



Radley Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123157
Local Authority Oxfordshire
Inspection number 292599
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Vanessa Ward

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Radley
Age range of pupils	4–11		Abingdon OX14 3QF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01235 520814
Number on roll (school)	85	Fax number	01235 520814
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr M Dixon
		Headteacher	Mrs R Benton
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Radley CE Primary school is smaller than average. Most of the pupils are White British and come from a mix of social backgrounds. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school works in partnership with the on-site pre-school and provides extended care for children in the term before their fifth birthday.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Radley Church of England Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education and has strengths in its curriculum and in the way it cares, guides and supports its pupils. This promotes good personal development, and pupils show positive attitudes to learning. Its good links with other agencies are used effectively to provide specialist help where it is needed. Parents greatly appreciate all that the school does, expressing the view that 'all the staff have the interests of the children at heart'.

The headteacher is supported well by the staff and governors. The accurate identification of strengths and weaknesses, and subsequent action, such as a recent focus on raising standards in mathematics, is bringing about improvement. Through Years 1 to 6, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The staff have identified pupils' writing as an area for development. Although actions taken so far have increased pupils' enjoyment of writing, more needs to be done to raise standards. By Years 2 and 6, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are broadly average, although they tend to fluctuate. This is because of the changing balance of abilities within the small numbers of pupils in each year group. The school is beginning to involve pupils in evaluating their own learning, but pupils currently have insufficient knowledge of how well they are doing and of what they need to do to improve. The effective provision in the Foundation Stage gives the children a good start to their academic and personal development.

The school's strong focus on the individual encourages the pupils to behave well and take on responsibilities very willingly. The fun that is provided through the stimulating curriculum helps foster their enjoyment of learning. The strength of the relationships within the school develops pupils' confidence and self-esteem. They take part in community events, such as music festivals and sponsored swims, with enthusiasm. Through participation in the numerous sporting activities provided and daily opportunities to eat healthily, the pupils gain a good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Their comprehensive knowledge of how to keep safe is regularly increased through the curriculum and by effective procedures for managing behaviour. Activities such as becoming involved in fund raising and running stalls at fetes help to prepare pupils for life beyond school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing in Years 1 to 6, particularly in relation to pupils' fictional writing.
- Increase pupils' involvement in and understanding of how well they are doing.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average. Children enter the Foundation Stage with skills that are typical of most four-year olds. The children make good

progress and, by the end of the Reception year, the majority achieve the expected goals. The school is introducing strategies to ensure that this progress is built on through Years 1 to 6.

By the end of Year 6, standards are average. Writing is the weakest area and the school is working hard to raise standards. Recent efforts have improved non-fiction writing. There has been less improvement in fictional writing. The school has introduced more rigorous tracking of pupils' progress with subsequent intervention to provide additional support where it is needed. As a result, progress is beginning to accelerate. Tracking information shows that all pupils make satisfactory progress, with pupils having learning difficulties and disabilities sometimes making good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' enjoy their time in school, expressing particular appreciation of the opportunities to exercise and play sports. They enjoy eating healthy foods in school and have a very good understanding of healthy lifestyles. The school is promoting this more as it works to gain a Healthy Schools Award. It is also increasing pupils' awareness of environmental issues. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. A current focus on rights and responsibilities is promoting their spiritual and moral development well. They learn to respect the values and views of others through assembly themes and group discussions. Pupils' behaviour is good and they are well aware of the school's new system for rewards and sanctions. The system of 'playground buddies' helps them to feel safe and secure in school. Their cultural understanding develops well through subjects such as art, music and literature. Pupils readily take on responsibilities, the older pupils regularly taking care of the younger ones. Pupils value the opportunities they are given to influence school improvement through the school council, and as house captains. The school's focus on English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) is equipping the pupils with the skills they will need in later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and account for the satisfactory progress that pupils make as they move through the school. There are some particular features that increase the pupils' learning. For example, the good relationships encourage positive attitudes to learning. Pupils know that 'the teachers always help us when we get stuck'. This makes them into confident learners. Pupils in a mathematics lesson in Year 5/6 were very willing to demonstrate their calculations for the class to evaluate. At times, learning slows and then pupils make less progress than they should. This occurs when the introduction to a lesson is too long or when work is not matched accurately to pupils' needs and is then either too hard or too easy. Teachers share the purpose of

