

Rivelin Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107081
Local Authority	Sheffield
Inspection number	324522
Inspection dates	27–28 April 2009
Reporting inspector	Ken Valentine

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.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	412
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	47
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Roberta Taylor
Headteacher	Dr Yvonne Twelvetree
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Morley Street Sheffield South Yorkshire S6 2PL
Telephone number	0114 2341304
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Rivelin Primary School is much larger than average. It serves a mixed area with a significant part that is more socio-economically advantaged than typical. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. A very small number of pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion entitled to free school meals is well below average. The school provides the Early Years Foundation Stage through Nursery and Reception classes. Rivelin offers a full extended school service. The playgroup and after school club on site are run by private providers and did not form part of this inspection.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The leadership and management of the school have been effective in improving teaching and learning, and this is starting to have a positive impact on the standards pupils attain. However, poor communication between the school's leadership team and parents means that there is a high level of dissatisfaction on the part of a significant minority of parents about the running of the school. The fact that governors and school's managers have been unaware of the level and nature of these reservations demonstrates the need for improved monitoring and assessment of parental views and better communication with parents.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. After a period of turbulence, staffing is now more stable and teaching is of a satisfactory quality that better meets the needs of pupils. The previous decline in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 has been halted and Year 2 pupils are on track to meet their targets. In Key Stage 2 there is an upward trend in pupils' achievement and current standards are broadly average.

The trend of improvement in pupils' achievement follows successful action by leaders and managers to deal with previous weaknesses in teaching and to introduce more effective management arrangements. These changes are having a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning, although some weaknesses remain. For example, although there is now more of a whole-school approach to developments, the quality of teaching is not yet consistent enough and does not always fully meet pupils' needs. The marking of pupils' work is also too varied in quality and does not always inform pupils of what they are doing well or how to improve.

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory, as is their behaviour. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, however, is good. They are confident in manner and present themselves well. The attitudes of most pupils contributes well to their learning and social development. Pupils speak with interest of the things they learn and show enjoyment of their work by their above average attendance and willing participation in class. The curriculum is satisfactory and is giving increasing chances for pupils to consider topics related to their health and future well-being. Where pupils can play a role in the local community, they do so with enthusiasm. Of particular value are visitors to school who contribute to curriculum enrichment. This is evident in the good-quality writing produced by pupils following a session with a professional author.

The school provides good care, guidance and support for pupils. Pupils express confidence in the support they receive and say they feel well cared for and safe. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory and meet requirements. Academic monitoring has improved and is helping the school identify areas of weakness in pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Clear priorities for development are identified, based on sound self-evaluation. Actions have been taken to improve the school, although some are recent and so their impact is yet to be fully realised. Management structures are appropriate, and more effective monitoring of the work of the school is being used to increase the extent to which staff are held accountable for their practice. There is a strong focus on raising standards, and effective arrangements to support equality of opportunity. Although links with other agencies are good, communications with parents are poor apart from in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Its recent improvement shows it has a sound capacity for improving further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

When children arrive in Nursery most have skills and knowledge that are in line with national expectations, with particular strengths in personal, social and emotional aspects of learning, physical development and creativity. They make satisfactory progress so that by the start of Year 1 the majority are working within the early learning goals and attaining at expected levels. There are valuable links with parents and these help children to settle quickly into the Nursery class. Welfare requirements are fully met. Children's care and their personal development are good. Children behave well and play happily together. This was observed when they were planting seeds that they had bought from a garden centre as part of their study of growing. Adults make the most of opportunities to help children develop their confidence to become independent learners. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching and the curriculum are accelerating children's progress. Good use is made of the indoor spaces where children play and explore a wide range of activities. Work has started to develop the outdoor provision area so that children's learning is further supported and extended. Staff check and record pupils' learning, but systems to track their progress from the beginning of Nursery to the end of Reception are at an early stage of development. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed leader is enthusiastic and has a clear vision of how provision can be further improved.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching so that more lessons are good and work is better matched to pupils' abilities to raise achievement.
- Improve the quality of teachers' marking and of the academic guidance given to pupils.
- Ensure that governors and leaders have effective arrangements for seeking parents' views of the school to improve communication and relationships with parents.

