

# Red Hall Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103784
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	336156
<b>Inspection dates</b>	7–8 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Speakman

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

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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 of pupils on the school roll</b>	401
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs N Stanley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	4 April 2007
<b>School address</b>	Zoar Street Lower Gornal Dudley
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work and looked at the school improvement documents, samples of pupils' work, tracking and assessment data and documents related to safeguarding. Ninety six parents' questionnaires were analysed as well as 52 pupil and 33 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- achievement of boys compared to that of girls
- reasons for the fall in test results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2008 and 2009
- the effect of initiatives to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- the extent of intervention support strategies and their effectiveness
- in raising standards
- staff skills in monitoring and evaluating school performance.

## Information about the school

Red Hall Primary School is larger than most primary schools. The local population is stable, with many generations of the same families being born and bred in the village. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage; none is at the early stages of learning English. The proportions of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of pupils with a statement of special educational needs are similar to the picture found nationally. The school has gained the Active Mark award recognising its contribution to pupils' physical education, Health Promoting School Status, the ICT Mark and recent renewal of Investors in People.

The headteacher joined the school in April 2008 and five new classroom teachers were appointed in September 2008. Some staff will be taking up new management roles later in the term, including new phase leaders. Infant and junior buildings are either side of Zoar Street, a busy road running through the village. The Nursery department is in a third building behind the infant department.

Children join the Nursery from the age of three for half day sessions. Parents of children in the Nursery are able to buy extra sessions and care over the lunch break. The school is directly responsible for the provision and outcomes in the Nursery and Reception classes. Pre-school and after school care is provided and is the responsibility of the governing body.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

Red Hall Primary School provides a satisfactory education. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. There are weaknesses in writing and in mathematics; test results in both areas have not been as good as those in reading and science over the last two years. This is mainly due to variations in the quality of teaching across the school, which has resulted in uneven progress from year to year and sometimes across classes within the same year group. During the inspection, teaching ranged from that which was satisfactory, to that which was clearly outstanding. Where teaching was good or better pupils at all levels of attainment made similarly good progress. In less successful lessons planned activities did not sufficiently challenge more able pupils and some with special educational needs and/or disabilities were not supported well enough.

The school has worked hard to promote pupils' enjoyment in writing. During the inspection a number of lessons were observed which clearly demonstrated that this has been successful. Both boys and girls enjoyed producing pieces of extended imaginative writing, which were of a good quality and of which the pupils were evidently proud. Standards in writing are beginning to improve. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills in other subjects. There is no whole school curriculum planning that identifies specific opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their writing and numeracy skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.

Pupils enjoy school and say they feel safe during the school day and whilst on school premises. They find school interesting and readily engage in the opportunities it offers. The vast majority of pupils attend regularly, but the frequent absence of a small minority of pupils, some with quite justifiable medical reasons, depresses the schools attendance figures. The school has successfully reduced the number of persistent absentees over recent years so that attendance is now getting near to the national average. There are still a number of parents who keep their children away from school unnecessarily and the school does not currently chase parents up for a reason early enough.

The use of assessment as a tool for judging and evaluating school performance is satisfactory. Although the school has a lot of information on how individual pupils are progressing, it is not used well enough by leaders and managers to assess the overall performance of different year groups, classes or groups of pupils. In consequence leadership and management is not in a strong enough position to predict and rectify potential weaknesses before they become reality. The senior leadership team carries out formal lesson observations during the performance management of staff, but much other classroom observation by the deputy headteachers is informal. Having said this,

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the senior leadership team's assessments of teaching very closely matched that of inspectors. The situation in the Early Years Foundation Stage is much the same. There is no full analysis of standards on entry to the Nursery from which to assess progress. Overly complex record keeping makes the tracking of children's progress difficult. Since being in post the headteacher has accurately identified key areas for improvement and devised well thought out strategies aimed to raise standards. The leadership structure is about to change and a number of staff will take on new leadership roles, for which they are being prepared. Standards are improving at both Key Stages 1 and 2, there is more high quality teaching and the learning environment in the Early Years Foundation Stage is improved. The school's capacity to improve is therefore satisfactory.

