

Redhills Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	113084
Local Authority	Devon
Inspection number	325751
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Mark Lindfield HMI

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	384
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	26
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Letten
Headteacher	Jeremy Doyle
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Landhayes Road Redhills Exeter EX4 2BY

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Inspection number	325751

Telephone number
Fax number

01392 255555
01392 211605

Age group	4-11
Inspection dates	5-6 November 2008
Inspection number	325751

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Redhills is a larger than average primary school. Most pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average whilst the percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. A small number are on the autistic spectrum and a few have speech language communication or hearing problems, a similar number have behavioural, emotional, or social problems. The school provides Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for pupils in Reception. It achieved Healthy School status in 2008.

Park Preschool Group, located on the school site, is independent from the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with Section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards, teaching and learning, care, guidance and support and leadership and management.

Redhills Community Primary is currently providing an inadequate quality of education for its pupils. Children enter Reception with skills generally in line with those expected for their age and make satisfactory progress across the EYFS. Their progress slows markedly across Key Stage 1 to the extent that standards are exceptionally low in reading and significantly below average in mathematics. A specific focus on pupils of higher ability has resulted in an increase in the proportion of higher attainers at Key Stage 2 but has had limited impact at Key Stage 1, where very few pupils achieve higher levels. Pupils make limited progress because the quality of teaching and learning is inadequate overall; instances of better teaching and learning are infrequent. Through Years 1 to 4, assessment information is not used effectively to ensure that all pupils are set work which is sufficiently challenging and it is not until Years 5 and 6 that the majority of pupils start to make the progress that should be expected of them. There is also a weakness in the way assessment information is used to guide pupils on what they should be aiming for and to support them in reaching their targets. The school has identified the use of assessments as an area for improvement and a newly appointed senior staff member is leading staff training, but these initiatives are too recent to have had a discernible impact.

There is a good ethos and a strong sense of togetherness in the school. All pupils feel welcomed and as a result, they behave well and are keen to do well in their work. The vast majority of parents are pleased with the care and time the school makes for their children. One parent wrote, 'Staff are caring and approachable. There is a strong sense of community at Redhills.' These positive features contribute to pupils' good personal development. The school works closely with outside agencies, including the local authority which provides valuable support and guidance. These links are helping to improve teaching and aspects of leadership and management. The school has been slow to respond to declining standards at Key Stage 1. As a result, progress since the last inspection has been limited. However, recent improvements, such as more effective teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 show that the school's leaders have the capacity to bring about improvement. Senior leaders have identified specific areas of weakness accurately and have developed appropriate strategies that are beginning to eradicate them. The school's actions have ensured that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen to average levels having improved from a below average baseline at the end of Key Stage 1, although the school is quick to acknowledge that more remains to be done. Subject leaders have a clear picture of what needs to be done. However, some action plans have an insufficiently close focus on raising standards and lack milestones that can be used to monitor progress. Following recent training in observing lessons, leaders offer sound support and advice to colleagues throughout the school. This has led to improvements, particularly in the teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 2. Information and communication (ICT) across the school, and modern foreign languages are also being well led. Governors are regularly involved in the life of the school and provide satisfactory challenge.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The provision for children in the EYFS is satisfactory. Children start school with a range of skills around those expected for their age. Daily letters and sounds sessions help children identify sounds in words but, when sessions are too long, they quickly lose interest and this impedes learning. Overall, children make satisfactory progress by the end of the Foundation Stage. Most write their names accurately and higher attaining children count in twos to ten.

Relationships are good and children are safe and well cared for, which helps to ensure that behaviour is satisfactory overall. Teaching assistants provide good support and help children to share equipment and work together. Children have satisfactory opportunities at designated times to make decisions whether to work inside or outside. There are appropriate plans to improve the outdoor area which does not consistently provide sufficient opportunities for experiences in all areas of learning.

