

Ravenhurst Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120098
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313516
Inspection dates	21–22 February 2008
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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	524
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Naylor
Headteacher	Nicola Webb
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2006
School address	Ravenhurst Road Braunstone Town Leicester LE3 2PS
Telephone number	01162 897808
Fax number	01162 892389

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average county school. Most pupils are of White British backgrounds with about 20% being Indian and a few being of White and Asian heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high at 25%. Only a few pupils, mainly of Polish origin, are at the early stage of speaking English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational need, is similar to the national average. The eligibility for free school meals is below the national average. The school was awarded Healthy School status in 2007 and has been awarded two eco-school green flags.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This improving school is providing a good education. Progress has been rapid since the current headteacher took up her post in 2005. All aspects of the school have improved and the school has gained recognition as a 'healthy school' and for its work as an 'eco-school'. The impact of the strong leadership team, including an able and well informed governing body, on raising standards shows that the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Children enter the school with standards close to expected levels and make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. From Year 1 to Year 6, pupils make good progress and achieve above average standards. All ability groups do well in lessons because assessment data is used well to ensure that the work set and the support provided are tailored to their individual needs. The school systems for tracking the progress of pupils, both at group and individual levels, are well established and used effectively. Regular progress reviews identify which pupils are underachieving and the most appropriate support action. The very challenging school targets set in order to raise standards are monitored closely.

The quality of teaching has improved as a result of the good monitoring and support systems introduced, and is good overall. Some of the teaching seen was outstanding but the strong features of these lessons, where all the pupils are fully challenged with tasks very well matched to their abilities, were not evident in all lessons throughout the school. The outstanding relationships and attitudes of the pupils mean that they enjoy the lessons and they all behave well. Lessons are made interesting and the pace of learning is good. There is good support for pupils of lower ability and for those with limited knowledge of English. The quality of marking is satisfactory but written comments by teachers on how pupils should improve their work are of variable quality. Pupils said that, although they were told how they could have done better, they did not have to repeat or correct the work. Pupils have individual targets for literacy but not yet for numeracy and science. The good curriculum is being further developed to make it even more relevant to the pupils. The extra-curricular activities are well supported.

Pupils benefit from good pastoral care and good academic support and guidance. Good links with a variety of external agencies ensure there is good support for vulnerable pupils. All pupils are mature, sensible and polite. They say they are well cared for and feel safe. They enjoy taking responsibilities and helping in the classroom. Real excitement and pride were evident when the older children talked about helping the younger ones. Pupils make a good contribution to the wider community through charity work and participation in local events, have a good understanding of what they have to do to lead healthy lifestyles and are very enthusiastic about joining in sports. The good behaviour and racial harmony within the school shows they have a good understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. Their involvement in the school council and the eco-school committee are examples of how, together with their good basic skills, they are well prepared for later life. The school works hard to encourage improved attendance but too many parents still take family holidays during term time.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children's standards when they enter the Reception class are close to expected levels. Literacy and language skills are less well developed with writing being the weakest area. They make satisfactory progress so that by the end of the Foundation Stage their skills are broadly average.

Good facilities enable children to experience a wide range of learning opportunities within the Foundation Stage but variations in the quality of teaching result in variable progress between the classes. Leadership and management are satisfactory but improving since the appointment of the Foundation Stage leader in January 2008. Children's progress is now carefully tracked and assessments help teachers plan for the next stage of children's learning. The Foundation Stage leader has begun to monitor the teachers' planning but this is still at an early stage. Children who are at the early stage of acquisition of English are supported well through effective deployment of learning support assistants and voluntary helpers in lessons. Assessments against the Foundation Stage Profile currently rely too heavily on activities set up by adults and do not reflect the quality of choices made by the children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Share the best practices in teaching, such as matching the work to pupils' abilities to ensure they are fully challenged, throughout the school to raise standards further.
- Ensure the quality of marking is consistent to provide good guidance to pupils to help them achieve challenging targets in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure assessments in the Foundation Stage are informed by the choices children make independently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress, but in Years 1 to 6 progress is good. Over one third of the pupils currently in Year 6 did not start at the school in Reception, and many of these joined with lower standards than their peers. In spite of this, overall standards in Year 6 are above average and many of those who have been in the school right from the Reception Year are working at standards that are well above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in the spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of their development. They respond well to the anti-bullying provision, saying that the school's prevention and control of bullying is one of its best aspects. Pupils develop well socially, as shown in the courteous way in which they address each other and adults. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good, due largely to the exemplary attitudes and relationships that pupils have both to each other and to adults. Racist incidents are extremely rare. Pupils enjoy and value the good community spirit and respond well to the opportunities for responsibility that the school provides. The school works hard to raise attendance but, despite improvement, attendance remains below average and the amount of authorised absence remains relatively high. Rates of exclusion are very low. Attitudes to learning are very positive. In lessons, pupils are attentive to their teachers and engage actively in the completion of tasks.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Whilst good overall, there are significant proportions of satisfactory and outstanding teaching. The main difference between the most and the least effective lessons is how well the tasks are

