

Ryvers Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109934
Local Authority	Slough
Inspection number	310146
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2008
Reporting inspector	John Earish

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	480
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jenny Instone
Headteacher	Mr Alan Dean
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Trelawney Avenue Langley SL3 7TS
Telephone number	01753 544474
Fax number	01743 594064

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average primary school serves the culturally diverse area of Langley in east Slough. The school is popular and oversubscribed. About three quarters of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and 14 pupils are at the very earliest stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to that found nationally. Attainment when children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is below that expected for the age group. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is broadly similar to that found nationally. However, the proportion with statements of educational need is very much higher than average. There is a pre-school, breakfast and after school club managed by the governors.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils achieve well. Some of the oldest pupils commented, 'We really enjoy learning because teachers help us improve our work and make learning interesting.' Another pupil added that he had 'moved to the school because of its reputation for hard work and helping pupils do their best'. Parents agree and the vast majority are very positive about their children's education.

The progress made by pupils presents a very complex picture. This is due to the nature of the school's intake, including the higher-than-average number of pupils whose first language is not English and those with complex learning difficulties such as autistic spectrum disorder. The number of pupils joining the school from abroad during Key Stage 2 further complicates this picture. Pupils make good progress and achieve well in the EYFS from below-average starting points. This good achievement continues throughout Key Stage 1 and standards are above average overall by the age of seven, and have been for a number of years. Standards were broadly average at age 11 in 2007. The school responded well to this dip in its performance by putting in place a range of strategies to raise attainment and increase achievement throughout the key stage. This has been successful and the unvalidated results for 2008 show significant increases in performance in English, mathematics and science at Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Data shows that pupils in the current Year 6 are achieving well against their starting points in Year 3.

Teachers have high expectations of how much their pupils can achieve, and they usually match work well to pupils' individual needs. Learning is most effective when teachers give pupils opportunities to learn independently and use their initiative to think things out for themselves. Pupils are good at working in this way. However, teachers do not always make the best use of these abilities during lessons. This slows the rate of progress, particularly for those pupils who work quickly.

Pupils really enjoy school because the good curriculum provides a good range of activities, including physical education, dance, music and modern foreign languages. The development of pupils' personal skills is supported through a well-planned personal, social and health education curriculum that promotes these skills well. The school is making links between subjects so pupils can use their literacy, numeracy and information communication and technology (ICT) skills creatively to enhance their work. However, this initiative is at an early stage of development and is not yet fully embedded. Pupils say they find this way of working motivating and enjoyable.

Personal development is good. Pupils form good relationships with adults, and with each other, and have extremely positive attitudes to learning. Consequently, their behaviour is outstanding and their attendance is good. Pupils are very well aware of the importance of healthy eating and staying safe. They say the school is a harmonious, caring community where the adults deal with any occasional bullying very quickly. As a result, they are happy and eagerly want to learn.

Care, guidance and support are good and the pastoral aspects are outstanding. Pupils are well cared for and feel secure and happy. The seamless teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants ensures very good support for pupils with autistic tendencies. They are fully included in the life of the school. Teachers provide good advice on how pupils can improve their work, and marking is helpful and detailed. However, pupils are not yet fully involved in assessing for themselves how well they are doing, so they can gain a better understanding of what they need to do next to improve their work and begin to set their own targets.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher has built a strong sense of community and teamwork, so that all adults are working purposefully to improve the achievement of all pupils. The school's recent record of accomplishment in increasing attainment and its clear view of what needs to be done next means there is a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children make a good start in the EYFS and achieve well from their below-average starting points because of good teaching and good leadership and management, but a number still do not reach the goals set for them by the start of Year 1. Children behave very well and thoroughly enjoy the learning opportunities organised for them. Teachers are good role models for spoken English and use every opportunity to develop pupils' language through skilful use of questioning, songs and rhymes. This is particularly effective for those who are at the earliest stages of learning English. There is a good balance between activities chosen by the children and those planned for them by the teacher. Staff use children's previous achievements well to plan the next steps in learning. However, these plans do not always clearly identify extension activities for those who learn quickly. Children are happy and feel safe throughout the EYFS because of the high priority given to their welfare and pastoral care.

Those children who attend the Pre-school benefit from good provision. Well-chosen activities capture the children's interest and develop their early language and social skills well. Adults are good at planning the next stages of learning based upon their accurate observations of children's achievements. Parents value very much the adults' contribution to their children's good start at school and enthusiasm for learning. The before and after school clubs are well managed. Children enjoy attending and the activities provided are interesting and appropriate for their age. The staff are committed to meeting the personal and welfare needs of the children, are appropriately deployed and use the resources well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers make the best use of pupils' abilities at working independently and assessing for themselves how well they are doing, so they can begin to set their own targets for improvement.
- Build on the good work in improving attainment and accelerating achievement at Key Stage 2.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards at age seven were above average overall in 2008 and have been for a number of years. In addition, attainment in mathematics was significantly higher when compared with pupils in similar circumstances. This is because teachers are building well on the good achievement of children in the EYFS and standards continue to rise.