Assessment procedures are satisfactory; samples of children's work, photographs and statements from the e-profiles build a picture of how well children are doing. The information is used to identify the next steps in learning for the majority. Recent training has increased leaders' confidence in linking planning to the EYFS curriculum and in meeting welfare requirements. Consequently, the leadership and management of the EYFS are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement in English and mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 1.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school, but particularly in Years 1 to 4.
- Ensure better use of assessment information to challenge and support all pupils to do their best.
- Provide clear action plans that include quantifiable milestones and place an appropriate emphasis on raising standards within a realistic timescale.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Children start in the Reception class with skills broadly in line for their age and they make satisfactory progress in their learning so that by the time they enter Year 1 many are working at the expected levels in most areas. During Key Stage 1, pupils' progress is inadequate because work does not build on what they can already do. Consequently, standards are very low, particularly in reading and mathematics and have been so for the last three years. Some pupils underachieve significantly; very few of the most capable pupils in Year 2 reached the higher Level 3 in the 2007 and 2008 national assessments. The systems to identify pupils who have learning difficulties at an early stage lack rigour and as a result pupils do not consistently receive the support needed to make satisfactory progress. Poor progress continues in Years 3 and 4 and too many lessons fail to build appropriately on previous learning. Progress improves in Years 5 and 6 because of better teaching that takes proper account of the pupils' needs. However, because of earlier slow rates of progress, a significant proportion of pupils do not reach the standards of which they are capable.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, and social understanding are good. There are regular sessions of hymn singing in assemblies that inculcate successfully in pupils a sense of reverence and a celebration of the spiritual dimension. Pupils have frequent opportunities to broaden and deepen their awareness of world faiths through visits to local churches, a synagogue and a nearby Islamic Centre. Most children enjoy coming to school and show positive attitudes to their learning both in lessons and around the school generally. A recently introduced programme of social and emotional development helps to reinforce these positive attitudes and adds to pupils' self confidence. Pupils' cultural understanding is developed through the satisfactory curriculum.

Pupils are appreciative of the extra-curricular opportunities that exist through various after-school clubs. Behaviour is good and pupils express confidence that staff manage the few instances of poor conduct that occur, fairly and consistently. There are few reported incidents of bullying and pupils both feel safe and are aware of the importance of the safety of others, especially in practical lessons such as science. Attendance is satisfactory and is improving.

Pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles is a strength of the school. They demonstrate a good knowledge of the importance of healthy eating, the harmful effects of drug abuse and smoking and the positive benefits of taking regular exercise. Pupils have a range of opportunities to make a positive contribution to the school and wider community through such initiatives as fundraising for local and national charities and recycling projects. Thoughts and opinions are voiced through the Pupil Forum, although its influence is not yet as extensive as it might be. Pupils' development of skills that prepare them for adult life, such as problem solving and teamwork, is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

Teaching and learning are inadequate overall and pupils' progress is erratic as they proceed through the school because insufficient attention is given to building on their prior attainment. In some lessons, teachers were unable to judge the progress that pupils had made because learning intentions were imprecise. Important weaknesses in the lack of pace and in over-direction by some teachers at the start and end of lessons, impeded opportunities for independent learning and led to a limited degree of challenge, notably for pupils of higher ability. Staff, commendably, take great pains to promote pupils' self-confidence and personal development through the use of praise. Too often this is at the expense of focusing on their academic progress. The best marking is detailed and points a clear way forward for pupils in a minority of classes; this good quality marking, however, is not evident across the school as a whole.

