



Redbrook Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 115639
Local Authority Gloucestershire
Inspection number 290285
Inspection date 16 January 2007
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Ikin

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Redbrook
School category	Community		Monmouth
Age range of pupils	4-11		NP25 4LY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01600 713501
Number on roll (school)	41	Fax number	01600 713501
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Lucy Morgan
		Headteacher	Gaynor Connor
Date of previous school inspection	4 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector

Description of the school

This village school is much smaller than most primary schools. All the pupils on role are White British. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is above average. At the time of the inspection, the school was being run by a retired headteacher pending the appointment of a permanent headteacher. The two class teachers were new and on temporary contracts and the school was without a secretary.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which, after a period of decline, has begun to improve as a result of the strong leadership of the acting headteacher and the commitment of the temporary teachers. Pupils and parents say that they really appreciate the way that the school has stabilised since their appointment. A warm and welcoming family atmosphere has been created in which everyone feels involved, trusted and valued. Pupils' personal development and well-being and the care and guidance they receive are good. The relationships between staff and pupils are good and many parents said that their children enjoy school and grow in confidence because of this. Pupils behave well and they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe and healthy. They make a good contribution to the community and pupils are soundly prepared for their future lives.

Achievement and teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science, which is not as high as they were in the previous inspection. This is mainly due to the many disruptions in staffing that have occurred over the last two years. Standards are picking up as the new teachers get to know their pupils and plan more closely for their needs. Improved teaching of writing and a greater emphasis on the correct use of punctuation has improved standards in the subject. However, there are weaknesses in pupils' handwriting and presentation skills, as there were at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well because of the good support that they receive from the teaching assistants. Some of the more able pupils do not achieve as much as they should in mathematics because they do not have the skills they need to apply their knowledge of number in problem-solving situations.

Assessment and recently introduced tracking procedures are satisfactory. Targets are set but pupils are not as involved as they should be in the process. The targets are not used enough to plan work which will raise the pupils' achievement over the longer term. The curriculum, including provision for Reception-aged children, is satisfactory but guidance to help teachers plan for pupils' progress from year to year in subjects other than English and mathematics has been lost during the staffing changes and needs replacing.

The headteacher's open approach has ensured that everyone knows where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie and what they need to do to improve. There is a clear sense of purpose in the school, with the temporary staff and governors united in their determination to drive up standards. The leadership and management of the school and its capacity to improve further are satisfactory because of this.

What the school should do to improve further

- improve the process of setting targets to raise achievement and ensure that pupils are more involved
- improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics, particularly those of the more able pupils

