

Rendell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119935
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313453
Inspection dates	11–12 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Lois Furness

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	293
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Murray Thomson
Headteacher	Hedley Coleman
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	Rendell Street Loughborough LE11 1LL
Telephone number	01509 263497
Fax number	01509 235050

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

In this above average-size school, 15 different ethnicities are represented, with the majority of pupils of either White British or Bangladeshi heritage. Over two thirds of pupils speak English as an additional language and of these, a significant number are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above average. The proportion of pupils joining the school at times other than in the Foundation Stage is above that usually found.

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 with an accurate view of its own effectiveness. In a warm and caring setting, pupils are well looked after, relationships are good and pupils quickly develop an enjoyment of school and of learning. As a result, the achievement of pupils of all ages, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English, is good. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of what this good school does for their children. One parent, reflecting the views of many commented, 'I am proud my children have had the advantage of attending Rendell. The school accepts and celebrates diversity and has developed our children's strengths and supported any weaknesses successfully.'

Central to the school's success is good leadership and management. Under the direction of the very good headteacher, all governors and staff share the same clear educational philosophy: they want the very best for each pupil. Staff foster good levels of teamwork amongst their pupils, do all they can to raise their self-esteem and pupils' personal, social and emotional development is good. Pupils behave well, are very polite and willingly take on responsibilities such as school council members or 'little leaders'. They have a very good understanding of different cultures and celebrate a range of religious festivals. Pupils know what makes a healthy diet and how to keep themselves safe. They keep fit by taking part in a variety of games and sports both during and after school. They say, 'This school is a safe place to be and adults will always help you.' Care, guidance and support are good.

A good start to school life is made in the Foundation Stage (Reception) where provision is good. Children enter the Reception classes with skills well below those typically expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy. By the time they leave for secondary school in Year 6, standards are broadly average. Progress is outstanding in all aspects of English. Standards in science have improved markedly over the past two years, and progress is good. In mathematics, standards have fluctuated over time from broadly average to below average. In this subject, pupils are grouped according to ability. Although staff plan conscientiously, the activities planned do not consistently match the range of learning needs within the ability group. In English, work is presented neatly and very good marking is evident. However, teachers do not have the same high expectations of presentation in mathematics, and marking is not as helpful.

Overall, the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum are good. In the Reception classes, the importance of the outdoor learning environment is recognised. However, the school is not planning well enough to ensure that both classes of Reception-age children have the same opportunities to learn in the good outdoor area available. Purposeful activities and thoughtful deployment of support staff are strong features of most lessons. Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively, so that pupils benefit from good demonstrations of new learning. Regular assessments help teachers to find out what pupils have learnt. Teachers use this information well in order to offer the right kind of support, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those at an early stage of learning English, or for those whose learning needs an extra boost. There is no complacency in this school, and it has good capacity for improvement in the future.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start school in the Reception class with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication language and literacy. Although by the time children enter Year 1 standards are below average, this shows good progress in all areas of learning. A good emphasis is given to developing children's literacy skills through both speaking and listening activities, and the regular teaching of the names of letters and letter sounds. Teaching is good and assessment information is used well to plan activities that interest and motivate children. Children enjoy school and behaviour is good. Effective arrangements for induction help children to settle well and to make friends quickly. The curriculum is interesting and the younger Reception children have good opportunities to learn in both the indoor and outdoor environments. However, a lack of direct access from the classroom to the outdoor environment means, the class of the older Reception children has insufficient opportunities to extend their learning outdoors.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure, in mathematics, that activities consistently match pupils' needs, teachers have higher expectations of presentation and marking is more informative.
- Extend outdoor learning opportunities for the older Reception children

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall achievement is good. By the time pupils leave school in Year 6 they attain broadly average standards in English and science. Progress in English is outstanding, when considering the low language and literacy skills of many pupils on entry to the school. In science, progress is good and the school has worked hard over the last two years to raise standards by placing a strong emphasis on the investigative and experimental aspects of science. In mathematics, standards have varied from broadly average to below average. The leadership responded well to these variations and a variety of good strategies have been implemented to raise standards in this subject. This has resulted in improved progress and now more pupils than before are working at the expected level for their age in most year groups. However, the leadership team knows there is still much work to be done as not all teachers consistently plan work that matches the learning needs of all pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English make good progress as a result of careful targeted support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school and have good attitudes towards learning. They enjoy working together and sharing ideas. Attendance, however, is only satisfactory as a number of parents take their children on extended visits abroad during term-time despite the school's good efforts to prevent this. Behaviour is good and pupils are polite and friendly. Pupils feel safe, saying that adults in the school quickly and fairly sort out any bullying. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, with a notable strength in cultural development. Pupils have a very good understanding of different religions, faiths and cultures. Residential visits are

appreciated, as pupils say 'these help us to cope without our parents and encourage us to take responsibility for ourselves.'

