaining above the national average level in English, mathematics and science. Although pupils make good progress, they do not have a clear idea of what they need to do to achieve higher levels. Pupils' good learning stems from good, well-informed and warm teaching and a good curriculum that is extremely well complemented by a host of extra activities, events and visits, revolving especially around music.

Pupils' personal development is good: they behave well, are happy, and say there is no bullying in school. They become sensible, confident and polite young people who are well prepared to fit into their next school and face their future lives. 'It's a great school to be in,' said one pupil, 'I never want to leave.' Parents are equally enthusiastic, '...this school is very precious,' wrote one.

Staff work very effectively with many other organisations to support pupils' learning, such as the 'cluster' of local schools for mutual mathematics support, or 'borrowing' teachers with advanced skills in particular subjects, including science, information technology and English. Other agencies boost the school's good level of care for pupils, especially those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Leadership and management are good. The school evaluates itself well. Pupils' progress and attainments are carefully analysed and acted upon effectively by senior teachers to make appropriate improvements where needed. Governors and senior staff give dedicated support to the headteacher, but many of these are new to their responsibilities, and do not always challenge proposals or take an active role in guiding developments.

The school has taken effective steps to bring about the required improvements since the previous inspection, and gives good value for money. It has a good capacity to make further improvements, as new and enthusiastic staff are beginning to take on leading roles, and new governors are learning more about what their roles should involve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils know what long-term targets they are working towards, and what they need to do to achieve them.
- Develop the roles of governors and senior staff so that they can be more active in helping to guide the school's improvements.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress and attain well. They progress well in the Reception class, and this good progress continues steadily through the school. In national tests over the past four years, pupils have consistently attained above the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. More higher ability pupils gain the higher levels than is the case nationally, and lower attaining pupils are given good support to help them to achieve as well as they can.

In 2005 and 2006, pupils' progress slackened off a little in some aspects of their learning in Key Stage 2, despite still attaining above the national average. A major cause was the loss of more than an hour a day transporting pupils to another school for a term when the roof had to be replaced. Additionally, several teachers had long-term illnesses, coinciding with a lack of challenge in some lessons. Several less able pupils joined the school during Key Stage 2, and a group of boys had severe behavioural difficulties. Effective action was taken to develop better support for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties, make science and mathematics more practical and investigative, and motivate boys more in improving their reading and writing skills.

Inspection findings concur with the school's own predictions that pupils in both key stages are again achieving well in all subjects, and are on course to improve their attainments in the 2007 tests. These forecasts are solidly based on in-school records, pupils' work, analysis by an outside agency, and the results of optional national tests that pupils take each year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They are well behaved and say that any incidences of 'falling out' are dealt with effectively. Pupils feel safe and know that there is always someone to go to with worries or concerns. Pupils are well involved with the community, especially through regular performances by the school choir at many venues. Pupils have a good understanding of what is needed to maintain a healthy life style, and sometimes spontaneously burst into song about it. They have good opportunities to take responsibility through activities such as being the 'table leader' for new children in Reception, being on the school council, or acting as 'playground buddies'. Pupils value their views being sought through questionnaires and class council discussions. They recently helped to develop playground activities, for instance. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school is actively seeking to broaden pupils' awareness of cultures other than their own.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, and know their pupils well. Positive and warm relationships help pupils to enjoy their lessons and try hard to achieve well. Lessons are carefully planned, with well-structured activities and clear explanations so that pupils know what the lesson aims are. Through recent training, staff have become good at assessing how well pupils are progressing, and they tailor their lessons well according to what pupils have already learned. In some classes the assessment information is used well to set individual and class targets, but in other classes pupils are not clear enough about how well they are doing or what they need to learn next to improve their attainments. Although lessons generally start in a lively and creative manner, occasionally when pupils settle to their own work the pace declines as their motivation wanes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good across the full range of subjects. It is being reviewed, with new strategies being developed to make learning even more interesting and exciting. There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' personal and social development so that they have a good understanding of staying safe, keeping healthy and being valuable citizens. The Foundation Stage curriculum has improved since the last inspection and now provides many interesting learning activities which capture children's imagination. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is a great strength of the school. These include the provision in music, visits, visitors and clubs, with many of these activities taking place out of school hours. These attract a majority of the pupils and contribute strongly to their learning and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of school life is good. Pupils feel secure and know that there is always an adult to whom they can turn to for advice and help should they need it. They say there is no bullying and any misbehaviour is dealt with effectively. Procedures to ensure pupils' health and safety are robust. The school has effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour, including the use of a 'positive play room' to help pupils with significant behavioural and emotional problems. The school tracks pupils' academic progress well. However, pupils do not know their own targets for the long term, such as what they need to do to gain Level 5 in writing by the end of Year 6. Pupils say that they would find such information helpful and motivating.

Pupils with learning difficulties are supported and guided well, helping them to make good progress. Pupils with special gifts and talents are increasingly provided with additional opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good because the headteacher has a clear view of what the school does well, and what needs to be done to maintain improvements. Reorganisation of senior staff responsibilities, with new and enthusiastic coordinators in some positions, is beginning to create a renewed degree of management support. Governors are dedicated and supportive, but most are new to their role. They help to manage the school's finances very well, and provide much help in school. What they do not do so actively is to probe, ask pertinent questions about pupils' standards, or make positive suggestions about future planning. Staff and physical resources are deployed effectively, with very good additional support from many parents, in fundraising activities and in regular help around school. Procedures for safeguarding pupils meet current government guidelines. All pupils have good access to the whole curriculum, and are provided with the support necessary to make good progress.

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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?	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

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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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	2
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.

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	3
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	3
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

18 January 2007

Dear Pupils,

Richardson Endowed Primary School, Main Road, Smalley, DE7 6EF

I expect you will remember when two of us visited your school recently. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome, showing us your work, and talking to us.

We think you go to a good school where you learn well in the different subjects, and how to be sensible, polite and grown-up. We agree with your parents and carers that your teachers do a lot to help you in all sorts of ways. As one parent wrote to us, 'The school has a fantastic atmosphere; the teachers are very approachable.' You learn a full range of subjects, and the school provides a lot of extras to boost your learning. Many of you do especially well in your music interests. We think it would help you if teachers talked with you to make it clearer what you need to do to get even better results from your learning. You are well looked after, and know that you can go to your teachers if you have problems. You told us that there is no bullying, and staff quickly sort out any behaviour problems that do happen.

Your school did not become so good by chance. Mr Smith knows how to run the school, and he does it well. We think your teachers and the school's governors give him lots of support, but we are asking them to help even more by asking questions about what happens in school, and making suggestions about different ways of doing some things.

With our best wishes for the future,

Trevor Watts

Lead Inspector