

Radford Semele CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125665
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	315280
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2008
Reporting inspector	Derek Watts

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	178
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Walsh
Headteacher	Paul Wyllie
Date of previous school inspection	15 September 2003
School address	School Lane Radford Semele Leamington Spa CV31 1TQ
Telephone number	01926 426940
Fax number	01926 426940

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Radford Semele CE is a smaller than average primary school. The vast majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just below average. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and none of these is at an early stage of learning English. At the time of the inspection, four teachers, including the deputy headteacher and leaders of English, mathematics and science, were on maternity leave. An acting deputy headteacher was seconded from the local authority.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of Radford Semele CE Primary is satisfactory. There are a number of good features to its work. Pupils' personal development and well-being are good because of the effective pastoral care and support provided. Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. Standards in the current Year 6 are broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. With his staff, the headteacher has created a positive school climate, which is much appreciated by pupils and their parents. During the past few years, the roles of subject leaders have been developed so that they are more effective in monitoring and improving their areas of responsibility. However, with four key leaders being on maternity leave, this has understandably had an impact on the progress of improvements and has led to some inconsistencies in provision. The school has developed good systems to assess and monitor pupils' attainment. This information is used well to set challenging targets. Most parents have expressed satisfaction with the school but significant numbers have concerns about the changes in staffing. The school has managed the staffing issues well, given the circumstances, by appointing replacement teachers who know the school and are committed to covering the whole period of teachers' absence.

Pupils' personal development is a clear strength of the school. They enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance and their keen participation in activities. Pupils are friendly, polite and relate very well to others. Behaviour is consistently good in lessons and around the school. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and have a clear understanding of the importance of healthy eating, keeping safe and taking regular exercise. They make sound contributions to the local and wider community. Pupils enjoy the good range of additional activities that enrich the curriculum.

Satisfactory teaching and a sound curriculum enable pupils to make satisfactory progress. Across the school, teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. Instructions, questioning and explanations promote learning effectively. Pupils make good progress when they are challenged, and tasks are well matched to their abilities. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school. A few lessons are too teacher directed and the pace of learning can decline. For example, when lesson introductions are too long, pupils are not sufficiently involved in their own learning. Standards by the end of Year 2 are usually average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is taking positive steps to raise achievement in writing by broadening the range of writing opportunities. Improving provision and achievement in mathematics is also a school priority. The quality of pupils' artwork is a strength of the school.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children usually enter Reception with knowledge and skills expected for their age. They quickly settle into routines and make good gains in their personal development. They make satisfactory progress in other areas of learning. By the end of Reception, standards are in line with expectations. Children benefit from teacher's clear instructions and explanations. They are keen to participate in the satisfactory range of activities provided. At times, over directed work can restrict children's opportunities to explore and work independently. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Children enjoy their learning and relate well with adults and other children. Since

the last inspection, the school has improved the outdoor facilities and the addition of a covered area has extended the classroom.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement, particularly in writing, so that pupils attain higher standards.
- Improve the consistency of teaching by ensuring that all lessons are suitably challenging, that they maintain a brisk pace and involve pupils fully in their learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Children make sound progress in the Foundation Stage and most attain the expected levels in all areas of learning by the end of Reception. Standards by the end of Year 2 are usually average in reading, writing and mathematics. National tests for Year 6 in 2007 indicated that standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. This was a higher attaining year group than usual and these pupils made good progress. Assessment and monitoring in the current Year 6 indicate that standards are broadly average in English, mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about school and show positive attitudes to learning. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Clear and consistent expectations by staff and positive relationships lead to consistently good conduct. Pupils form very good relationships with adults and amongst themselves. They work well collaboratively in a range of activities. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles and possess a good understanding of the importance of healthy diets and taking regular exercise. The raising of funds for a variety of charities such as ? contributes to the wider community. Pupils are reasonably well prepared for their future. They have well-developed personal and social skills and a sound base of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with elements of good practice. Across the school, teachers have established positive relationships with pupils and managed them well. Pupils are attentive and respond well to their teachers' clear instructions and effective questioning. Good opportunities are given for pupils to discuss their work, particularly in pairs, and this develops their speaking and listening skills well. When teachers use assessment information effectively, tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. As a result, pupils are challenged well and they make good gains in their learning. In a few lessons, pupils are not suitably challenged and find the work either too hard or too easy. Introductions to lessons are sometimes too long and this results in a slow pace and a lack of pupil involvement. Teaching assistants are effectively deployed and contribute well to learning, particularly for pupils with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities. The marking of pupils' work is constructive and helpful. Teachers' comments praise good work and give guidance on how to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well and enables them to make satisfactory progress. Positive steps are being taken to raise achievement in writing across the school by providing pupils with more opportunities to write in different styles and for different purposes. However, there is not an explicit policy on the teaching of handwriting. Leaders of mathematics and science have introduced more investigative and problem-solving work to their subjects but this is not consistent in all classes. While there are some good examples of pupils using and applying literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects this is not happening in all classes. The quality of artwork is a strength of the curriculum. Throughout the school, there are impressive pieces of pupils' work inspired by a wide range of artists. A good range of additional activities contributes to pupils' enjoyment and interests. Successful residential visits for Years 5 and Year 6 to outdoor centres develop pupils' geography skills and provide new activities such as climbing and canoeing as well as building pupils' personal and teambuilding skills. Healthy lifestyles and personal safety education are promoted well across the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Effective pastoral care and support contribute well to pupils' personal development. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and have established very good relationships with them. Procedures to ensure pupils' protection and safety are satisfactory. Systems for assessing and tracking pupils' attainment and progress have improved and are now good. Pupils' progress books provide a clear ongoing record of pupils' attainment in writing, mathematics and science. Assessment information is usually used well to plan teaching. Assessment is also being used effectively to set individual learning targets in English and mathematics. As a result, pupils know what they are working towards to improve.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are successfully promoting good pastoral care and this is leading to good personal development for pupils. The impact of leadership and management on teaching and on pupils' achievement is currently satisfactory.

Leaders of English, mathematics and science have increased their skills of monitoring and improvement planning through participation in the Primary Leadership Programme. Self-evaluation is mostly accurate and realistic. The school knows what it does well and is taking positive action to bring about improvements in writing and mathematics. However, the absence of so many key leaders at once is adversely affecting the school's rate of development. The school's capacity to improve is satisfactory.

After a local authority review in summer 2007, the governing body have restructured and governors now have a clearer understanding of their role and responsibilities. Governors are beginning to offer constructive challenge as well as support.

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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

16 January 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Radford Semele CE Primary School, Leamington Spa CV31 1TQ

Thank you so much for welcoming us into your school and showing us your work. We enjoyed our visit and would like to tell you what we found out. Radford Semele is a satisfactory school. Teaching is satisfactory and most of you are making the expected progress.

These things are strengths of the school:

- you clearly enjoy school and your attendance is good
- you are friendly, polite and get on very well with other pupils and adults
- a good range of additional activities is provided
- displays of your artwork are impressive
- your behaviour is good in and around the school
- you adopt healthy lifestyles
- staff know you well; they take good care of you and give you good support.

These are the things the school has been asked to improve:

- some of you could make more progress, particularly in writing, and the school is working hard to make this happen
- sometimes your teachers could challenge you more, involve you more in your learning and ensure that the lesson moves on at a quick pace.

Finally, thank you once again for all your help. We wish you all the best for the future.

With kind regards

Derek Watts Lead inspector

16 January 2008



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With kind regards

Derek Watts
Lead inspector