

Radbrook Primary School

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	123448
Local Authority	Shropshire
Inspection number	327913
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Patricia Potheary

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)	201
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	David Emmerson
Headteacher	Peter Rickard
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Calveton Way Bank Farm Road Shrewsbury SY3 6DZ
Telephone number	01743 232895
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Age group	4–11
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Amended Report Addendum

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Radbrook is an average size primary school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportions of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are eligible for free school meals are lower than average. In the two years since the last inspection the school has appointed a considerable number of staff. The headteacher was appointed in January 2007. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in the Reception class is funded by the local authority. There is a privately run after school club on site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Radbrook is a good school. Pupils thrive in a well-ordered and stimulating environment where learning is highly valued. The progress pupils make and their personal development and well-being are good. This results from strong and very well informed leadership and management, where improving pupils' personal and academic achievements is the key focus. When pupils join Reception their attainment is above that typical of the age group. Standards remain above average throughout the school. The quality of teaching has improved significantly recently and the progress pupils make is now at least good for a large majority in all age groups. Senior leaders recognise that standards do not yet reflect the progress being made. This is particularly evident for the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 who have made rapid progress in the last year.

Pupils clearly enjoy school and their attendance, behaviour and understanding of keeping safe are outstanding. They work hard in lessons and are polite, helpful and very supportive of each other. They find lessons interesting and, as one commented, 'teachers are friendly and help you'. They particularly enjoy physical education and 'doing science experiments'. Good teaching helps pupils of different abilities work at their own pace. For this reason all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the more able, make equally good progress.

The school provides a wealth of opportunities to make learning lively and enjoyable. These include high quality sports and arts activities, plenty of visits, and projects and performances, for example, pupils sing at local events. The good and rapidly improving curriculum securely supports pupils' good progress in literacy, numeracy and science. Information and communication technology (ICT) is now used well to enhance learning in most subjects.

Parents are positive about many aspects of the school and like the way their children are well cared for and supported. They particularly appreciate the many improvements which have taken place. Senior leaders have implemented a remarkable number of changes in a short time to successfully bring provision in line with best practice. The high quality system they have introduced to guide pupils in aiming high, and to inform teachers very regularly of the progress being made, is pivotal to the recent successes. One parent commented that 'the teachers have ensured that pupils are challenged to achieve their potential'.

Pupils are well supported in developing their personal skills and they make a substantial contribution to the school and wider community. One of many examples is the class that campaigned successfully to keep the local area free of litter. In addition, every pupil takes on responsibilities in the classroom and many take the opportunity to sit on the pupil council. With these good team skills and well-developed social and basic skills, pupils are well prepared for their next school and future lives.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in Reception is good. Progress and teaching are good in all areas of learning because planning and assessment to meet children's different needs are very thorough. Good leadership ensures that by the time pupils join Year 1 they securely reach or exceed the goals expected for their age. An appropriate focus on phonics and number means that children emerge as readers and writers who are already learning how to count and add up. The children quickly develop good personal skills and get on well with staff and each other. Routines, such as those for lining up and washing hands, are well established.

Links with parents and nursery providers are strong. As one parent commented, 'I feel good effort is made to help the children settle well.' The personal book shares information between home and school, effectively involving parents in their children's learning.

Children enjoy stimulating activities such as the Forest School where they can collect leaves, talk about them, and stick them to their self-made headbands. This work then carries on in the classroom with spelling and painting. The use of the outside space, however, does not provide enough opportunities for learning to flow from indoors to outdoors. The school is working on ideas to improve outdoor access and the breadth of learning taking place there. The curriculum ensures a good balance of learning through play and more formal activities, including those chosen by the children and those directed by staff.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that standards are raised, to reflect the good progress now being made, especially by the more able pupils in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve the use of the outside space in Reception so that activities, in all the areas of learning, flow naturally between inside and out.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