The importance of leading a healthy lifestyle is well understood as pupils try hard to eat sensibly and take regular exercise. Healthy School status and the Activemark award show how the school acknowledges the importance of this aspect of development. Pupils know how to keep safe, knowing about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and smoking. They make a good contribution to the school community and the local community. Satisfactory basic skills of literacy and numeracy show pupils are prepared appropriately for the next stage of education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teachers' subject knowledge is good and pupils are motivated by clear explanations and well-managed class discussion. A strong emphasis on using subject-specific language effectively supports those pupils at an early stage of learning English. Careful questioning encourages thoughtful, reflective answers. Teachers and support staff work effectively together and all staff are involved in planning. Consequently, all are well prepared, and are confident to take initiatives to support individual learning. Pupils enjoy sharing their ideas and they say that learning is fun. Interactive whiteboards are used well to introduce topics and to share ideas. Planning is good, particularly in English, in ensuring clear links between class and group activities. However, in mathematics, activities do not always build sufficiently well on what pupils know already. Also, some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the presentation of work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Provision for modern foreign languages and a strong emphasis on creativity, particularly in art and design, effectively enhance the broad and balanced curriculum. A good range of additional activities, including residential opportunities and well-attended clubs, effectively support pupils' good personal development. Provision for science and information and communication technology has improved significantly since the last inspection. The constant review of the curriculum ensures there is an accurate view of development needs. For example, an emphasis on active learning has been successful in effectively engaging boys' interest. Although the outdoor learning opportunities for the younger Reception children are good, the opportunities for the older Reception children to use the outdoor environment as a resource for learning are insufficient.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a harmonious, friendly place with a caring culture shared by all. Pupils say they feel safe and staff will always help them if they have a worry or concern. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well, as are those who are at an early stage of learning English. There are effective links with a wide range of external support agencies. Although the school works hard to strengthen the involvement of parents in its work, parents do not always take advantage of the support offered. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and the safeguarding of pupils are implemented rigorously.

Academic guidance is good and the systems for tracking pupils' progress are well developed and effectively used to identify those in need of additional support. Pupils know their targets in English and marking effectively shows pupils the good features of their work and how they might improve. However, this good practice is not as apparent in mathematics and marking comments do not consistently help pupils to extend their knowledge of how well they are learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher, who is highly regarded by parents, staff and governors, provides very good leadership, with a clear focus on raising standards and developing pupils' personal qualities. He has developed an effective team of staff who share his vision and who are working well together to make this successful school even better. Self- evaluation, which involves all staff, is accurate as a result of thorough monitoring and evaluation activities, including good analysis of assessment information. Advice from external agencies is always actively followed. Good procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning through regular lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and reviews of teachers' planning. This has been more effective in English and science, because in mathematics the scrutiny of planning has not been linked sufficiently well to the work that pupils produce. Governance is good because governors strike an appropriate balance between supporting the school's work and asking challenging but helpful questions.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	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 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	3

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.

Annex A

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 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

13 June 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rendell Primary School, Loughborough LE11 1LL

Thank you for your help in this inspection. You made us feel so welcome and your parents should be proud of the way so many of you said hello and opened doors for us as we walked about school. Those of you who were kind enough to speak to us told us a lot about what you do and what you enjoy. We agree when you told us yours is a good school. You contribute to this by your hard work, good behaviour and the way you help each other in class. It was so good to see how well you all work and play together. You have a good understanding of how to keep healthy and how to stay safe. It was good to see you all so energetic at break and lunchtime. We think the school council, 'little leaders' and peer mediators do a good job. We know the school council is very proud of their involvement in the appointment of the new deputy headteacher who will start at school in September. We were pleased to know that you feel safe in school and that adults take good care of you.

Teaching is good, and activities are interesting. We could see that you enjoy using the interactive whiteboards to show each other your ideas. As a result, you make good progress and reach standards that are similar to those of children in most schools in the country. You learn very well in English, and your progress in this subject is outstanding. Well done! We think you have a very good headteacher who knows what needs to be done to make things even better. He knows you could do better in mathematics and we have suggested that all teachers plan work that makes all of you think hard. Also, we think you need to present your work more neatly; using the squares in your mathematics books to write your numbers would help! We have asked your teachers to give you better advice about how to improve your work, just as they do in such a good way in English.

We think the curriculum is good and you do lots of exciting things, including learning to speak French. Your art and design work is really good and some of the displays in school are amazing. We think that those of you in the Reception classes learn well. However, we do not think that all of you in these two classes have the same chances to learn outdoors. Therefore, we have asked your headteacher to think about how he can make sure that both classes are able to use the outdoor area to play and learn.

Thank you again for helping us and you can help the school by continuing to behave well and trying your best in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Furness Lead inspector

13 June 2008

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