**What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Raise standards and accelerate pupils' progress, particularly in writing and mathematics by;
  - improving teachers' understanding of how to plan lessons so that tasks are well matched to ability and meet the learning needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those capable of doing harder work
  - developing curriculum planning so that there are planned opportunities for pupils to develop and practise their core language and numeracy skills in other subjects.
  - Improve leadership and management skills at all levels so that all staff are able to make a significant contribution to school self-evaluation and improvement planning by:
    - making sure that members of the senior leadership team rigorously monitor the classroom performance of all teachers
    - developing the analysis of pupil performance data by the phase and subject leaders to provide a clear picture of the progress of cohorts, different classes and groups of pupils.
  - Improve assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage so that staff can easily monitor individual children's progress by:
    - establishing starting levels for each child to be used as a point from which to assess children's progress through the Nursery
    - improve the use of assessment data in tracking children's progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage by simplifying the recording systems.
  - Raise attendance by:
    - improving systems for early checking on reasons for absence
    - working with parents to help them to recognise the value of sending their children to school regularly.

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- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Standards are average by the end of Year 2 in reading and writing. Although still broadly average, standards in mathematics are slightly weaker. There has been a trend of improving standards over the last few years, as a result of good teaching and accelerated progress in Year 2. Due to some past disruption to teaching at Key Stage 2, standards at the end of the key stage dipped in the last two years. However, it is clear that these are now improving and inspection evidence shows that attainment in Year 6 is broadly average. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities progress satisfactorily. This is usually better when they receive dedicated support in their groups, by teaching assistants for example. This is not always the case and sometimes in class they are left without appropriate adult support. Similarly pupils capable of doing harder work are not always given challenging enough tasks and sometimes find the work too easy.

Learning varies from class to class and matches the quality of teaching. Pupils relish the opportunity to be independent and to learn through investigating in an exciting environment. Year 1 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the challenging mathematics activities and the opportunity to work in a practical manner with lots of different resources that were highly effective in building secure ideas about ordering numbers. These pupils were so motivated they continued to challenge themselves. Older pupils respond similarly to exciting stimuli and the opportunity to produce independent writing. Enjoyment in learning and a pride in achievement are evident in these more successful lessons.

Behaviour in class and around school is good. However, over a third of pupils who responded to the pupils' questionnaire disagreed that behaviour is good. Only limited inappropriate behaviour, by a few older boys, was seen during the inspection, and there was no disruption to learning. Such is the moral code of other pupils that they find inappropriate behaviour unacceptable and the vast majority remain unimpressed when others misbehave. Similarly, although pupils confirm they are safe in school, about a quarter disagreed in the questionnaire. Closer investigation shows that this is because they feel unsafe when crossing the busy road at the beginning and end of the day. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute to the daily life of the school and they do this well. Responsibilities such as Play Ground Leaders, prefects, helping with the tuck shop and the school council are just a few of the ways in which they help the school run smoothly. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, both from the point of view of keeping to a healthy diet and taking up opportunities to exercise and stay physically fit. They are adequately prepared for the next steps in their education.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

### How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Variation in quality means that there are differences in the pace of learning; the outstanding progress made by pupils in some classes is tempered by that which is merely satisfactory in others. Planning is of a variable quality, with some that is of a high standard and identifies what it is that each group of pupils will learn and activities are very well matched to ability. Some lesson plans contain a mismatch between what pupils are intended to learn and the details of the learning activity. This means that the pitch of the lesson is not always sufficiently challenging for some pupils. Books are marked regularly, informing pupils of what they have done well and areas for improvement. However the latter are not always followed through and pupils are not always given the opportunity to respond. Consequently some of the value of marking is lost.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets all statutory requirements. There are sufficient strategies at both key stages to support pupils who need a little bit of extra help in improving their literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum is supported by a good range of sporting and musical extra-curricular provision, which adds interest and enjoyment. Pupils enjoy the trips and visitors who come into school to add a further degree of interest. The school takes good care of all pupils, whatever their specific needs might be and pays special attention to pupils' emotional well-being. A nurture group provides valued support for identified pupils and this support is having a positive