- ensure that teachers have the guidance that they need to plan the year-on-year progress of pupils' skills in subjects other than English and mathematics
- improve standards of pupils' presentation and their handwriting skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When children enter the Reception class, standards are broadly in line with those expected for children of a similar age. Standards by the end of the Reception Year and in the rest of the school are average in English, mathematics and science, which represents satisfactory achievement in relation to pupils' starting points on entry. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well but some of the more able pupils do not always do as well as they should in mathematics because of weaknesses in their problem-solving skills. Standards at the school have begun to improve, most notably in writing, where staff training has resulted in a greater focus on developing pupils' vocabulary and creative ideas through drama and discussions prior to the pupils beginning their writing. Weaknesses in pupils' use of punctuation are being addressed but handwriting and presentation remain weaknesses, as they were at the time of the previous inspection.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and throughout the school most pupils behave well. Older pupils help younger ones and show a mature understanding of those who have difficulties, particularly with relationships. They say that bullying rarely occurs and that unkind behaviour is quickly sorted out. They grow in confidence and are eager to learn because of the warm and supportive atmosphere in the school and the good relationships that they have with their teachers, teaching assistants and each other. They say that they did get 'fed up' when they had many changes of teacher but are happy now that this situation has been resolved. They concentrate well on their work in lessons but do not take sufficient pride in the finished product, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community through their work on the class council and are increasingly involved in making decisions that affect them. For example, they have recently designed questions in preparation for the interview of the new headteacher. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe and healthy and enjoy exercise and activity. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared in basic subject knowledge for their next stage of education and their future economic well-being. They enjoy coming to school and their attendance is good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Throughout the school, behaviour is well managed. Pupils are keen to answer questions and contribute to whole-class discussions. This is particularly so in literacy where, as a result of recent work, they are developing the vocabulary to explain their imaginative ideas and express them in writing. A recent emphasis on helping pupils in the Key Stage 2 class to improve their punctuation is proving effective but there is not enough emphasis on helping them to improve their handwriting and presentation. The good teaching of basic skills contributes well to the accuracy of pupils' number work. The school has recognised weaknesses in pupils' problem-solving skills and has started to put a greater emphasis on this in lessons. Satisfactory attention is given to helping Reception-aged pupils to learn through play as well as through teacher directed activities. A satisfactory range of assessment systems is in place and they are used well to plan work which closely meets the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision meets the needs of most pupils except in mathematics, where the school has recognised that problem solving and investigation needs greater emphasis to help all pupils, but particularly the most able, make better progress. There is a good range of strategies, including effective support from teaching assistants, to help pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities achieve well. Although some of the school's extra-curricular activities have been curtailed during the recent staffing difficulties, additional music tuition has continued to enrich the curriculum. Satisfactory use is made of national guidance to ensure that pupils acquire basic subject knowledge in English and mathematics, and teachers plan closely together to ensure that the rest of the curriculum is fully covered. However, there is insufficient guidance to ensure that pupils make year-on-year progress in the skills required in each subject over the longer term.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Rigorous health and safety and child protection procedures are in place. Pupils receive good quality pastoral care and guidance because of the very good knowledge that the acting headteacher and teaching assistants have of individual pupils and their families. This has been passed on to the new teachers who use it well in assisting the pupils. The school has good links with outside agencies for when it needs to offer pupils extra support. Assessment is satisfactory and tracking procedures have improved since the previous inspection as a result of the recent work of the acting headteacher. Marking is used well to help pupils improve their work but the use of targets to guide pupils'

academic progress is rudimentary and pupils often do not know what their targets are. Parents are supportive of the school and appreciate the way the acting headteacher and the staff have created a settled atmosphere for their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The leadership of the acting headteacher is a particular strength. Achievement and standards have begun to improve in a relatively short period of time because of the stability she has brought to the school. A positive ethos based on mutual care and respect has been created and the new teachers have been fully consulted and involved in moving the school forward. Procedures to check and evaluate the work of the school are satisfactory. Assessment data is used well to identify where improvements are needed in the pupils' learning. However, the teachers' and governors' roles in checking on the work of the school are underdeveloped, mainly because so many of them are new. Members of the school community are consulted about the school's work, although procedures for consulting parents are not as formalised as they should be. Governors are very committed to the school and have learned a great deal about their roles as a result of steering the school through its recent difficulties. They have a good understanding of their part in helping it to improve.

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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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
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?	3
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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Thank you for making me so welcome and helping me when we visited your school. I really enjoyed talking to you and watching you learn and play. I can see why you like your school and your headteacher and teachers so much. I think that they give you a sound education.

What I liked about your school

- Your headteacher and new teachers are doing a good job in making the school a more settled place after all the changes in the previous year.
- You behave well and look after the school and each other well.
- The school takes good care of you and is interested in what you and your parents have to say.
- Your writing is interesting to read because you use imaginative ideas and interesting words that bring stories to life.

What I think needs to be improved

- The way the school uses targets to help you make progress.
- You need more practice to solve problems in mathematics.
- The guidance that your teachers need to ensure that you make progress in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Your handwriting and the presentation of your work need to be better.

You can help in all this by always trying to do you best, even when work gets hard, and by taking care over your handwriting and the way your finished work looks.