

Rainford Brook Lodge Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104780
Local Authority	St. Helens
Inspection number	319792
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Clare Henderson

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	205
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr I Beaton
Headteacher	Mrs Pamela Davenport
Date of previous school inspection	28 June 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 10 lessons taught by seven teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at documents relating to safeguarding, pupils' progress and attainment, the curriculum, the school's development plan and the way in which the school evaluates its own performance. The views of parents and carers, through 91 returned inspection questionnaires, and the opinions of staff and pupils were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- pupils' attainment in English and mathematics, particularly in Years 3 to 6, and the achievement of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- successes of leaders and managers at all levels in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection
- the quality of leadership, including governance, in raising pupils' achievement
- the quality of curricular provision in enabling all pupils to achieve their potential.

Information about the school

This school is average in size. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for a free school meal is below average. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The majority of pupils are of White British background. A few are from minority ethnic groups. The school has gained the National Healthy Schools and Activemark Awards.

The school provides extended care in the pre-school class which, together with the Reception class, forms the Early Years Foundation Stage provision. The school has suffered significant staffing disruptions, since its last inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

This is a satisfactory school. There are, however, key strengths which include good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage, good links with parents and carers and strong partnerships within the local community. These aspects contribute effectively to pupils' good personal development. Parents and carers are appreciative of the good care and support their children receive.

Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has fluctuated. There are indications of above average standards in the current Year 6, but over time attainment has been broadly average. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. Recent support from the local authority, actions put in place to improve the quality of teaching and learning and greater stability in staffing, are beginning to improve pupils' attainment, particularly in writing. However, there has not been enough time for these features to be fully effective in raising attainment overall and in accelerating progress.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is no better than satisfactory because not all teachers use assessment data effectively to plan lessons which will challenge pupils to achieve their full potential. Similarly, too few lessons provide pupils with enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and to work independently.

The curriculum is enriched well, particularly through a wide range of interesting after-school clubs that pupils really enjoy. However, pupils are not provided with enough opportunities within all subjects of the curriculum to extend and apply their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils develop a good understanding of what is needed to lead healthy and safe lifestyles. Furthermore, the contribution they make to their school and wider community is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall, although they have limited opportunities to engage with pupils from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds within the wider world.

Leaders and managers including governors, evaluate the school's effectiveness satisfactorily. They currently identify key strengths and weaknesses accurately. However, they do not make rigorous enough use of tracking data to ensure that all pupils are achieving as well as they should. Consequently, the capacity for the school to sustain improvement is no better than satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' overall attainment and accelerate their progress in English and mathematics, by ensuring that leaders check that :
 - teachers consistently make effective use of assessment data to plan lessons

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which challenge all pupils to achieve as well as they should

- pupils have more opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning and to work independently
- pupils are provided with further opportunities within all subjects of the curriculum to extend and apply their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Extend the role of senior leaders and governors in improving the quality of teaching and learning by making more rigorous use of tracking data and evaluations of the quality of lessons to ensure all pupils are achieving as well as they should.
- Enhance the promotion of community cohesion, by:
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to engage with other children from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds in the United Kingdom and abroad
 - reviewing the impact of such experiences on pupils' attitudes and values.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Most pupils are enthusiastic, well-motivated, behave well and have good attitudes to learning. They achieve well in those lessons where teachers expect much of them and set them challenging targets. In such lessons, encouraged by clear explanations and teachers' searching questions, they work well with one another, share ideas and make good progress. However, such lessons are currently few in number. The school works satisfactorily to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, by providing work that meets their needs, skills and understanding adequately. As a result, these pupils make similarly satisfactory progress to their classmates.

Pupils develop a good understanding of safety. They say the few incidents when pupils misbehave are quickly sorted out and that they could talk to any member of staff if they had a problem. A good partnership between home and school, coupled with pupils' above average attendance, contribute well to their enjoyment of school.

Pupils' greatly value the responsibilities they have to contribute effectively to the school and the local community. For instance, as members of the 'pupils' voice' group, they represent the school by contributing to discussions affecting their local community at meetings in the town's Chamber of Commerce. Such experiences enable pupils to develop adequate work place skills and prepare them satisfactorily for their economic well-being and future.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In the few lessons where the quality of teaching is at least good, learning is planned well around clear objectives that are shared with pupils, tasks are challenging and pupils make fast progress. However, when, as in the majority of lessons, teaching is satisfactory, lessons are overly directed by teachers or not pitched at the right level. This is because teachers do not use information gathered through assessments consistently or well enough to ensure that lessons fully match pupils' skills and understanding. Neither do they provide pupils with sufficient opportunities to work independently or to be involved in assessing their own or others' work.