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

Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 have declined over recent years because of staffing problems. However, the situation has improved and standards are now average, with pupils making progress in line with their targets. Following two years when standards at the end of Year 6 were below average and pupils underachieved, there has been an improvement, and in 2008 the provisional Key Stage 2 tests results were above average. This represented satisfactory achievement from pupils' starting points. Results improved most in mathematics and science and action taken to improve standards in English, especially writing, is beginning to have an impact. Current standards are broadly average, again showing satisfactory progress from pupils' starting points. Pupils' achievement across the school, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, is satisfactory overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy school. Behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils generally behave well in lessons, but behaviour in the playground is occasionally too boisterous. Pupils are confident in expressing their views and have a good understanding of right and wrong. They are well aware of the benefits of healthy eating, exercising and keeping safe. They benefit from the school's participation in the local sports partnership. Relationships are good and pupils respond positively to the care shown by their teachers. They have a good awareness of different cultures and their responsibilities to the wider world through their work on Fair Trade. An awareness of the needs of others is shown by pupils in their fundraising for local and national charities. Although there is an elected school council, its work is still developing and pupils feel they could make an even greater contribution. Pupils are satisfactorily prepared for the next phase in their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Relationships between teachers and pupils are good in lessons and pupils show good attitudes to learning. Many lessons have good features, but the quality of learning varies from class to class. The best lessons are dynamic, with well-planned tasks which quickly grasp pupils' interest and encourage them to work independently. Activities build on previous learning and challenge all pupils appropriately. Opportunities for pupils to think for themselves are created. Other lessons are more mundane, however. In these, work does not match pupils' different skills and abilities closely enough. Single tasks set for the whole class do not stretch higher-attaining pupils, while lower-attaining pupils find the work too hard. Usually, in these lessons teachers tend to talk too much, explaining in detail what pupils are about to learn, while pupils sit patiently waiting to start. This slows the pace of learning and progress. Although pupils are aware of their targets, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and some are not given sufficient information to help them improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is currently being reorganised to give pupils more opportunities to apply and develop what they have learned in one subject to a range of different, practically based learning experiences. Examples of these are themed modules such as World Week and Healthy Living Week. These changes, though well founded, have yet to show their full impact on the standards pupils reach. A good range of interesting activities outside the classroom such as residential visits, sport, and drama, and visitors to the school are well liked by pupils. These enrich their learning and widen their horizons. Provision for personal, social and health education is good, and is reflected in the positive attitudes to learning that the large majority of pupils have. The successful introduction of German to Years 3 and 4 and French to Years 5 and 6 is broadening pupils' views of the world.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Support staff contribute well to the satisfactory progress made by these pupils. There are close and effective links with other agencies that provide specialist support for pupils, such as the speech and language service. A significant minority of parents have raised concerns about bullying. However, inspection evidence indicates that bullying is dealt with appropriately. Pupils confirm they feel safe, and say that if bullying does occur it is dealt with by their teachers. Pupils say they enjoy their time at school. Academic monitoring is satisfactory and is developing. The progress made by pupils is accurately tracked and this triggers the additional support for pupils for whom it is needed. Good links with local secondary schools ensure that pupils transfer confidently to the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

A number of improvements have been made to leadership and management structures and processes and these are starting to have an impact. Successful new teaching and management appointments have been made. Monitoring has been made more rigorous, and staff are held more accountable. Arrangements for checking pupils' progress have been strengthened. These are leading to a more corporate approach to practice which is helping to improve pupils' achievement. However, some developments are recent and they have not yet ensured enough consistency of practice in all areas, such as the quality of teaching. The management and organisation of the curriculum promotes equal opportunities well but activities to contribute to community cohesion are at an early stage of development.

Parents recognise strengths of the school but the poor quality of communications between the school and parents detracts significantly from parents' appreciation of the school's work. A significant minority of parents report that they find the school's leadership team unapproachable and that insufficient note is taken of their views. Comment is also made regarding weaknesses in the administrative efficiency of the school that sometimes causes misunderstandings and lessen parents' opportunities to contribute. Governors have not been aware of these concerns and, as a result, have not held the school leadership team sufficiently to account.

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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
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?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	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/or disabilities make progress	3

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

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
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	3
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	3
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?	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?	2

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 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	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
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**

In our recent visit to your school I was impressed with the welcome you gave the team. Thank you for that.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory quality of education. You obviously enjoy the work your teachers ask you to do and I think you are making sound progress in your learning. Your teachers are working hard and give you interesting things to do and I have asked the school to make all the teaching equally good and to give you work that matches your needs. I have particularly asked that teachers mark your work carefully so that you all know how you are getting on and how to improve.

It is good to see that you are developing as young people, caring for each other and acting responsibly. Most of you behave sensibly, although a very small number of pupils are too boisterous in the playground. Your parents are keen to support you at school and I have asked the school to make sure that they have better contact with your homes. I have particularly suggested to the school governors that they make sure that they know your parents' view of the school.

The school looks after you well and the headteacher and staff are making progress in their efforts to make sure that the school does its best for you. I hope you will play your part with your continuing good attendance and lots of enthusiasm for your future work.