

Reddish Vale Early Years Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106018
Local Authority	Stockport
Inspection number	336597
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2009
Reporting inspector	Shirley Herring

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

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	97
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs A Graham
Headteacher	Ms R Lord
Date of previous school inspection	3 June 2007
School address	Reddish Vale Road Reddish Stockport SK5 7EU
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited eight sessions and held meetings with governors, staff, parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at teachers' plans, the work on display, the latest school improvement plan, assessments of children's progress, and children's records of achievement. They also looked at the 17 questionnaires completed by parents.

- the achievement of boys
- the progress of children who are learning English as an additional language
- how assessment information is used to plan the next steps in learning
- the effectiveness of management's actions in bringing about improvements
- the school's engagement with parents and carers

Information about the school

Reddish Vale Children's Centre serves an area of mixed housing. The vast majority of children are of White British heritage with a small proportion from minority ethnic groups. A small number of children are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The Centre runs a wide range of early years provision, supporting families in the school and the community. The Children's Centre is part of a 'soft' federation of schools, including the neighbouring primary school and the nearby technology college. This inspection was of the Nursery provision within the Children's Centre. Children join the Nursery the term after their third birthday. Most children attend part time, but a small proportion attends full time.

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 school. It has outstanding strengths in the care, guidance and support it provides, its engagement with parents and carers and its partnerships with others which promote the well-being of children. Parents and carers speak of welcoming, friendly staff and happy children who are eager to come each day. Some families from outside the immediate area choose to travel to the Nursery each day because of its good reputation and their previous good experiences of its provision.

Children's achievements are good. They behave well, respect each other and enjoy being in school. They thrive in the secure and welcoming atmosphere in which the needs of the individual are at the forefront. They feel extremely safe and this gives them the confidence to try different activities to help them to learn. They enter the Nursery with skills that are generally below those expected for their age. Good teaching and a rich curriculum help children to make good progress. The majority reach, and some exceed, the expected level for their age by the time they leave to join reception classes in other schools. While improvements to the outdoor provision have resulted in some gains in boys' learning, a small minority of boys do not achieve as well as the girls. This is because some boys find it difficult to sustain their interest and concentration.

The success of the Nursery is underpinned by the drive of the headteacher in leading a team which is proud of the school's ethos in focussing on the needs of individuals. Senior leaders keep a close eye on how well children are learning and are ever watchful over children's safety and well-being. In maintaining good practice since the last inspection and improving procedures for assessing children's progress, the school has demonstrated a good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the achievement of boys by employing more ways to sustain their interest and concentration for longer periods.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children

2

Children enter the school with a range of skills that overall are below what could be expected for their age, particularly in language and social skills. The rich curriculum, which is firmly based on practical and enjoyable activities, enables children to learn well and make good progress. The successful focus on providing for the needs of the individual helps children to achieve well. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well because of the excellent care and support they receive. The

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Nursery makes exceptional efforts to include in all activities those children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. For example, adults learn how to greet each child in their home language and encourage other children to include them in their play, helping them to settle quickly and feel welcome. Consequently, children at an early stage of learning English as an additional language achieve well. Some boys do not always achieve as well as girls because they are more easily distracted. They are less engaged when they are required to join in activities in a larger group.

Children feel exceptionally safe because of the justified trust they have in the adults, particularly their key worker (a member of staff with particular responsibility for a small groups of children). Within a few weeks of starting in the Nursery, quite young children skip in happily, eager to join in the available activities. They are very aware of their own and others' safety, taking care as they ride the bikes or use tools such as scissors.

Children respond well to the high expectations of mutual respect and so the behaviour of the very large majority is good. They are developing a good understanding of keeping healthy as they enjoy fruit snacks and take part in vigorous exercise. Initiatives such as 'Smile Week' help children to learn how to look after their own hygiene. They develop basic academic and social skills which prepare them well for the future. With strong encouragement from the Nursery staff, attendance for such young children is good. They make a good contribution to the community as they take turns and help each other.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Children are learning the difference between right and wrong and they celebrate the diverse cultures of children within the Nursery.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Children's attainment ¹	3
The quality of children's learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2

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

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	
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Provision is good and children get off to a positive start and make good gains in their learning. A strength in teaching is the way all staff focus on the needs of each individual. The assessment procedures are appropriately based on close observation and the results are used effectively to plan the next stage of learning for each child. For example, those children experiencing difficulties in their speech are encouraged to talk about what they are doing at every opportunity to help them to improve.

The curriculum is good. It is firmly based on purposeful, practical activities that show a good understanding of how young children learn. There is a good balance between those activities led by an adult and those which children choose for themselves. Adults are skilled in linking different areas of learning, for example, while children were enjoying creating a firework picture the teacher emphasised letter sounds in words such as 'Pop and bang!'. Activities in the extensive outdoor area are well planned for all children. They enjoy making the puddles into areas of coloured water and the more vigorous activities are particularly popular with the boys. The curriculum is enriched through visits and visitors to school, for example, children learned about oral hygiene during a visit from a dental health worker.

There are excellent procedures for introducing children to the Nursery, including home visits, and so children settle quickly. Any concerns or needs are identified at an early stage. Close links with the Children's Opportunity Group within the Children's Centre ensures that some needs are identified and planned for even before the children join the Nursery. This ensures that any existing support is continued. The daily opportunities for informal discussions with the key workers give parents confidence that all staff know the children well and have their best interests at heart. Parents and carers report that any concern, however small, is solved with remarkable speed and they are kept fully informed.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2

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

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The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1
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How effective are leadership and management?

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
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

Views of parents and carers

The views of parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive and supportive of the school. The inspection evidence supports their views that the Nursery takes excellent care of their children and that they make good progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Reddish Vale Early Years Centre 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 17 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 97 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	17	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	17	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	76	4	24	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	10	59	5	29	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	13	76	4	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	71	4	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	82	3	18	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)	12	71	4	24	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	76	2	12	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	11	65	6	35	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	82	2	12	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	16	94	1	6	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	16	94	1	6	0	0	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 children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
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 children. 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 child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
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 children 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 children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

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.



Dear Children

Thank you for helping the inspectors when we visited your Nursery recently. We really enjoyed our visit. Some of your mums told me how much you enjoy coming to school each day and I can understand why. They also told me how much they appreciate that the school tells them what is happening in school.

You go to a good Nursery which is a safe and happy place to be. In fact, some of the things about your Nursery are outstanding, which is the best word we can use. All the adults take outstanding care of you all and there is always someone there to give you extra help when you need it. The Nursery does its very best to make sure that you receive specialist help from other people when necessary.

We were pleased to see how well behaved you are and how much you are learning. We particularly liked the way in which you help each other and take good care of those children who do not quite understand what is being said to them. Your teachers plan exciting things for you to do. I could see how much you really enjoyed shaking the tambourine and watching the frogs bounce on the stretchy blue material as you sang about 'The Little Green Frog'.

Your teachers work hard to help you to learn. It is part of my job to suggest ways that even a good school could be better. Your teachers are going to think of more ways to help some of the boys concentrate for a little bit longer on what they are doing.

You are a credit to your mums and dads and carers. I can see why your teachers enjoy working with you each day. I wish you and your families all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

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