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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impact on their concentration and learning. Pupils are cared for well at the before school breakfast club and after school. Provision here reflects the school's approach to pupils' overall welfare and safety.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Despite the efforts of the senior leadership team and, particularly, the headteacher to move the school forward, not all staff share this goal. Responses to the staff questionnaire make it clear that not all agree with the headteachers' ambitions for an outstanding school. The small minority of dissenters are presenting a barrier to improvement. For this reason, the effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is satisfactory. The governing body makes a satisfactory contribution to the work of the school. They are supportive of the school. The chair of the governors has regular contact and he is pleased with the work of new and enthusiastic governors. Although they consider themselves to be challenging, at present there is too little emphasis on holding all staff members more accountable for their performance.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory. A small number of safety concerns were investigated, and the school is aware of, and trying to minimise, danger on the road between the two school sites for example. Other minor matters have been put right. The child protection policy has not been updated recently, but a scrutiny of records relating to child protection shows that the school's practice is good.

The school's approach to providing equality of opportunity is satisfactory. This is because of the variation in the quality of teaching across the school and variations in the achievement of different pupils. The promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school is making good arrangements to promoting this within school and within the local community. Links with the national and global communities, especially in terms of faith and ethnicity, are at an early stage of development. |

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3



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<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

### Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are well cared for and supported pastorally. They enjoy their learning activities and feel safe. Children are beginning to make good progress, particularly in the Reception classes during the last year, although their personal, social and emotional development is at best satisfactory. Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage are very keen and enthusiastic to improve provision and children's progress. There have been significant improvements this year, particularly in improving the outdoor learning environment so that learning outside is as effective as indoors.

There is a strong emphasis on learning through play, so much so that, often, planned opportunities to gather groups of children together for teacher directed learning are missed. There is therefore a lack of balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning. Adults do not yet sufficiently use their assessment information to plan for the progress of individuals and groups of pupils.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### Views of parents and carers

Parents are generally happy with what the school offers. Comments and outcomes of the inspection questionnaire indicate most concern about dealing with inappropriate

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behaviour, taking note of suggestions and concerns and the quality of leadership and management. Inspection findings agreed that there is some inappropriate behaviour from a very small minority of pupils, but this is dealt with well and the impact kept to a minimum. The vast majority of pupils behave very well. The inspectors found that the leadership of the headteacher is good and she is well supported by the two deputies and many staff. However, there are still some staffing issues that remain unresolved.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Red Hall Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 401 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	46	48	48	50	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	38	56	59	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	14	68	72	14	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	24	63	68	7	8	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	21	23	67	72	4	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	22	63	68	9	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	32	61	64	3	3	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	28	57	64	5	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	19	70	74	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	13	14	57	63	18	20	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	10	11	62	69	15	17	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	12	13	59	63	19	20	4	4
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	32	61	65	1	1	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



9 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Red Hall Primary School, Lower Gornal, DY3 2PA

Thank you for making us welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and visiting lessons. We particularly valued the opportunities we had to speak to you to find out what you think about your school.

You go to a satisfactory school. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get a sound start to their education. After that you make satisfactory progress in lessons and by the end of Year 6, reach standards in your work that are similar to those expected for your age. You are adequately prepared to go on to the next stage of your education.

Most of you help a great deal by behaving well, taking responsibility seriously and trying hard to do your best. We were generally impressed by your approach to learning and by how some of you are willing to have a go, even when tasks are difficult. We were very pleased by the sensible way in which you make friends and care about each other. You help to make others feel safe in school and enjoy being there, but a good number of pupils are concerned about the behaviour of others. Perhaps those few children who do not always behave as well as they should, might think about others' feelings towards their behaviour.

Adults in your school are always looking for ways to improve the school. We have asked staff and governors to look at:

raising standards in writing and mathematics by improving the quality of teaching and giving you more opportunities to practice these skills in other lessons

improving the effectiveness with which teachers with different responsibilities check on how well the school is doing

improving the checking of progress and standards of children in the Nursery and Reception

working with your parents to try to improve your attendance even more.

We wish you all the best in the future.

Yours faithfully

David Speakman (Lead Inspector)

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