

# Rakegate Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104304
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336280
<b>Inspection dates</b>	9–10 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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>	350
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kevin Dungey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Steve Harris
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	6 February 2007
<b>School address</b>	Rakegate Close Wolverhampton WV10 6US
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Inspectors saw 20 lessons and 12 teachers. Children in the Nursery were not in school on the first day of the inspection but a scrutiny of their work was conducted. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, three governors and two officers of the local authority, one of whom is also the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' attainment and progress, school policies, minutes of meetings of the governing body, and samples of teachers' planning and assessment records. Inspectors analysed and took account of 54 questionnaires received from parents and carers, 100 from pupils and 16 from staff.

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

- the performance of different groups of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language
- how well the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils
- how effectively the school's monitoring and evaluation systems promote better outcomes for pupils.

## Information about the school

Rakegate Primary is larger than the average primary school. Most of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Around a third of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, including Black Caribbean and Indian backgrounds. Approximately 10% of pupils speak English as an additional language, a few of whom are at the early stages of learning English. A high proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is much higher than that found nationally. However, the proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national picture. A privately-run company provides care for pupils before and after school on site: this is subject to a separate inspection.

**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?**

**4**

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

**3**

## Main findings

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: aspects of leadership and management, particularly the effectiveness of the governing body in ensuring that all statutory responsibilities are met.

Although outcomes for pupils are satisfactory in all respects, leaders and managers, including the governing body, have not ensured that all statutory requirements are met. While safeguarding policies and systems are in place, they are not monitored regularly or with sufficient rigour. Furthermore, the school has not adopted an explicit strategy to promote community cohesion or to prepare all pupils for life in an ethnically and culturally diverse society.

Notwithstanding the weaknesses highlighted above, the school has a number of strengths. Pupils are mostly well behaved, friendly and keen to learn. They collaborate well in pairs and small groups and are willing to help others when they encounter difficulties. The school's provision is often effective in helping to improve the self-esteem and confidence of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There are also strong and effective relationships with parents and carers.

Teaching in the Early years Foundation Stage is good and ensures that children make a strong start on entry to the school. There are further examples of good teaching across the school, but the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory because it does not enable all pupils to secure good learning and progress, particularly those of average and above ability. Assessment information is not used effectively to meet pupils' differing capabilities and there is little systematic analysis of pupils' linguistic backgrounds or the impact of bilingualism on their academic achievement. Although, all lessons seen had learning objectives, these often varied in their precision which resulted in a lack of clarity for the pupils about how their success during the lesson would be measured.

The school's drive for improvement since its previous inspection in 2007 has been one of small, but steady moves forward, particularly in respect of pupils' attainment. The school has also successfully increased pupils' attendance from low to average levels. Procedures for school self-evaluation are sound. Inspection evidence concurs with the school's own data that suggest that rates of progress have improved further for most groups of pupils this year. This reflects the school's satisfactory capacity for further

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sustained improvement. However, leaders are not always systematic in following up weaknesses in provision within challenging timescales and procedures for evaluating the impact of actions taken do not always include quantifiable targets so that progress can be measured accurately.

