

# Rushmere Hall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124679
<b>Local Authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	328190
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joan Hewitt

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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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	394
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
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr David Kightley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Jenny Barr
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	12 October 2005
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Lanark Road Ipswich Suffolk IP4 3EJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01473726027
<b>Fax number</b>	01473273771

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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

### Description of the school

Rushmere Hall is a community primary school with Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. It is situated on the outskirts of Ipswich. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. About 13% of pupils are from a variety of minority ethnic groups. Seven are at the early stages of learning to speak English as an additional language. The overall number of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is typical for this size of school. However, Rushmere Hall has a higher proportion than average of pupils with a statement of special educational needs, with 28 children learning in the school's language and hearing impaired units. Children arrive at the Speech and Language Unit at various times throughout Key Stage 1 from across South Suffolk. Children in the hearing impaired unit generally remain at the school until the end of Key Stage 2. There is a Children's Centre on the same site as the school, which opened in July 2008. Children can also attend an after-school club run by an independent provider.

### Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Rushmere is a good school in which pupils make good progress. Adults in the school provide a warm and friendly environment in which all pupils, especially those who attend the specialist units, flourish. Some pupils who struggle to acquire good social skills are supported well so that they are able to behave well and make good progress.

As a result of the good care they receive, pupils' personal development is good and they feel safe. They are kind to each other and everybody is included at playtime. Pupils know how to be healthy and they thoroughly enjoy their time at school. This can be seen clearly in their good attendance. Pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is also good. Pupils enjoy a strong community involvement and their cultural awareness beyond the school is developing well. They respond readily to the opportunities the school gives them to take on extra responsibility which helps them prepare for the next steps in their education. The school provides good guidance to pupils about the quality of their work although senior leaders are aware that occasionally pupils do not understand the targets teachers set for them.

Children enter the school with standards below those expected for their age. They make good progress overall so that standards by the time they leave at the end of Year 6 are in line with national averages. The school has been successful in improving pupils' performance in mathematics because teachers have planned lessons carefully to help pupils gain confidence in their understanding of different mathematical concepts. Senior leaders know there is work to be done to ensure pupils' writing skills improve so that they can make a successful transition to secondary school.

Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Lessons include interesting activities that motivate pupils and encourage them to be independent. An example of this was seen in a Year 6 science lesson when pupils used the outdoor area to learn about which materials can be successfully recycled. In some lessons the more able pupils do not always make the progress they should because the work is not challenging enough. The curriculum is good because teachers make effective links between subjects through themes and projects. Pupils can also attend a variety of activities before and after school, including Judo and a bird-watching club.

The headteacher leads the school with energy and infectious enthusiasm. With good support from governors and senior leaders, she has helped teachers to focus effectively on improving pupil's learning. The middle leaders play a strong role in evaluating the work of the school. Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas it needs to improve. The new tracking system is helping them and all teachers to improve the rigour of pinpointing where pupils should be doing better and intervening effectively. The school work well with a range of partners to support pupils' learning. Links with the recently opened Children's Centre are developing well. The school has taken effective steps to improve since the last inspection and it has good capacity to improve.

## Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

### Grade: 2

In the EYFS children get off to a good start. They enter the Nursery with standards below those expected for their age, however, within this there is variation so that some children are well below age expectations and a few are above. An effective induction programme ensures that

they quickly settle into the life of the school. Secure baseline assessments result in work that is well focused and provides effective challenges for the wide range of abilities. Children develop good personal skills and they play happily together. The curriculum meets the needs of all children and stimulates their interests successfully. The adults who work in the EYFS work well together and they provide children with an interesting environment. This encourages children to explore the world around them and to develop independent learning skills. As a result, children make good progress and attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year. Teachers provide an exciting range of activities that are firmly rooted in developing children's skills across all areas of learning. This makes each day relevant and fun.

Leadership of the EYFS is satisfactory. Observations of the children are used to plan their next steps in learning matched to the needs of each individual child. Effective, regular meetings are organised so that parents can discuss their child's progress and ways in which they can support at home. However, there is insufficient time given to monitoring the quality of teaching and this hinders the team in identifying areas that need to improve. For example, the outside area is not being used to its full potential to provide opportunities for children to explore and investigate the natural world. The children are very happy in school and all show great confidence in talking to any adult about what they are doing.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve standards in writing so that all pupils' attainment is consistently in line with national averages or better.
- Increase the level of challenge for more able pupils so that they make consistently good progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Children enter the EYFS with standards below age related expectations. This has varied significantly from year to year and so the standards pupils reach at the end of Key Stage 2 have also fluctuated. Progress overall is good but is more variable at Key Stage 1 and for some groups of pupils. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. However, some pupils, particularly boys, do not make enough progress in writing because the actions teachers take to intervene when pupils are underachieving are not always successful. At the end of Year 6 in 2008, results were broadly in line with national averages. From a low starting point this represents good progress. Pupils' progress in mathematics is good across the school because of effective action taken to improve teaching of mathematical concepts. The school are continuing to develop pupils' learning in this area. On occasions, more able pupils do not make as much progress as they should because teachers do not always expect enough from them. Pupils who find learning more difficult make good progress. Although pupils in the Speech and Language Unit do not always reach the standards expected for their age, they make excellent progress from very low starting points because of the excellent specialist teaching and support.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils are happy and enthusiastic learners and enjoy coming to school. As a result their attendance is good. Pupils work well independently as well as in partner and group activities.