Teaching in EYFS and in Years 5 and 6, is more effective because work is more closely matched to the needs and capabilities of pupils and as a result, they consistently make at least satisfactory progress. Parents notice the increased confidence in their children in these classes. Group work, investigations and problem-solving activities encourage pupils to learn collaboratively and help to develop their social skills suitably.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. It has strengths, such as the development of creative links between subjects to make learning more interesting and to provide opportunities to extend pupils' writing skills in other subjects. However, it is not yet closely enough tailored to pupils' individual needs, because assessment information is not used sufficiently well. Provision for ICT helps to engage pupils and is used well to support problem-solving activities in mathematics. The curriculum is broad and balanced and is extended through visits, field trips and visitors to the school. The history project on an Exeter workhouse, using first-hand evidence, gives the pupils a sound understanding of their local area and engages their interest. Pupils learn modern foreign languages, starting in the Reception Class. Consequently, younger pupils answer the register confidently in a range of languages. These activities give pupils a wide range of opportunities to develop their interests.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 4

The school provides a safe and secure environment, which effectively supports pupils' personal development and well-being. Good relationships promote a trusting atmosphere so that pupils are confident in discussing issues of concern with staff. The school has also had some recent success in reducing the absence rate through more direct follow-up with parents and better liaison with the Education Welfare Service. Arrangements for ensuring that pupils' welfare is safeguarded are in place. However, guidance and support for pupils are inadequate. Pupils are not aware of how much progress they are making; they do not have individual targets in literacy or numeracy and are frequently unsure what they need to do to improve. Individual education plans for pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not all revised at suitable intervals to ensure that progress is satisfactory. Assessment is not used well enough to identify pupils who have additional needs and not all pupils who are in need of support receive it at the earliest opportunity. In the most successful lessons, teaching assistants support these pupils' learning effectively although this good practice is not sufficiently widespread. Teaching assistants and other professionals provide satisfactory help for pupils new to speaking English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leaders and managers of the school are aware of the need to raise standards in Key Stage 1 but have been slow to respond. Improvements have been hampered by weaknesses in school development planning and by insufficient involvement of leaders at a range of levels in the school. Senior leaders are now more effectively involved in evaluating the school's work and this is having a positive impact on increasing the rate of progress in Years 5 and 6 and in securing improvements to ICT and modern foreign languages. Subject leaders are providing valuable support and advice to colleagues. The mathematics coordinator has overseen improvements in the use of problem solving activities so that pupils apply their calculation skills more effectively in lessons. Governors are supportive and place a strong emphasis on the caring ethos of the school. They provide satisfactory challenge but are prevented from playing a more effective role because of a lack of clear and quantifiable milestones in some of the school's action plans.

Recent training in monitoring lessons for all senior leaders has given them a greater understanding of the relative strengths and the areas for development in all subjects. Lesson monitoring has, however, on occasion been overgenerous in evaluating the strength of teaching. The headteacher recognises that insufficient account is taken of prior attainment in the planning of some lessons. Realistic plans are in place to develop this aspect of the school's approach, and senior leaders, supported by the local authority, are currently involved in a training programme to address this issue.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
--	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No
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?	3
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	3
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	4

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?	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	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 learners' needs?	4
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?	4

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	4
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	4
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
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?	Yes

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

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Redhills Community Primary School, Exeter EX4 2BY.

Thank you very much for your welcome when we visited your school. We noticed that your behaviour was good and that you were friendly and inquisitive. You feel welcomed and part of the school. Staff are happy to help you and take care to make sure you are all right. You enjoy the visits and visitors to your school and appreciate the after-school clubs that are on offer.

You get off to a satisfactory start in Reception class but then your progress slows down in Years 1 to 4. We think you can do a lot better, especially in mathematics and reading. We have asked the school to make sure that you do, and have given the school a 'notice to improve'. This means the school will get lots of help to improve quickly. We saw that teachers help you to make quicker progress in Year 5 and 6 and some of your parents told us that you feel more confident when you are in these classes. We have asked the headteacher and senior staff to make sure that all of you make progress right across the school. This will make sure that by the time you leave school at the end of Year 6, you have all done as well as you can do. In particular, we have asked the school:

- to ensure teachers take extra care to know how well you have done in each lesson and then to plan work that follows on from wherever you have got to
- to make sure that you know how to make your work better in literacy and numeracy
- to draw up action plans that concentrate on raising standards. They should show how leaders can check through the year that these plans are working.

Thank you, and good luck.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Lindfield

HMI