There are no significant differences in the good progress made in any age or ability group. The most able and those who find learning difficult progress equally well because work at all levels is now suitably challenging. Progress is good overall in mathematics, English and science with an increasing proportion of pupils making outstanding progress. However, the school has identified that a small minority of pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress, particularly in the practical application of science. The school has been systematically reducing the legacy of underachievement and standards are beginning to rise, most noticeably in the younger age groups. The more able pupils in Years 3 to 6 are rapidly catching up but this has not fully worked its way through to show improved standards at the highest levels.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' excellent behaviour means that bullying is rare. As one reported, 'The best thing about this school is how safe I feel.' This mature, responsible attitude carries through into the classroom where pupils value their learning greatly. Most pupils understand the need to keep active and often find physical education one of the most enjoyable subjects. However, not all pupils know how to eat a healthy, balanced diet, which is an area the school is currently developing. Pupils have a strong respect for different cultures and beliefs and show great empathy for the needs of others, regularly raising money for charity, for example. Relationships between pupils and with staff are warm and respectful, encouraged by good personal and social education. Pupils do many things to support the school and are active further afield: for example, older pupils act as play pals helping others on the playground and the younger ones have worked for the Shrewsbury in Bloom project. Pupils, through their council, have contributed substantially to improving the playground, even managing their own budget. They relish such opportunities, which will help them well in the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved considerably in the last year and there is a significant proportion of outstanding lessons where learning is very rapid. In a very few lessons work is not well suited to the needs of all pupils and so, for some, their work lacks pace and challenge. The accuracy of assessment, however, is much improved and is now good overall. Most of the time teachers use assessment very well to plan what pupils need to learn next and pupils have a clear understanding of how to improve their work. Teachers' very good subject knowledge and skilled use of the strategies necessary to take learning forward are evident in their planning and in pupils' work. Teaching assistants contribute substantially to the good learning taking place. Pupils enjoy their lessons and like the exciting activities that bring learning to life, from filming their own storytelling to 'hot seating', where they play a character and answer questions from the class.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There are many new developments to the curriculum. Pupils are now encouraged to apply their basic skills across all subjects. For example, a history project on the Second World War for Years 3 and 4 involved a museum visit, role play, writing and a computer presentation. Opportunities for pupils to develop ICT skills are improving with the introduction of equipment such as laptops and cameras into classrooms. Teachers have identified how to develop ICT skills in all the subject areas and some good work takes place, although ICT targets are not formally mapped to ensure that pupils makes sufficient progress in the full range of skills. There have been clear improvements in the development of pupils' number work since the calculation policy, involving parents, was introduced. The curriculum is also culturally rich with impressive art work displayed around the school, high profile sporting achievements and musical performances. Strong links with secondary schools further increase pupils' experiences, for example enabling more able pupils to attend specialist science days.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Systems for safeguarding pupils are robust and the school has achieved Safer School status. Good support for more vulnerable pupils, including those who find learning difficult, ensures that their personal and academic achievement is at least good and sometimes exceptional. New procedures for improving attendance and behaviour have been very effective. The new system to track pupils' individual progress, over the short and long term, is very well organised. Expectations are high, the targets set are challenging and tracking is very regular and increasingly effective. All staff are involved very well in this monitoring process, which informs teaching and the curriculum. Pupils are also closely involved. Despite this, the targets set for a few pupils are not adapted to allow sufficiently for the different rates of progress they may make.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior leaders, have achieved a great deal in a very short space of time. This is despite considerable staffing turbulence in 2007, and it demonstrates some impressive skills and expertise in leadership. The support provided by governors to guide the school over a difficult few years has been outstanding. There have been significant developments in the quality of teaching, the curriculum and guidance. Effective self-evaluation has led to strong improvement, particularly in the rate of progress pupils make in English and mathematics. There has also been a complete restructuring of staff responsibilities leading to good involvement by all staff, including teaching assistants, in the work of school improvement. Leaders at all levels are now rigorous in using information about progress to ensure that all pupils' needs are met. However, the full impact of these changes is not yet evident in pupils' standards which is the main focus of the school's future planning. Senior staff have a very good and accurate understanding of what the school needs to do to continue improving and the capacity to improve is good.

The school works well to encourage pupils' understanding of their community. It fosters several local, regional and international links, for example with Ethiopia, which are used effectively to promote tolerance and respect for communities in the United Kingdom and across the world.

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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?	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

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

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

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

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?	2
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	1
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**

27 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Radbrook Primary School, Shrewsbury, SY3 6DZ

Thank you for being so welcoming when we visited your school. We very much enjoyed meeting you, joining you for lunch and seeing some of your lessons.

Your school is a good school, with many interesting things going on, just as you described. Skilled teaching helps you to make good progress in your lessons. As a result, you do well, particularly in English, mathematics and science. We like the way you really enjoy your lessons and always try to do your best. You told us that your teachers make lessons interesting and fun and we can see that they know how to help you do as well as you can.

Senior staff work hard to keep improving the school and they have achieved a great deal in a short time. For this reason, the progress you make is improving. We would now like to see this good progress work its way through, to increase the levels you reach by the time you leave the school. We are sure that you will discuss this with your teachers and help them by working hard and sharing your ideas.

A good curriculum helps you to make good progress in your social and personal skills. We would like those of you in Reception to have more choice to do different sorts of learning outside. You were keen to tell us that the school also keeps you safe and looks after you well. It is therefore pleasing to see that you are helping yourselves by looking after one another. Your behaviour is excellent, especially in the way you value learning.

The responsibilities that you take on within the school are very helpful, especially the way you support the pupil council and raise money for good causes. You clearly enjoy coming to school. We think that these strengths, alongside your good basic skills and ability to work together, will help prepare you very well for your next school and future lives.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Potheary

Lead inspector