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

- Secure better learning and progress for pupils and increase the proportion of good teaching by:
  - making more effective use of learning objectives that focus on pupils' progress in individual lessons
  - ensuring that planning meets the needs of all groups of pupils, and in particular those who speak English as an additional language and the more-able
  - ensure that the specific linguistic needs of all pupils who have English as an additional language are met by providing relevant training for all staff.
  - To improve the effectiveness of the school's work, leaders and managers should:
    - determine the progress made by different groups to inform effective support and intervention
    - be more systematic in following up weaknesses in teaching, learning and assessment within challenging timescales
    - in all strategic planning, add specific, quantifiable and timed targets, so that progress towards them is measurable and can be reported accurately.
    - ensure that the school meets all of its statutory duties by the end of the autumn term 2010 in regard to health and safety, community cohesion and in promoting equality of opportunity for all.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Pupils generally enjoy their lessons and are prepared to work hard. They are happy to talk of lessons that they find exciting and interesting. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress over time and achieve the levels expected of them. However, not all pupils of average and above average ability reach the levels worthy of their capabilities. This is because teaching does not always challenge their thinking, and some of the tasks they are presented with do not match their needs. The lower attaining pupils often have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many are hindered by poor skills in reading and writing but make steady progress because they respond positively to the extra support they are given. This is particularly the case in support groups outside lessons, where their learning is broken down into small steps. However, on occasions, their needs are not fully met within lessons because the teacher's planning does not take account of the pupils' specific learning difficulties. Pupils who speak English as an additional language, including those who are advanced bilingual learners and those who

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are at an early stage learning English, are of most concern. They make less progress than they should because the school does not cater adequately for their needs. Teachers have not received training on how to support these pupils in their learning. Behaviour is satisfactory and is often good in lessons but around a third of the pupils who completed a questionnaire, and those who spoke to inspectors, thought that it was not good all of the time, because occasionally incidents of boisterous behaviour do occur in the playground. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social awareness is satisfactory, with many pupils having a keen sense of right and wrong. They acquire a range of social skills that will help them to develop into well-rounded individuals. Pupils make a sound contribution to the school community through their involvement in the school council and their support for younger pupils. Their participation in charitable and fund raising events ensure that pupils are developing a satisfactory understanding of their rights and responsibilities in the wider community. However, there are limited opportunities to develop pupils' knowledge of other cultures and beliefs. Pupils have a satisfactory and growing awareness of how to keep healthy and of how to help look after the environment, with their learning supported by the introduction of a school vegetable garden.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<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>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</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>

<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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## How effective is the provision?

Most lessons were conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and good humour where the pupils settled quickly and eagerly to the tasks set. In several classrooms, lessons were punctuated by different activities, such as the use of discussion partners, as well as direct instruction from the teacher. Pupils were keen to learn and showed enthusiasm and enjoyment in their work, even when the activities set were more mundane.

There were some shortcomings in teaching. In most lessons and books seen, the support for bilingual pupils was weak. This is because teachers do not analyse closely enough the writing of pupils for whom English is an additional language, to identify the specific difficulties they face when writing in English. Consequently, not all pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work and the pace of learning slows down. Moreover, assessment, although carried out regularly, is not always used effectively to plan work that is matched accurately to the pupils' different ability levels. As a result, much of the pupils' work is either too easy or too difficult and often pitched at the same level of difficulty regardless of pupils' different levels of competency.

Richness is added to school life for very many pupils by the extra-curricular activities including the use of educational visits, after-school clubs and the many visitors to the school that add richness and interest to the school life of many pupils. There is a good range of sporting activities which are well attended with good participation in team sports. Links with a neighbouring school, and with other partners have helped to extend the options available to pupils, in subjects such as information and communications technology and modern foreign languages.

In spite of weaknesses in the overall effectiveness of care, guidance and support for pupils, there are some important strengths. Sound support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities through detailed individual plans enables them to make satisfactory progress, Close monitoring of patterns of attendance

- helps the successful identification of children who are at risk of disengaging with their learning and effective transition arrangements are in place especially for pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

*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>4</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

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School leaders have created a harmonious school community that is successful in tackling discrimination. The headteacher is supported well by the governing body that is fully committed to the continuing improvement of the school. They carefully monitor budgetary decisions, securing the best value from spending, and seek to make savings where possible. The school complies with the regulations relating to the checks made on prospective employees and volunteers regarding suitability to work with children.