matched to pupils' abilities so that the work and the pace provide suitable challenge. Teachers are confident and enthusiastic. They have good subject knowledge and use information and communication technology resources well to engage and motivate the pupils. They generally make good use of the assessment data available to them to plan the lessons. Pupils show outstanding attitudes to learning and they have good opportunities to discuss their work in pairs, which helps develop their speaking and listening skills. There are inconsistencies in marking, which does not always provide sufficient guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. The quality of the monitoring of teaching and learning is effective and is having a positive impact on improving practice. Literacy targets give pupils a clear understanding of the skills they need to develop. Pupils with additional needs are supported well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English. The teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a good range of focused and age-appropriate activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school meets its statutory requirements and has already gone further by introducing the teaching of French. All classes now contain single age groups. Provision is more targeted with the introduction of setting by attainment in literacy and numeracy. The school provides a range of visits and visitors which enhance and extend the children's experience. Gifted and talented pupils have their own programme of events. Pupils appreciate the wide range of extra-curricular activities that are available to them, mentioning particularly the many sporting activities and the booster groups in Year 6. The school continues to monitor and revise its curriculum as part of its strategic plan to make it more inspiring and bring more enjoyment to pupils' learning. In a minority of lessons, where teaching was only satisfactory, the curriculum content was not sufficiently matched to the needs of all of the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers and other members of staff are united in their strong commitment to pupils' well-being. The school has robust procedures to safeguard children and provides a very safe and supportive environment for them. A few parents said they would like more information about the midday supervision arrangements. Pupils themselves say that they find the school a healthy and safe place for enjoyment and achievement. The school has been particularly successful in promoting the adoption of the habits of healthy living. Pupils say that the school listens to and responds to their point of view and that the school council is effective. The school's records show that the systematic support given to all types of vulnerable pupils is exemplary so that these pupils are now reaching higher and more challenging targets. The school has a rich source of data with which to track pupils' progress and which enables class teachers to report to parents and to contribute effectively to many aspects of pupils' personal development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

At all levels, the school's leaders set clear direction and share the vision to make this an outstanding school. Challenging targets are very well used to raise standards on a whole-school basis. Within the classroom, pupils are set challenging targets in literacy but not yet in numeracy

or science. The good assessment and tracking systems supported by the review process ensure that the leadership team knows the school's strengths and weaknesses well. Action taken to address a relative weakness is demonstrated by the new appointment in the Foundation Stage to raise progress to the same level as the main school. Equal opportunities are a strong feature of the school and the improved standards now give pupils good opportunities to work with other pupils when they move to secondary school. Governance is good. Governors are well organised and support the school well. Both the governors and the school say that the partnership between them has improved greatly. The school has demonstrated that it has a good capacity to improve further.

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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ 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?	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	3
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

25 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravenhurst Primary School, Braunstone Town, LE3 2PS

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed being at your school, meeting with your teachers and talking with you during the day. Your school is an improving school which is providing you with a good education. These are the things that we particularly liked

- The relationships you have with adults and with each other are outstanding.
- Your attitude to learning is outstanding and this results in good behaviour and allows everyone to learn well in lessons.
- The staff take good care of you and this helps you feel safe and allows you to enjoy school.
- Teaching is good and ensures that you are all making good progress in your learning.
- The headteacher and her staff have worked hard to make your school a good one and are determined to make it even better.
- You understand how to live healthily and you enjoy the opportunities you get for sports and activities in your spacious school grounds.

In order to help the school improve and become even better, we have asked staff to

- Look at each other's teaching methods to try to use the best ways of helping you learn even more in all of your lessons.
- Set you challenging targets in numeracy and science the same way as they do for literacy.
- Give you more written guidance in your books to enable you to understand better how to improve.
- Use information about choices you make independently to monitor your progress and needs in the Foundation Stage.

You can do your bit to help by making sure you know your targets in literacy, numeracy and science and by correcting your work when you make mistakes.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood Lead inspector