The most recent validated data shows that standards at age 11 in 2007 were broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Strategies to raise standards and increase achievement for the older children are having a positive effect. Unvalidated data for 2008 shows the numbers attaining the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were significantly better in all three subjects. The most recent tracking information for pupils in the current Year 6 show these improvements have been sustained and improved further.

Pupils are now making good progress in lessons and are achieving well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress, including those who are at the earliest stages of learning the language. The most recent information on the tracking of pupils' progress and achievement across the school confirms that sustained improvement continues for all classes.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. From the earliest age, children successfully learn to share, take turns, make friends and care for each other, with the result that behaviour is excellent. Pupils greatly enjoy their education because 'our teachers listen to us and are good at helping us when we are stuck. They also mark our work thoughtfully.' Pupils are well aware of the importance of healthy eating and staying safe. Indeed, they are adamant about feeling safe and secure at school because 'our teachers respect us and want us to do our best'. The school councillors take their responsibilities seriously and represent the pupils' views well. Attendance is above the national average. This is further evidence that pupils enjoy coming to school. They have well-developed skills and abilities at working independently or in small groups to explore their own ideas. They say that they learn best when teachers given them adequate opportunities to work this way. Pupils acquire literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills that equip them well for later life and learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good overall. This is because teachers are successfully using the new assessment arrangements to identify, track and support pupils' learning needs well. As a result, pupils know what they need to do to improve their work and have suitably challenging tasks to complete. They work together well and learn from each other. Learning is interesting, enjoyable and challenging because teachers use a broad range of teaching styles and methods, including interactive white boards and computers. However, there are inconsistencies. On occasions, teachers fail to exploit fully the pupils' well-developed abilities at working independently or their skills at exploring ideas for themselves. This slows the rate of progress, particularly for those pupils who work quickly.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and enriched with a good range of additional activities, which pupils thoroughly enjoy. A particular strength is the provision for physical education, dance, music and modern foreign languages. The curriculum meets pupils' needs well, including those identified with autistic spectrum disorder or at the earliest stages of learning English. There is a strong focus throughout the school on the development of pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT. Older pupils are able to access a virtual learning environment via computers at home and school. They say this is helping them learn more effectively and it is highly motivating. Pupils develop a strong sense of social responsibility through their work in personal, social and health education. They have a good range of activities both before and after school and they participate well. The school is adapting the curriculum to make it challenging, relevant and

exciting for the many different groups represented within the school community through linking the different areas of learning. This approach is developing well, but the school recognises there is still more to do.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support of pupils are good and the pastoral aspects are outstanding. The support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as for pupils new to English, is well planned and effective in meeting their individual needs. Support for those with autistic spectrum disorder is very good. There are well-developed systems for identifying any pupils who are not making as much progress as they should, so that immediate action can be taken to address these concerns. The school provides good academic guidance for its pupils and marking and feedback are used well to help pupils understand exactly what they need to do to improve their work. Pupils say they find this very helpful, especially the carefully written comments in their exercise books. This gives them a much clearer idea of what they need to do to improve and encourages them to do even better. The school recognises that while all pupils have group targets and receive good quality feedback from their teachers, they are not yet fully involved in assessing for themselves how well they are doing or setting their own personal targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The good leadership of the headteacher and his senior management team has enabled the school to meet the needs of a changing community by developing a committed and effective leadership team that shares a common sense of purpose. New systems for monitoring and evaluating provision have enabled the school to identify accurately the right priorities for development. Monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is both regular and rigorous and has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. For example, this has resulted in clear improvements in the numbers of older pupils attaining Level 4 and the higher Level 5 over the past two years. These improvements have been achieved despite major changes to staffing, which were beyond the school's control. The senior managers are supporting less experienced leaders well, so they become more effective at influencing the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This will help ensure consistently good progress in all classes. Community cohesion is of good quality. For example, the school has recently hosted the first Slough Community Cohesion Conference in partnership with Alk Saath (Together as One). The school council has been involved in devising a Slough Children's Charter, involving children from different ethnic and religious backgrounds. The governors are now much more involved in determining the strategic direction of the school.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

05 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ryvers Primary School, Langley, SL3 7TS

On behalf of the inspectors I would like to thank you for being so welcoming and helpful when we came to inspect your school. We think that you go to a good school and receive a good education. We were impressed with your friendliness and your sensible and helpful attitudes towards each other. Here is a list of some of the many good things about your school.

- You work hard at school and make good progress.
- Your school is friendly and welcoming. You behave extremely well and get on very well with each other.
- You are good at working independently, organising yourselves and helping and supporting each other.
- You welcome children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into your classes and make them feel part of the community. Well done!
- You are knowledgeable about healthy eating and lifestyles. We were pleased to see you eating lots of fruit and drinking plenty of water!
- All of the adults in your school make sure that you are well looked after.

All of the adults in your school want it to be even better. To help them to do this, we think that there are two things to do next.

- Your teachers need to make certain they give you more opportunities to work independently and assess for yourselves how well you are learning, so that you have an even better understanding of what you need to improve. You can then start to set your own targets for improvement.
- Your teachers are also going to check that the older pupils are making good progress during lessons and they have all the help they need to do really well in school.

You can all help by continuing to work hard and to meet the targets set for you. We are sure that you are ready for these challenges!

Yours sincerely

John Earish

Lead Inspector