the lesson with their pupils very effectively. This helps them to know what they are expected to learn. Support staff work well with small groups of pupils, often helping those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers know their pupils well and are using assessment information with increasing effectiveness to help them keep track of how well each pupil is doing.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is currently being reviewed to make it more creative and to provide effective links between subjects. This is already in place for ICT, which is used well across a range of subjects. Writing skills have been developed successfully in several subjects, such as history and geography. This practice is now being extended to other year groups to support the school's initiative to raise standards in writing. Pupils of all abilities are enabled to enjoy a full curriculum. Educational visits and special events enhance the curriculum. Pupils speak enthusiastically about Africa Week and Celebration Day. Pupils' personal development is enhanced well through teaching about health, safety and relationships. The wide range of clubs provides much encouragement to pupils to take exercise and to enjoy learning. In the Foundation Stage, the stimulating curriculum promotes good progress, and effective links with the on-site playgroup support continuity in pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The good quality of care, guidance and support provided for the pupils enables them to make good progress in their personal development. Procedures to promote health and safety are very effective. Careful consideration is given to supporting pupils with learning difficulties. Parents speak very positively about the support provided for their children, saying that 'all the staff are very approachable and nothing is too much trouble'.

A recent initiative to improve behaviour outside the classroom is proving successful and the school is currently evaluating its impact. The school provides good support for pupils when they join the Reception class and leave Year 6. Whilst the school sets some individual targets, the pupils have insufficient involvement in this process and are not well enough informed about how well they are doing and what they need to do next. The school has started to work on this issue, but more needs to be done.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and have some strengths. Good teamwork is established and there is strong commitment among staff and governors to raise standards. Priority is given to the professional development of all staff and is linked closely and effectively to school improvement. The school's process for self-evaluation

and subsequent improvement planning suitably involves the staff and governors. The views of parents and pupils are also taken into account. As a result, the school is successfully implementing several initiatives to raise standards. These are comprehensive and have resulted from an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There is evidence that these initiatives are beginning to improve progress, but this is not yet sufficient to ensure that most pupils achieve well.

A new system for allocating management responsibilities has been put in place. The school recognises the need to monitor the effectiveness of these roles as they develop, and to allow time for new initiatives to become established, before moving on to others.

The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Governors are well informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses. Improvements since the previous inspection, combined with the success of recent initiatives, such as improving behaviour and mathematics, indicate that the school has good capacity 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	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?	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	3

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	3
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?	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?	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 feel welcome when I visited Radley recently and for talking to me about your school. It was very useful to listen to what you had to say about what you enjoy doing.

Your school is a happy place and your parents and carers speak very well of it. They think that you are well cared for in school and I agree with them. You told me that you enjoy being in school and feel safe there. You know that the adults will always help you if you are upset or worried. Your teachers give you interesting things to do and this helps you to achieve satisfactory standards in English, mathematics and science. Your teachers are trying to help you to improve your writing and I have asked them to do more of this. Some of you have learning targets and your teachers are going to involve you more in understanding how well you are doing and what you need to do next in order to improve.

The school is good at helping you to grow up and take on responsibilities. Caring for younger pupils at lunch time is a good example. You eat fruit and vegetables in school and are involved in many sports. These things help you to be healthy. You behave well and show that you care for each other, and this helps all of you to enjoy learning. I am pleased that you enjoy sharing your ideas for making your school better through your school council.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors work hard to make your school better. I hope that you will help them as much as you can.

Yours sincerely

Vanessa Ward

Lead Inspector