Self-evaluation by senior and middle leaders is mostly accurate. Regular monitoring of teaching and learning provides a reliable view of its quality. However, shortcomings in the monitoring of teaching and learning do occur because leaders do not revisit classes to check that agreed developments or whole-school policies have been fully implemented. As a result, pupils' experiences in different classes are sometimes uneven, and their pace of learning inconsistent. School development planning is not robust enough to bring about the necessary improvements in pupils' learning and raise standards. The areas identified for improvement are broadly accurate, but the plan lacks challenging targets, detailed actions or accountabilities.

Although leaders and managers take health and safety issues seriously, there are some important areas where the school has failed to keep aspects of policy, procedure and training up to date. This is particularly the case in relation to its assessment of potential health and safety hazards. Although carried out, some of the assessments lack sufficient detail to effectively reduce risk. Similarly, not enough work has been done in relation to promoting community cohesion. This is despite the fact that the school recognises that it is important for pupils to be adequately prepared for life in a multicultural and multi-faith wider community. Little has yet been done other than a very broad-brush outline policy.

The school has not yet undertaken an evaluation of the impact of its policies on equal opportunities, as required. However, the school does review its policies annually. Leaders and managers are not always able to demonstrate the impact of its actions, including those resulting from a range of partnerships, because of weaknesses in the analysis of the information that it collects. Moreover, the analysis of assessment information is not accurate enough to help staff track the pupils' progress and achievement. This is particularly the case, but not exclusively, for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. Consequently their particular learning needs are not fully met. This reduces the governors' ability to challenge and support the school in tackling any areas of weakness.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<p><b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>
<p>Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning</p>	<p>3</p>
<p><b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>



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<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</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>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

### Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication language and literacy. They make good progress over the Early Years Foundation Stage. As a result, children are working within and some meet the early learning goals for their age by the end of Reception. Staff work well as a team and provide a bright, lively learning environment. The outdoor areas are well equipped to enable children to develop their motor and sensory skills using big apparatus. There is an appropriate balance between child-centred and adult-led activities. Sometimes staff do not plan sufficiently closely for children's next steps in all areas of learning because observations and other assessment information are not used to inform future planning. Learning, development and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage are met satisfactorily. Nonetheless, risk assessments for out-of-school visits do not always assess risks in sufficient detail. Other procedures for the children's welfare, health and safety are thorough.

*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	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

### Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who returned a questionnaire indicated that they are pleased with the quality of education and care that their child receives. A few parents feel the school does not provide enough information about how to help their children with their learning. Inspectors found that the school provides some but not a great deal of information about how parents might help with their child's learning.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rakegate 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 350 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	25	46	29	54	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	30	56	23	43	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	23	43	31	57	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	21	39	31	57	2	4	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	24	44	29	54	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	20	37	31	57	3	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	41	32	59	0	0	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)	19	35	30	56	2	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	37	34	63	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	17	31	33	61	0	0	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	12	22	41	76	0	0	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	21	39	31	57	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	29	54	24	44	0	0	1	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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.**



11 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rakegate Primary School, Wolverhampton, WV10 6US

Thank you so much for your warm welcome when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. We would like to thank you and your parents or carers for filling in the questionnaires that gave us your views about the school.

There are some satisfactory things about the school.

You try to listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you.

You behave well.

You know how to lead a healthy lifestyle and keep safe.

Your school council is doing a good job on your behalf.

You told us there is always someone to talk to if you have any problems.

While there are some positive things, we have judged that the school needs a 'notice to improve' because it needs to make improvements in some areas very quickly. Inspectors will visit the school in the future to check how well it is doing. In the meantime, we have asked the headteacher, staff and the governing body to do a number of things to help the school to become better. We have asked them to:

- keep a closer eye on your progress and make sure that important policies and routines are the very best they can be, especially the ones that keep you safe
- make sure that everyone is given work at exactly the right level so that it is not too easy or too difficult
- make sure you know what you are aiming for in a lesson and how to improve
- make sure that teaching always helps you to make good progress, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.

You can all help your school improve further by continuing to try your best in all you do.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth

Her Majesty's Inspector

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