

# Redbourn Infants' and Nursery School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	117236
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hertfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312542
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 July 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Philip Mann HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	218
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Hilary Hollick
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 June 2006
<b>School address</b>	Long Cutt Redbourn St. Albans Hertfordshire AL3 7EX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01582 792341
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

Redbourn Infant and Nursery is a smaller than average school in the village of Redbourn, near St Albans in Hertfordshire. There are 218 pupils on roll, including 61 in the Nursery, who attend on part-time basis. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are mostly of White British heritage, with a small number from minority ethnic groups, traveller or mixed heritage families. A very small minority are from families whose home language is not English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with statements of special educational need, is below the national average. The school has been awarded 'Healthy School Status' and holds a nationally recognised award (NACE) for challenging work.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Redbourn Infant and Nursery is a good school. Much has been achieved recently and this is fully reflected in the school's accurate evaluation of itself. Purposeful leadership by the headteacher has raised expectations of what pupils can achieve in many aspects of their development. A very positive ethos has been established, where pupils are encouraged to love learning and show respect for all. Parent comments such as, 'The school celebrates children's successes and encourages them to be proud of their achievements,' and, 'I'm extremely impressed with the teaching and ethos of the school,' fully reflect this view.

Achievement is good overall and all pupils make good progress in reading and mathematics. Achievement in writing is satisfactory but best for the younger pupils where it is good. Pupils in Year 2 have had too few opportunities to write at length and the teaching of early writing skills has been inconsistent in the past. School leadership has correctly identified this as an area for improvement with action now reflected in the good progress made by younger pupils in their early writing skills. All pupils make particularly good progress in the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and many other subjects such as physical education.

The personal, social development and well-being of pupils is good. Pupils behave well in the classrooms, playground and around the school. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and demonstrate very positive relationships towards other pupils and the adults working with them. They are developing a healthy approach to life and know who to go to if they feel unsafe. Citizenship skills are developed effectively through participation in school council activities.

The quality of education is good. Teaching is predominantly good or better with very little teaching observed that did not engage the children. Teachers set high expectations and plan work in great detail based on a thorough knowledge of the pupils' achievements. A relevant and interesting range of learning experiences provides many opportunities for pupils to learn new skills and develop their understanding of the world around them. The level of care and support provided for pupils is excellent and their progress is monitored very effectively. The opening of the 'Children's Centre' has further strengthened the strong partnership established with parents and the wider community.

Leadership and management of the school are good. Teamwork is a very strong feature. Monitoring and self-evaluation are significant strengths in which subject leaders now play a major part. Governors carry out their duties with due diligence. They actively monitor the work of the school and play a vital role in its evaluation. Short-term planning for school improvement is comprehensive and resources are used to good effect to support further development of the site. However, the absence of a long-term strategic plan limits the opportunity for even more efficient use of resources in the future. Much has been achieved since the previous inspection and with a strengthening of the leadership team, the school demonstrates excellent capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

### Grade: 1

Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. Children settle well into the supportive and exciting environment of the Nursery due to effective induction procedures. Children start in the Nursery at levels of ability similar to that seen nationally. Teaching across the key stage is at least good with some outstanding features. All staff plan very well for a good balance between

adult and child led activities. These allow the children to effectively develop their independent skills and this is reflected now in well above average attainment in personal, social and emotional development by the end of Reception. The development of early writing skills is actively encouraged and enhanced by an outside shelter for 'writing'. Such innovative provision enriches further the already well developed outside provision, used extensively even on very wet days. The introduction of daily letters and sounds sessions further supports the children's confidence in their early literacy skills in the classrooms. The recently improved provision, very effective team work and outstanding leadership has created excellent opportunities for all children to succeed. Assessment and monitoring of progress are particularly thorough. As a result of this excellent provision, children now make good progress to reach above national expectations overall in all areas of learning by the time they are ready to start in Year 1.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Ensure more opportunities are provided for older pupils to write at length in literacy and other lessons to enable them to attain higher levels.
- Plan effectively for the long-term development and continued improvement of the school.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement is good overall. Data indicates that pupils currently in Year 2 started in Year 1 with average levels of attainment, although the attainment of children currently in Reception is above expectations in all areas of learning. Inspection evidence confirms that all pupils make good progress to attain good standards overall. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make similar progress because support is carefully targeted to match their needs. Those from the traveller community make particularly good progress in mathematics. The challenging targets set for pupils are likely to be exceeded in reading and mathematics this year. Teacher assessments and inspection evidence indicate standards are currently above average in reading and well above average in mathematics. However, they are average in writing because punctuation and spelling for the pupils currently in Year 2 is underdeveloped and there have been too few opportunities for them to write at length. Consequently, not enough pupils are able to write confidently at the higher Level 3. This is an issue for improvement identified by the school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupil's personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils' obvious enjoyment of life in school has a significant impact on their behaviour and achievement. Pupils love to come to school and particularly enjoy the many enrichment activities and opportunities provided for them. Pupils feel safe and secure. They say they feel very well supported by staff and 'buddies' if they need help. This, along with their well developed social skills and good behaviour is apparent in the way they move around school and interact in the playground. Parents agree that the school is good at promoting personal development with one particular parent saying, 'I think the school is very good at dealing with each child individually and giving them a sense of self belief and confidence'. All pupils respond well to good opportunities for them to develop a healthy lifestyle. The School Council allows the children to have a 'voice' within the school. This has been instrumental in making changes to the way the lunchtime play session is organised. Attendance is average overall but some parents

