

Rough Hay Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 104177 |
| Local Authority | Walsall |
| Inspection number | 323984 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 March 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Gerald Griffin |

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 3–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 296 |
| Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS | 0 |
| Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years | 0 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Diane Moore |
| Headteacher | Mark Klekot |
| Date of previous school inspection | 1 February 2006 |
| Date of previous funded early education inspection | Not previously inspected |
| Date of previous childcare inspection | Not previously inspected |
| School address | Rough Hay Road Darlaston Wednesbury WS10 8NQ |
| Telephone number | 0121 568 6421 |
| Fax number | 0121 526 2809 |

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|--------------------------|----------------|
| Age group | 3–11 |
| Inspection dates | 3–4 March 2009 |
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

The percentage of families claiming free school meals is above the national average. Nearly all pupils are from White British families. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage provision comprises a Nursery with part-time places and two Reception classes. The headteacher has been in post for two years.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Rough Hay is a good school. Pupils achieve well and leave with average standards despite entering the Nursery with skills well below those typically found in children of their age. The school is rapidly improving under the good leadership of the headteacher. Over the past two years the school has successfully tackled its history of underachievement, poor behaviour and weak teaching. Parents are very pleased with the standard of education that the school provides and typically they write, 'The school has improved so much and I am very happy with my child's progress. Children like coming to school because the staff really understand the children and quickly resolve any problems that they have.'

Pupils' attitudes in school are very positive and their personal development is good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. They are polite and considerate to each other and to adults. They enjoy their education and feel very safe and secure. They are proud of their school and develop into mature young people. Children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Their progress is accelerating in Key Stages 1 and 2 and standards are rising in English and mathematics overall. However, pupils' ability to write in different styles remains a weakness. This is because the advice they are given on how to improve their English does not place enough emphasis on this aspect of their work. In all other respects academic guidance is good and is making a significant impact on raising standards.

Good teaching provides interesting and stimulating lessons that engage pupils well. As a result, they are keen to learn and work hard. Lessons stretch pupils well and they make good progress overall. Occasionally a good level of challenge is not sustained throughout the lesson when the work the teacher plans does not accurately match each pupil's needs. Some pupils find this work either too hard or too easy and progress temporarily slows. The good curriculum supports aspects of pupils' personal development well. There are many popular clubs that add to pupils' enjoyment of school. Care, guidance and support overall are good. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of each pupil well to provide a good standard of pastoral care. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive sensitive support. The headteacher receives good support from subject leaders and leadership and management are good. The headteacher's thorough commitment to raising standards is enthusiastically shared by staff. The impressive record of recent improvements means that the school is well placed to get even better.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes. They enter the Nursery with skills and experiences that are well below the levels normally found. They make good progress, and start Year 1 with levels that are closer to, though still below, the national average.

Children feel very safe and secure and their personal development is good. They really enjoy learning and work and play together well. Children take turns and readily share toys and learning materials. They take responsibility well, for example by registering themselves as present. Children are very well cared for in the supportive learning atmosphere. Parents are encouraged to help their children learn but they do not have the opportunity to work alongside their children at the start of the day. Teachers plan an exciting range of learning activities both indoors and outdoors. There is a good focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills and

children make particularly good gains in these areas. For example, role play is used very effectively to develop conversation that brings their play to life and helps them make sense of the world. There is an appropriate balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning and children gain good levels of independence because of the many opportunities they have to choose what to do. However, there are not enough opportunities for children to practice writing in their chosen activity. Children very much enjoy the outdoor space and have good access to it in all weathers. Running in the fresh air and manoeuvring wheeled vehicles skilfully contribute well to their physical development.

The leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is strong, with a clear grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. It has brought about significant improvements. While healthy snacks are provided at break, food used in lessons does not always reinforce healthy eating. Regular assessments are used skilfully to plan the next steps in children's learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Inform pupils of how they can improve their writing styles so that they can improve their standard of English.
- Ensure pupils are challenged well throughout their lessons so that they sustain their good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement, including that made by those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is good. Children's skills and experiences on entry to Nursery are well below the levels expected for their age. Children make good progress overall in the Nursery and Reception so that by the time they start Year 1 they are closer to national averages, though still below them. In Years 1 to 6, pupils' progress is improving and is good overall. Standards are rising and by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, they are broadly average. Boys' progress in Years 1 and 2, which was slower than the girls' last year, has improved and boys and girls now make similarly good progress.

Standards in English are rising because pupils' spelling, punctuation and breadth of vocabulary are improving. Pupils' ability to express their ideas clearly in a range of styles, such as stories, reports and persuasive letters, is a relative weakness. Reading standards have improved in the last two years because pupils now have a clearer understanding of the meaning of the text. Pupils are making good gains in mathematics too. Their skill in solving mathematical problems is well developed. However, calculations sometimes take too long because pupils' recall of simple multiplication is slow. Improved research and investigation skills have raised standards in science and information and communication technology, which are also average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respect other people and their property, and reflect maturely on their feelings. Their good behaviour is founded on a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils cooperate well with others and are keen to work in teams, and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good overall. However, their understanding of the diversity of British culture is a relative weakness.

