

The Raleigh School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125011
Local Authority	Surrey
Inspection number	315122
Inspection date	4 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Madeleine Gerard

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	422
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Nicky Owens
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona O'Neill
Date of previous school inspection	11 October 2004
School address	Northcote Crescent West Horsley Leatherhead KT24 6LX
Telephone number	01483 282 988
Fax number	01483 285 631

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector. The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: pupils' achievement, the standards that they reach, their cultural development, the quality of teaching and learning, the academic guidance given to pupils, and the extent to which pupils are able to develop their literacy and numeracy through cross curricular links between subjects. Evidence was gathered from a range of documents, pupil progress data, school records, discussions with the headteacher, senior leaders, staff and pupils, observations around the school and replies to the parents' questionnaire. Some 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

This is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils are White British. Very few pupils are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is in line with the national average. A below average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mainly for speech and language and for behaviour. The school has a number of nationally recognised awards including Healthy School and Bronze Ecoschool status, and the Activemark for Physical Education.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The Raleigh is a good school. Outstanding features include the pupil's personal development and the quality of care, guidance and support provided. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. The overwhelming majority of parents are confident that their children are safe, well cared for and enjoy their time in school. This helps pupils to make good progress and is reflected in their consistently above average attendance. One parent commented, 'All my children have settled in fantastically, have great caring teachers and all love school.' Pupils are very confident, polite and have very positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is exemplary. They show a very good awareness of those who are less fortunate than themselves and support many charities and projects. They are enthusiastic to take on responsibilities within the school, and make a good contribution to school life and the local community. The elected school council proudly speak about their work in the school, for example, through their 'lunchbox peek' campaign to promote healthy eating. This develops pupils' very good social skills and self-esteem.

Attainment on entry to the school has been above average in the past, but more recently pupils have joined the school with attainment generally at the expected levels for their age. Provision in the Foundation Stage is outstanding and ensures that children get off to a very good start. Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 have been exceptionally high in English, mathematics and science for the last three years. From their above average starting points, this represents good progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 are generally well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing, although writing dipped to broadly average in 2007. The school's own data suggests that rates of progress as pupils move through the years have been uneven in the past. However, since the beginning of this year, the school has successfully addressed this. Staff knowledge of measuring pupils' attainment has been developed, pupils' progress is monitored more carefully and targeted support put in place, and changes introduced to the way writing is taught. As a result, pupils' current work shows that they are on course to meet challenging targets. Consequently, the capacity to improve the school is good. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those who find literacy difficult and those with more limited social skills make outstanding progress because of the very good, focused support they receive in class and in small groups. Teaching assistants are managed skilfully to meet the needs of all pupils. Pupils' outstanding academic standards and extremely good attitudes and social skills mean that they are very well prepared for the next stage in their learning.

Thorough monitoring by leaders help maintain good teaching. Pupils make good progress because of good teaching and pupils' high levels of motivation. Lessons are appropriately challenging. Teachers make clear what pupils are supposed to be learning from the outset. This enables pupils to reflect on their own progress. However, there are shortcomings in marking because guidance on how pupils can make their work even better is not consistently given. Behaviour is managed very well and throughout the school strong relationships among pupils and staff contribute to pupils' confidence and progress.

The good curriculum meets the needs of the pupils. One pupil said, 'I like the variety of things we are given to do. There's always something exciting.' The school has prioritised the development of strong links between literacy and a wide range of other subjects which ensures pupils are given lively and interesting tasks to reinforce their reading and writing skills. A similar range of opportunities for pupils to practise their mathematical skills is developing. For example,

in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils calculated the ingredients needed to make 120 scones which they then cooked for the school's Strawberry Cream Tea for volunteers and community residents. However, this is not consistently in place and opportunities are missed to reinforce their numeracy skills.

Year 5 pupils enjoy learning a musical instrument and there is a wide range of popular extra curricular clubs including French, judo and puppet club. Pupil's cultural understanding and self-confidence grows through participation in music, drama and a wide range of sports which encourages pupils' very positive attitudes to keeping fit and healthy. Pupils are developing a good awareness of cultural diversity. They enjoy visits to local places of interest and visitors into the school. They speak with particular enthusiasm about annual residential visits, 'We went to the best place ever!' said one pupil about the Year 6 activity week.

Outstanding pastoral care and support are centred on all staff knowing pupils very well. They help pupils make outstanding gains in their personal and social skills. An excellent 'buddy' system ensures that Reception children are partnered with Year 6 pupils who play with them and help them settle. Year 1 pupils are supported in their reading through a partnership with Year 5 pupils, who take their role very seriously. The school works extremely well with a variety of outside agencies to promote pupils' well-being. Pupils are very clear about how to keep themselves safe. They feel secure because they are confident that should problems occur which they cannot sort out, adults will take swift and effective action. Pupils have helpful, individual learning targets which are regularly reviewed. Teachers have good assessment procedures and pupils are developing good self-assessment skills.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher gives clear direction. All leaders and managers are successfully involved in monitoring and identify relevant areas for further development. Self evaluation is largely accurate, although the school judges pupils' standards and the Foundation Stage too harshly. Funding is well managed and any surplus is put to effective use, such as improving the ventilation in the computer room and enhancing the school hall. The governing body is committed and supportive and takes an active role in school improvement. Parents generally praise the school and the staff.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

Children enjoy learning and make very good progress to reach well above average standards in communication language and literacy, and in their personal, social and emotional development. Home visits prior to starting and well-established routines help children to settle quickly. One parent said, 'We are extremely happy with the school and our child has really enjoyed her first year here.' The outstanding curriculum links areas of learning very well and planned activities provide practical experiences. For example, children practise joined up handwriting describing insects, observing their shape, number of legs and colour. There is a very good balance between adult-lead tasks in small, targeted groups and opportunities for children to choose activities for themselves.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure marking is used consistently to make clear to pupils what the next steps are in their learning.
- Increase opportunities for all pupils to develop and apply their numeracy skills in other curriculum subjects.

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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	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	1

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	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1
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

15 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Raleigh School, Leatherhead, KT24 6LX

Thank you for being so friendly and helpful when I came to inspect your school. You made me feel very welcome and I enjoyed talking with you. I really enjoyed my visit and would like to tell you what I found.

The Raleigh is a good school.

These are its strengths:

- you are happy at school, talk about it with pride and are keen to do your best
- you benefit from good teaching and experience an exciting curriculum
- everyone provides excellent care, guidance and support for you
- you behave well in lessons and around the school; when there are occasional upsets or fallings out you are confident that an adult will deal with the matter quickly
- year 5 and year 6 buddies do a great job in looking after younger pupils
- you reach very high standards and make good progress in your work
- you like the lunchtime and after school clubs and especially like the residential visits that are organised for you in years 3 to 6
- you do a good job in raising money for charity which shows you care about those who are less fortunate than you
- your headteacher, staff and governors are leading the school well and are working hard to make it even better.

I have asked the school to make sure that when your work is marked you are always given lots of ideas about how to improve your work. I have also asked the school to ensure all of you have more opportunities to practise your numeracy skills in all your subjects.

You can help by continuing to work hard and doing your best.

Yours sincerely

Madeleine Gerard

Lead Inspector