continue to take their child on holiday during term time despite the careful monitoring and intervention of the headteacher.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. Teaching varies between satisfactory to outstanding with much being good or better. In those lessons judged outstanding, expectations are very high, the pace of learning is brisk and pupils are keen to learn. All lessons are well planned and resourced to meet the wide range of pupils' needs with good levels of challenge for the more able pupils. This is especially so where pupils respond very well to the challenges set for them. Support staff are well briefed and play an active role in all lessons. Teachers make appropriate use of the interactive whiteboards to illustrate key teaching points. However, when teaching is satisfactory, opportunities are missed to effectively use these teaching aids to fully engage pupils in their learning and maintain pace to lessons. The use of marking to inform pupils about their learning is developing well. However, evidence of older pupils responding to the teachers' comments in their work is limited. This is particularly evident in writing where common mistakes often reoccur.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum. The integrated, creative approach to subjects such as history, geography, science, art and design technology, gives breadth to the learning opportunities planned. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in information and communication technology (ICT). However, older and more able children spend insufficient time on extended writing activities outside of the literacy lessons to develop their writing skills. In contrast, the school provides a wide range of enrichment activities through visits, specialist visitors and seasonal activities. The 'Take 10' activity provides additional opportunities for physical activity alongside providing a mental stimulus to effectively start the day's learning. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good and pupils from the traveller community are supported well. The NACE Award recognises the many opportunities offered by the school to extend the more able pupils.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 1**

Pupils are well cared for by staff. The school takes the pastoral aspects of its role seriously with all child protection procedures robustly in place. Safeguarding arrangements ensure all staff are vetted effectively. The academic tracking of pupil progress and personal development is very good. Early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities leads to effective provision. Individual progress is monitored closely and the full involvement of outside agencies ensures that the needs of these pupils are met effectively. Older pupils are actively encouraged to make decisions about their own learning challenges. This has proved instrumental in raising standards within literacy and numeracy lessons. Individual learning targets are chosen by the pupils, with guidance from staff, and are reviewed regularly. These are proving effective in developing pupils' ability to be analytical of their own learning.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very clear direction for the school's work within a culture of continual improvement. A very positive and inclusive climate for learning has been established with challenging targets set to raise standards. Self-evaluation is especially thorough. Senior staff, subject leaders and governors monitor all aspects of the school in great detail to identify areas for further improvement. The engagement of parents and pupils in this process is an example of outstanding practice.

Governance and financial management are good. Planning for school improvement in the short term is comprehensive. However, there is currently no long-term strategic plan that effectively identifies the school's future development.

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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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	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?	1

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
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	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

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Redbourn Infant and Nursery School, Redbourn, Hertfordshire, AL3 7EX

On behalf of the inspection team I would like to thank you all for making us feel so welcome. We really enjoyed visiting your school and we were so pleased to see you all getting on so well with each other.

Mrs Hollick leads and manages the school very well. Under her guidance, all the staff work together to ensure that all of you succeed at school. They have all been working hard to help you improve in reading, writing and mathematics. Many of you are doing well in these areas but not enough of you at the top of the school are writing as well as you could. This is something that the teachers are going to try to ensure happens in the future. You can all play your part by writing as neatly as possible and always making sure that you punctuate your sentences correctly.

The governors work very closely with Mrs Hollick, the staff, parents and yourselves to learn what is needed to make the school even better. This information is used well to make a plan that ensures that the school runs smoothly each year and much has already been achieved. However, in the future, they are going to use this information to provide a detailed plan for the school's improvement over several years.

Thanks again for making us so welcome and I wish you all the very best for the future

Philip Mann

Her Majesty's Inspector