

Rounds Green Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103980
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	336212
Inspection dates	12–13 January 2010
Reporting inspector	Jenny Batelen

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	346
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Janet Kendrick
Headteacher	Mr Michael Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The majority of the time was spent observing learning. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at documents including the school development plan, safeguarding and welfare arrangements, and records of pupils' progress. Inspectors also analysed questionnaires from pupils, staff and 77 from parents.

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

how teachers help pupils make good progress through planning, teaching and assessment

- how the leadership team develops and drives improvements
- how the curriculum provides for the needs and interests of all the pupils
- the effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

This is a larger than average primary school, with a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and an increasing number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is a higher than average proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than would normally be found in a school of this size and includes pupils with physical disabilities. Awards obtained by the school include the Department of Children, Schools and Families Intermediate Schools Award, the Healthy Schools' Award for Health and Emotional Well-being, and the Becta Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Mark.

Rounds Green Playscheme Out of School Club provides on-site before- and after-school care and holiday care, managed by a private provider. This club was inspected separately.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good and improving school where considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection so that attainment is rising and pupils are making good progress. Staff are committed to the school; pupils are keen to do their best, behave in an exemplary fashion and want to '...make Mr Murphy proud'. Parents and carers appreciate the work of the school for their children. 'We feel our child is valued at Rounds Green.' is a typical comment.

The school has restructured its management team and has appointed a number of particularly skilled staff. This, and a focus on ensuring that all pupils make good progress, has directly contributed to rising standards and achievement for all pupils. Governors are committed to the school and provide effective support. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas to develop, and share the vision for the further progress of the school. As a result, the school has a good capacity to improve.

The care given to each pupil is a strength of the school. Pupils sum this up when they say, 'Someone is always there for you, supporting you'. The school is very inclusive and the whole school's use of signing helps all pupils, and particularly those with English as an additional language, to make good progress.

Pupils have a good start to their schooling in the Early Years Foundation Unit where Nursery and Reception Year children work and play alongside each other and are helped to make good progress in all areas of development.

The majority of teaching across the school is good with some outstanding practice and nothing less than satisfactory. As a result, pupils are fully engaged in their lessons and want to do well. Thorough assessment ensures appropriate work, and pupils are able to assess their own work and that of their peers and 'check for success' against the criteria that they have been involved in setting. However, this peer and self assessment is not always thorough enough to identify just what needs to improve, especially in independent writing tasks.

The curriculum has a cross-curricular and international focus. Pupils and staff speak enthusiastically of the themes they are studying and the activities that support them. Enrichment opportunities include the teaching of languages and music from specialist teachers. The school identifies that not enough is done to enrich the curriculum further by making more use of the wider school and local environment.

'This is a fun school....you learn and play.' and 'Every single teacher helps us.' are comments from pupils that sum up why this is a good school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- Raise achievement in writing by improving the pupils' skills in assessing their own work and that of their peers.
 - Extend and further enrich the opportunities for all pupils' learning by taking lessons beyond the classroom environment.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills well below those expected for their age. They make good progress and start Year 1 with standards below age related expectations, with particular weaknesses in reading, writing and calculation. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have been rising and are now broadly in line with the national averages for mathematics and science. English standards are still below average because pupils do not use their writing skills consistently enough. Teachers make good use of subject specific vocabulary, developing the pupils' understanding and confidence in discussing their work in all subjects. Good progress is made in lessons and this is reflected in the data that shows year-on-year progress for individual pupils and for groups. There is a robust tracking system which identifies those pupils not making good enough progress and allows for interventions to be put in place to improve their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because of the clear identification of their needs, and the skilled support staff and effective systems in place.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe and are particularly confident in how to be safe when using new technologies. Their exemplary behaviour in lessons and around school ensures that they support each other well. The 'buddy' system helps pupils play well together and proved particularly effective during a long period of inside playtimes. Pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and are enthusiastic about the opportunities to be involved in active pursuits such as cheerleading, introduced to encourage girls to participate. The effective and representative school council has a voice in school developments such as improved playground provision with a shelter with seating. Pupils develop skills for their future learning through working well together, understanding and working towards their personal targets and their rising standards of attainment, particularly in mathematics, science and reading.

Pupils make good use of the opportunities for reflection through assemblies and in lessons. This is shown when pupils think about and share their goals, such as, 'I want to learn to control my temper'. They are enthusiastic about the rich cultural experiences delivered through the curriculum, such as learning the guitar and learning Spanish. Attendance is satisfactory with many strategies in place to improve this further.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The majority of teaching is good, with some outstanding practice, ensuring that pupils make good progress in their lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge, make effective use of ICT and have high expectations of pupils' involvement and behaviour. Pupils are valued and supported and vulnerable pupils are helped to overcome significant barriers to their learning and well-being, as is reflected by the school's award for the emotional aspect of Healthy Schools. As a result, pupils have very positive attitudes and are keen to do well. Marking is thorough and supports good progress with advice as to how to improve their work. Challenging targets are set and pupils know what they must do to achieve these. Other adults in the classroom give valuable support, especially through 'just in time' interventions that prevent pupils failing to make good progress. The role of key members of staff, such as the learning mentor, is clear and pupils and parents comment positively on the help that they receive.