Pupils feel very safe because the rare cases of bullying are quickly and effectively dealt with by the school. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe, for example, on the Internet. They keep fit by taking plenty of exercise and most of them walk or cycle to school and take part in sports clubs. They are well informed about healthy eating but not all put this knowledge into practice at break when some eat sweets and chocolate. Pupils thoroughly enjoy all that the school offers and they are very keen to come to school. Although attendance rates are average, most pupils only have time off school when they are really ill and unauthorised absence is rare. Pupils are keen to take responsibility, for example as members of the school council. They are proud of the help they have given the school in writing the new behaviour policy and choosing playground apparatus. Pupils generously collect for charity and are keen to take part in local events. Positive attitudes and average standards mean pupils' preparation for secondary school and future employment is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

There are many signs that teaching is improving. Classes are well managed and lessons are rarely interrupted by misbehaviour. Teachers use computers and other resources well to engage pupils and develop their learning. Assessments are used effectively to plan work that mostly challenges pupils well and ensures they make good progress. Sometimes the level of challenge drops. This can happen when the work provided is either too easy for some pupils or too difficult for others because it is not pitched at the right level for each member of the class. Pupils make especially good gains when they are actively involved in their learning in investigations, research and educational games. The many opportunities provided for pupils to talk in pairs is helping them to clarify their ideas and develop good language skills. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to learning, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum supports pupils' personal development well overall, for example in physical education and swimming lessons. Pupils gain a good understanding of world faiths from religious education lessons. There are insufficient opportunities for them to work with their peers from ethnically diverse backgrounds to strengthen their understanding of the diversity of British culture. Recent curriculum changes, to make work more relevant, have enabled boys to catch up with the girls in Years 1 and 2. The wealth of sports and other clubs raise pupils' aspirations. The many educational visits to places such as museums bring relevance to class work and broaden pupils' horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils can readily turn to an adult if they have a problem, secure in the knowledge that their worries will be quickly and effectively resolved. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have appropriate learning programmes that match their needs well based upon secure assessments of their work. The procedures to settle pupils who arrive during the academic year are effective. The school makes good use of outside agencies to promote pupils' learning and welfare. For example, expert advice has strengthened teachers' planning of work for pupils

with speech and language difficulties. The robust child protection arrangements and health and safety procedures are regularly updated.

Marking and other feedback provide pupils with valuable guidance on how they can improve their work, especially in mathematics, where it matches accurately the weaknesses in each pupil's work. In English pupils are given clear help with improving skills such as spelling and punctuation. Instruction on how they can develop different writing styles is not always detailed enough.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Robust monitoring and evaluation provide the school with a largely accurate assessment of its strengths and areas for improvement. Development plans are effective. For example, behaviour has been improved by implementing a clear code of conduct, which is supported by pupils and parents, and reinforced by a popular system of rewards. The school sets its pupils very challenging targets. Progress towards them is checked regularly and there are effective procedures to help pupils who fall behind catch up with their work.

Many subject leaders are new in post but they are already taking responsibility for checking standards and for improvements in their areas of responsibility. For example, they have provided training for teachers to sharpen their skills when teaching problem solving in mathematics. However, they are not yet taking full account of pupils' and parents' views about learning in their development plans. The governors take a keen interest in the school and are not afraid to hold it to account over the standard of education it provides. They have a good understanding of school data but are less confident in their interpretation of information from outside sources.

The school uses staff well to keep teaching groups small so that pupils get more individual help. It is having considerable success in getting parents who are reluctant to visit school involved in their children's education. The school is providing classes that enable local people to gain qualifications in the basic skills. The school is a harmonious community and has satisfactory plans to promote community cohesion more widely, for example through supporting voluntary work abroad.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| 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

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| 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 capacity to make any necessary improvements | 2 |

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

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|---|---|
| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How well do children in the EYFS achieve? | 2 |
| How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS? | 2 |
| How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted? | 2 |
| How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed? | 2 |

Achievement and standards

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|--|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress | 2 |

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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|---|---|
| How good are 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 |
| The extent to which 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 | 3 |

The quality of provision

| | |
|--|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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 |

Leadership and management

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|--|-----|
| 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 eliminated | 2 |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 3 |
| 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 |

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

5 March 2009

Dear Children and Pupils

Inspection of Rough Hay Primary School, Darlaston WS10 8NQ

Thank you for being so polite and friendly when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our visit and having the opportunity to talk to some of you and to see you in lessons and at play. We also liked meeting Betty, your school dog. You are rightly proud of the school's happy atmosphere in which you all get on so well together. We think Rough Hay is a good school. We also think it is improving. Here are some of the things we found out.

- You make a good start to school in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- Good teaching helps you make good progress in your lessons.
- Standards are average in English, mathematics and science.
- You really enjoy school and feel very safe and secure.
- You behave very well and you do your best to attend very regularly.
- You have good relationships with your teachers and you work hard for them.
- The curriculum provides you with exciting clubs and visits out of school that you enjoy.
- Adults look after you well and are always ready to help you.
- You have a good understanding of how you can improve your work.
- The headteacher and adults are working hard to make sure the school gets better.

- We have asked the school to do two things to help you do even better in your learning.
- Tell you how to improve the way you write stories, reports and letters.
- Make sure teachers keep you working hard throughout each lesson.

You can help the school by continuing to behave well, trying your best and attending regularly.

We wish you all success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Gerald Griffin

Lead inspector