

Redwell Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121949
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	314163
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4-7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Trevor Hill
Headteacher	Anne-Marie Jackson
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2003
School address	Barnwell Road Wellingborough NN8 5LQ
Telephone number	01933 673520
Fax number	01933 673520

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: provision in the Foundation Stage, the development of pupils' reading skills, how well the needs of more able pupils are met in mathematics, provision for boys' writing, and the impact of subject leaders. Evidence was collected from parents' questionnaires, discussions with pupils, members of staff and governors, observations of teaching and learning, scrutiny of pupils' work and school documentation. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Most children are working comfortably within or above the levels expected for their age when they start school in the Reception Year. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. Most pupils are of White British heritage. Only a very few pupils are eligible for free school meals. The headteacher joined the school in September 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

In this good school, the excellent partnership between members of staff and the parents helps pupils to achieve well and attain high standards from their above average starting points. Parents help children to settle into the Reception classes by taking part in assessment interviews and by taking turns to complete 'Billy Bear's diary'. These activities, along with outstanding Foundation Stage provision, help children in this year group to have an exceptionally good introduction to school life. In Years 1 and 2, very well attended reading sessions for parents and their children provide a calm and purposeful start to the day and contribute successfully to the school's particularly high reading standards.

In Years 1 and 2, good teaching enables most pupils to make good progress in writing, mathematics and other subjects. There has been a slight downward trend in standards at the end of Year 2 in recent years because some very able pupils could do better in mathematics, and more able boys do not always produce the quality of writing of which they are capable. A new system for monitoring pupils' standards and progress is used well by the dynamic headteacher to identify areas for development and, along with the teachers, to set challenging targets for all pupils. The school has started using a new mathematics scheme this term and early indications are that it is supporting teachers well in providing pupils with more challenging work. Teachers and experienced learning support assistants monitor pupils' progress carefully and, together with voluntary helpers, use various 'rescue' strategies successfully to support less able pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have good individual education plans with easy to measure steps which ensure that work builds successfully on what they already know and can do.

Most pupils thoroughly enjoy coming to school and, as a result, the level of attendance is good. Members of staff are friendly and caring and engage the pupils' interest well. Pupils follow 'Redwell Ted's good behaviour code' in an exemplary fashion. Excellent pastoral care ensures that pupils know how to stay safe and well. For example, pupils know how to cross the road safely and Year 2 pupils explained that they can 'tell the teacher' if they have any worries. The very positive attitudes of most pupils towards school support them very well in their learning. Most are eager to please and keen to help each other at work and play. They show the teacher how well they have understood lessons by using a 'thumbs up' system. Pupils are expanding their contribution to the community well through the new school council and they know the importance of listening to the views of others. As one councillor said, 'We can make our school a happy, healthy, safe place to learn.'

Teachers support the pupils' learning well most of the time. They give clear explanations of what pupils are going to do in each lesson. They mark work frequently but do not always make clear how pupils could improve their writing. An interesting and varied curriculum meets the needs of most pupils well. The school has identified correctly that some writing topics are not sufficiently 'boy-friendly' and has started to look at ways of making writing more exciting. The curriculum ensures that pupils learn how to make healthy choices and most pupils enjoy healthy foods and take part heartily in frequent exercise. For example, pupils in a Year 1 class joined in the 'Activate' session enthusiastically, knowing that it would help them to concentrate in the lesson which followed. The school has established very close links with external agencies, including with other schools. Pupils learn about a wide range of occupations from visitors and visits and by using the interesting communal role-play areas. Their well-developed basic skills

and excellent personal development prepare them extremely well for the next stage of their education and later life.

The headteacher and the governing body work together well as a committed and successful team, ensuring that the school continues to provide pupils with a good education. There is a clear sense of purpose and the school's good capacity to improve is evident in the successful way that provision for information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection. Several subject leaders are new to their roles and the school is aware that, while they are enthusiastic, they have not had enough opportunity to evaluate provision and progress in the subjects they manage so that they can assist more fully in raising standards.

Most parents are very pleased with the work of the school. The headteacher is aware that some parents want to know more about how well their children are doing and the rationale behind recent changes, and is considering ways of improving this information. Nevertheless, one parent spoke for many by saying, 'The school is well run, with happy children who are keen to learn.'

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage (Reception Year) is outstanding because members of staff work together exceptionally well as a team, enabling children of differing abilities to do very well in all areas of learning. By the time children start Year 1, most are working well beyond the levels expected for their age. Children particularly enjoy the exciting activities planned around a shared theme. For example, they greatly enjoyed comparing shoes of various sizes, matching cats to the right size basket and estimating how many bears would fit into a container. Members of staff have high expectations and ask children challenging questions while they are working. There is a very good balance between interesting activities supported by an adult and tasks that children have chosen. Monitoring provision in the Foundation Stage is informal but has been successful in identifying and tackling minor weaknesses so that children learn as quickly as possible.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise expectations and the level of challenge for the more able pupils in mathematics and for more able boys in writing.
- Increase the opportunities for subject leaders to become involved in monitoring progress in their subjects.

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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?	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	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
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?	1
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	1
How well 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	1

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

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

1 November 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Redwell Infant School, Wellingborough, NN8 5LQ.

Thank you for welcoming me to your school and for sharing your work with me. I am pleased that you enjoy coming to this good school.

- Here are some things about your school:
- you make an excellent start in the Reception Year
- you make good progress in Years 1 and 2, especially in reading
- you take notice of Redwell Ted's rules and behave very sensibly
- teaching is good and your teachers help you to learn quickly by explaining what you are to learn clearly
- you study a wide range of topics and you learn the importance of staying safe
- you enjoy taking part in 'Activate' sessions
- all adults in school are kind and caring and look after you well
- your headteacher, teachers and governors are working well to make your school even better.
- What I have asked your school to do now:
- help those of you who are quickest at learning to do better in mathematics and help boys to do their best writing
- ensure that teachers who look after subjects have more chances to check that you are doing well.

I thoroughly enjoyed talking with you about your work and watching you learn, and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Alison Cartlidge Lead Inspector

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