Pupils enjoy most lessons, especially when the emphasis is on practical activities, for instance, when pupils have to plan, organise and cost an event with the local council. Such activities advance their self-confidence, enterprise and communication skills adequately. The school has made a start at linking subjects through themes, to increase pupils' understanding and enjoyment and to provide a focus for developing their writing skills. The impact of this on raising pupils' attainment in English and mathematics is satisfactory.

Most parents and carers understandably speak positively about the good care and support their children receive from all adults, and how this contributes well to their children's good personal development. Support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is good. Parents praise this aspect of the school's work. 'The school has worked wonders with my child' said one parent. Arrangements to prepare pupils for high school are well-planned and help to ensure a smooth transition to their next stage of education.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Considerable staffing disruption, including at senior level, has slowed the pace of improvement and limited the effectiveness of the management of the quality of teaching and learning. Consequently, some of the issues raised at the last inspection, for instance, to track pupils' progress more rigorously to ensure that they all achieve at least well, remain to be addressed fully.

Governors are supportive and keen to play their part in promoting improvement. They ensure that all safeguarding requirements are fully met. However, they do not fully challenge the school's performance. The ethos established in the school is one of promoting equality for all. This is evident in the availability of curricular enrichment for different groups of pupils. However, all groups of pupils do not achieve the best they could in English and mathematics. Partnerships with others are good, particularly in promoting pupils' well-being. The quality of community cohesion is satisfactory overall. It is good within the local community. However, there is a limited range of opportunities for pupils to link up with children from different religious, ethnic and cultural backgrounds to their own within the wider world.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3

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The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3
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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children begin the pre-school with skills which are broadly in line with those expected at this age in all areas of learning. Good links with parents and carers ensures children's passage into the pre-school and on into Reception are smooth. Parents and carers welcome the opportunity to access wrap-around care throughout the day to accommodate their working patterns. Adults provide good care and effective teaching, within exciting and stimulating indoor and outdoor environments. Children are happy from the moment they arrive. Their smiling faces are testament to this. Learning is advanced at a good pace because adults capitalise on children's interests. For instance, children eagerly investigate which items will float or sink, or use plastic piping and water to test out how far their boats will travel. Such activities give children practical experiences, such as problem solving and scientific enquiry. As a result, they quickly become independent, creative and active learners. Progress is good and, by the time they move to Year 1, most children are exceeding the goals expected in all areas of learning. Ongoing observations of children at play are collected by all adults. These are reflective and used effectively to plan children's next steps in learning. The effective manager has a good knowledge of how well children progress. She has initiated a project with recently appointed pre-school staff to refine the method of tracking children's progress through pre-school and into Reception.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The 89 parents and carers who replied to the questionnaire agree that their children are safe in school. Most say that their children enjoy school and that they are content with the education and care their children receive. A few raised concerns about the negative effects that the numerous staff changes have had on their children's learning. Inspectors agree that this has had the impact of limiting the pace at which pupils have progressed in Key Stages 1 and 2. In addition, some also feel that their views are not always taken into account, that unacceptable behaviour is not dealt with effectively and that leadership of the school is not as strong as it could be. Evidence indicates that parents'

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and carers' individual concerns are responded to appropriately, that staffing is more stable and that behaviour observed during the inspection was good. The inspection found that leadership is satisfactory overall. Inspection evidence confirms the positive responses which most parents and carers submitted about all aspects of the school's work.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rainford Brook Lodge Community Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 91 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 205 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	66	28	31	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	61	67	30	33	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	39	43	42	46	10	11	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	53	37	41	5	5	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	51	56	37	41	3	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	48	43	47	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	54	36	40	4	4	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	47	44	48	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	45	43	47	5	5	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	36	45	49	10	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	35	46	51	9	10	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	35	38	42	46	9	10	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	49	54	39	43	3	3	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



21 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rainford Brook Lodge Community Primary School, St Helens, WA11 8JX

I would like to thank you for helping the team when we inspected your school. I would like to share with you what the inspectors found out about your school. Yours is a good school. Here are some of the best things about it.

- You enjoy learning and you make good progress while you play in the pre-school and Reception classes and satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6.
- All adults take good care of you and you told us that you feel safe in school.
- You behave well and have a good knowledge of how to lead a healthy life.
- The way you contribute to school life and within the community is good.
- Partnerships within your community are good and provide you with lots of opportunities to learn new skills in sports and music.

To make the school even better, I have asked your headteacher, teachers and governors to:

- check that each one of you is given work in lessons which will enable you to achieve as well as you can and to see that you make enough progress in each class
- check that you are given lots of opportunities to use your literacy and numeracy skills to find out new information
- give you more opportunities to learn about the different lives, values, customs and beliefs of children in other parts of the United Kingdom and across the world.

All of you can help by always trying your very best and letting teachers know if your work is too easy or too hard.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Clare Henderson

Lead Inspector

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