The curriculum has been completely reorganised since the last inspection and there is now a good balance of subjects. Skills are developed well across a broad range of experiences. Pupils are enthused about the topics they are studying. For example, when 'evacuated' to the school overnight, they began to be able to understand the impact of a disaster as an entry point to learning about volcanoes. Older pupils are helped to understand how the brain works and how they learn. The international dimension to the curriculum is strengthened by the learning of Spanish and Italian and also by using the home languages of staff and pupils when appropriate, such as when wishing each other Happy New Year. Focused weeks such as Religious Education and Creative Arts further develop the pupils' understanding of different areas of the curriculum.

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These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The long-serving and hard-working headteacher is well regarded by parents and has seen the school through considerable changes, resulting in the current improvements. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior staff whom he has empowered to take further responsibilities. Long-serving governors provide effective support and appropriate challenge. They have a thorough grasp of their roles and responsibilities and, together with senior leaders, have been key players in the improvements made since the previous inspection. Teaching has been improved and strengthened as a result of careful monitoring and well planned professional development. Staff morale is high and there is a strong commitment to all pupils' progress and welfare and the further improvement of the school. High expectations and consistent policies contribute to these improvements. There are effective links with a range of external agencies, including the local secondary schools that support the progress and well-being of the pupils. Parents speak positively of how they are kept informed through the Learning Gateway and the texting service and of how the school welcomes their views. Community cohesion is good with a strength in the international dimension. There are many local links, although the school wishes to further develop these. Safeguarding is robust with procedures, policies and practice securely in place. The school deploys its resources well and gives good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2

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The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The recently appointed leader of the Early Years Foundation Stage has identified and is delivering improvements to the provision, ensuring good outcomes for all children. Nursery children work and play alongside those in Reception and quickly settle into routines. 'Family groups' of children with their key worker support children to be independent, make choices in the activities they will take part in and develop social skills that ensure very good behaviour.

There is a good focus on developing language and writing skills through learning traditional tales and the use of signing. Shape, space and measure have been identified as weaknesses in mathematical understanding, so staff use focused activities to help children to develop the language for talking about shapes. Observation and assessment are carried out by all staff and are based on child-initiated activities both inside and outside. As a result, children are able to make good progress in all areas of development from their low starting points. There is a large, well-equipped outside area, but it does not fully reflect the inside learning environment and its use in all weathers is made difficult, as there is no shelter. Whenever it is possible, children are able to access the outside freely and thoroughly enjoy working together, for example to build an igloo and learn about the properties of snow. Children serve themselves with healthy snacks from the snack bar and learn to keep themselves safe in their activities.

Good links are developed with parents and carers who speak of feeling well-informed by the very helpful, friendly staff. 'He/She loves it.' is a common comment.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are generally very supportive of the school. The returned questionnaires were positive. A few comments identified areas of concern, for example the impact on pupils' learning of mixed age classes, but the inspection evidence

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suggests that good teaching and planning ensure that all pupils are able to make good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rounds Green 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 inspector received 77 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 346 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	56	31	40	3	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	56	30	39	4	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	34	44	33	43	9	12	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	36	39	51	4	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	44	37	48	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	32	41	53	8	10	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	35	45	58	4	5	0	0
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	32	41	53	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	35	44	57	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	30	41	53	7	9	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	30	41	53	7	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	35	45	32	42	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	47	37	47	3	4	0	0

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"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



14 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rounds Green Primary School, Oldbury, B69 2DP

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed joining in with your lessons, talking to you, hearing you sing, play guitars and also speak Spanish and try other languages. Yours is a good school and, as a result, you make good progress in your learning. There are many good things about your school.

You behave very well and enjoy school.

You work hard in your lessons and are keen to do well.

All the adults in the school care a lot about you and make sure that you are safe and well supported.

You have lots of opportunities to keep active and healthy and you know very well how to keep yourselves safe.

The adults who manage and run your school work hard to make sure you have the best opportunities to achieve well.

There are a couple of things we have asked the school to do to make it even better. These are:

- to help you to improve your writing by making sure that you assess your own and your friends' work carefully and accurately
- to give all of you more opportunity to have lessons and learn using the outside areas of the school.

You can help by being careful when you assess your writing to be sure that you have met all the 'Checks for Success'.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Batelen

Lead Inspector

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