Pupils behave well and listen attentively to staff and each other because they are supported effectively in learning good routines. The school's caring and friendly ethos is evident and pupils have good spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils are well aware of other cultures such as Chinese, Sikh and Muslim because of the visitors who talk to them in assemblies and in some lessons. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and local community, through carrying out roles and responsibilities, a school council that takes pride in its work in ensuring that pupils' views are heard, fundraising and providing Harvest fruit for the elderly. Pupils are ready to take on more responsibility and plans are already in hand to introduce 'Playtime Pals' to provide extra support for younger children. Pupils enjoy the healthy meals provided by the school and can talk sensibly about adopting healthy lifestyles. They know who to speak to if they have worries or concerns and consequently feel safe in school. While pupils develop good social, independent and team-working skills, the school recognises that there is still work to do to improve writing skills to prepare them better for the future.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Pupils enjoy good teaching and so make good progress. Teaching is outstanding in music and in the specialist units because teachers plan exciting work that is closely matched to individual needs and teachers' expectations are high. For example in an outstanding speech and language lesson pupils were enthusiastic in identifying specific sounds through storytelling. Teaching across both key stages is good overall with some pockets that are satisfactory. This results in some uneven progress, particularly in Key Stage 1. In most lessons tasks are interesting and involve pupils in their learning. Behaviour is good in lessons because pupils with poor social skills are effectively supported in developing good attitudes by teachers and attending nurture sessions in the 'Sunshine Class'. However, in some lessons discussions are teacher dominated and pupils are not given the opportunity to develop extended answers. Consequently, more able pupils are not sufficiently stretched and they do not make as much progress as they should. A strong feature of most lessons is the opportunities pupils get to assess their own and each other's work. This builds on teacher's good marking in helping pupils identify the next steps they need to take in improving their learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Thorough planning enables all pupils to access learning. Enjoyment is supported through the development of a 'connected curriculum' through themes such as Year 6 'Dig for Victory' in which pupils combined historical research with biology. This gives pupils the opportunity to be more actively involved in their learning and to develop their writing skills in an imaginative way. The school has good plans to extend this. Subject leaders have good subject knowledge and this results in good planning across the school. Music is a strength of the school with visits from local authority tutors and African drummers. In assembly pupils sing enthusiastically, in French and in part harmony. The school provides a variety of experiences, such as learning French and interesting visits that support their learning. Pupils can choose to play tennis, football and basketball. The extensive play area and wide range of equipment provides good opportunities for pupils to enjoy their play. The school provides a good personal, social and health education, which supports pupils in developing safe and healthy lifestyles.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The school's pastoral care and personal guidance for pupils are outstanding. Staff provide a warm and friendly environment that ensure pupils are happy and feel secure. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning because teachers have created good learning environments. Safeguarding procedures are secure and robust. Provision for vulnerable pupils and those who attend the specialist units are a particular strength. Every child is known and valued. Pupils are confident that should they have any worries they can turn to staff and receive help. Parents are appreciative of the work of the school, for example one parent commented, 'I am impressed by the level of care and attention paid to each individual child'. The Sunshine Class provides an outstanding opportunity for pupils to develop their confidence and self-esteem. Tracking of pupils' progress enables the school to identify those whose learning needs a boost. However, although pupils have access to their targets teachers do not always help them to use them effectively to improve their learning.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Senior and middle leaders form an effective team and parents are appreciative of the work of the school. The headteacher, together with senior and middle leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's strengths and the areas that they need to develop. Subject co-ordinators and senior leaders track the progress of children well and there have been recent improvements in the school's systems to support this. There are early signs that this is helping leaders to improve the rigour and challenge of the targets the school sets for itself to raise standards. The community spirit in the school is strong and the school has plans to develop community cohesion further by reaching out more effectively to the local community through its work with the recently established Children's Centre. However, these plans are at an early stage and it is too early to measure their efficacy. Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning and take effective steps to improve it. The school is outstanding in its work to ensure all children have equal opportunities. Children from different faiths and ethnic backgrounds learn to cooperate well together. The inclusion is particularly notable in the progress children in the specialist units make.

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**Annex A**

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	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

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	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?	3

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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	1

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 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

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
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	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**

20 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rushmere Hall Primary School, Ipswich, IP4 3EJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. You were very helpful when we were talking to you about your work. Your ideas and views helped us to understand what it is like to go to your school. Rushmere Hall is a good school. It is caring and friendly, you told us you feel safe and that you look after each other. We think your teachers know you very well and help you to solve any problems you have.

Your behaviour in lessons and on the playground is good. You enjoy learning and this helps you to make good progress. Your writing is not as good as your reading and mathematics skills. This is important, as it will help you to do well when you move to secondary school. Your teachers make lessons fun and you often get the chance to judge how good your work is and this helps you to learn. Sometimes you think your work is too easy and we agree. Those of you who attend the specialist units make excellent progress because the adults plan your work carefully so that it is exactly right for you.

There is a good range of clubs and activities for you to do before and after school and we were very impressed with how many of you take part. We enjoyed hearing you sing in French in assembly and we think your music lessons are excellent.

We have asked Mrs Barr and the teachers do to a few things to make your school even better and these are:

- to make sure your lessons are challenging for everybody
- to make sure teachers help you to improve your writing skills.

Thank you once again for helping us to find out about your school. You can also help to make Rushmere Hall an even better school by making sure you keep working as hard as you can in every lesson and carry on looking after each other.

Yours sincerely

Joan Hewitt

Lead inspector