

# Rowlatts Hill Primary School

## Inspection report

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Unique Reference Number	120054
Local Authority	Leicester
Inspection number	339583
Inspection dates	5-6 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Barbara Atcheson

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

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Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	302
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mary Draycott
Headteacher	Jay Virk
Date of previous school inspection	31 October-1 November 2007
School address	Balderstone Close off Ambassador Road Leicester LE5 4ES
Telephone number	0116 2768812
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 11 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's data tracking, quality of monitoring, improvement planning and other key documents. The outcomes from 65 parent questionnaires were also evaluated.

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

- how far improvements have been made to attainment and progress, especially in English, across the school and in mathematics in Years 3 to 6
- the success of measures to tackle any weaknesses, including how well senior and subject leaders monitor the implementation of initiatives and how well governors fulfil their strategic role
- assessment for learning and the tracking of pupils' progress
- the effectiveness and reliability of the safeguarding of children
- the development of the national and international dimensions to the promotion of community cohesion.

## Information about the school

This is a large school. A quarter of the pupils are White British and one third are British Asian. The remainder are from a mixture of other ethnic backgrounds. One third of pupils speak English as an additional language. Many start school at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and and/or disabilities is well above the national figure. A significant number of pupils are admitted to school at times other than the usual time of entry. The Nursery and Reception classes are joined to form the Early Years Foundation Stage. A privately run children's centre is sited within the school grounds. This setting is not managed by the school's governing body, so it is 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

## Main findings

- This is a satisfactory and improving school. Although the general pattern of attainment at the end of Year 6 has been low over the last three years, there has been a rising trend in pupils' attainment and the progress they make since the previous inspection. Pupils make good progress from low levels of attainment on entry, regardless of their ability, age or ethnicity. However, standards in English, particularly writing, are not as high as those in mathematics and science.
- Children in Reception make good progress and are well prepared for their work in Year 1, although planning for activities does not ensure the most imaginative use of the outdoor area.
- Teaching has improved and is now good. It is based on an effective, creative curriculum which has been modified to enable pupils to succeed in their personal, social and emotional development as much as their basic skills. Sometimes teachers talk for too long and the pace of learning drops. This limits pupils' rate of progress. Although pupils can outline their targets, not all of them understand what they must do to improve.
- Pupils feel safe and parents recognise the good quality of care, guidance and support and the effective safeguarding procedures in the school.
- The school ensures all pupils have equal opportunities to succeed.
- The school has developed very successful partnerships with parents, other schools and the local authority, which enable it to offer good-quality learning across a wide range of subjects.
- Leadership and management are good and plans to improve teaching and accelerate pupils' progress are effective, although some senior leadership roles are not as well developed as they should be.

This school has a good capacity for continuous improvement because it has a secure view of its own strengths and weaknesses based on sound self-evaluation. Staff and governors share the headteacher's passion for improvement and are united in a drive to raise achievement and standards. Targeted improvements have ensured that pupils overcome any barriers to learning that they may have and this has enabled them to reach the challenging targets set by the school.

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

- Raise standards in English, specifically writing, by:
  - improving the development of writing skills across the curriculum
  - placing greater emphasis on punctuation and grammar.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good by:
  - improving the pace of learning
  - ensuring that pupils are clear about what they need to do to improve their work.
- Develop the role of senior leaders by
  - ensuring that all leaders work closely together to accelerate the pace of improvement
  - ensuring that the implementation of initiatives is rigorously monitored.

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

The school's values statement 'Together we succeed through challenge and enjoyment' can be seen in the way in which pupils behave well in lessons and respond positively to the challenges set by their teachers. Consequently, all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability enjoy learning and make good progress. Pupils know their targets but are not always clear about what they need to do to improve their work. Good use of assessment and tracking of pupils' progress means that learning is tailor-made and this, together with a high level of targeted intervention, has ensured that pupils make good progress. However, on occasion when teachers talk for too long and the pace of learning drops, progress is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 6 are improving although they are still below average, with the exception of science, where they are average. English, and particularly writing, is the weakest area because pupils start with low language skills and those in Years 5 and 6 have had to close gaps in learning caused by a legacy of previous inadequate teaching.

Pupils work productively and purposefully and enjoy all aspects of school. They have a good understanding of personal safety, and this is evident particularly in their work to draw up an anti-bullying code. Pupils who are new to the school and those from minority ethnic groups are integrated well in lessons. Other pupils take great pride in helping them. The produce that pupils grow in their allotments makes a real contribution to their good knowledge and understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They apply their basic skills in a range of contexts and this,

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together with positive attitudes and effective team-working, means that pupils are suitably prepared for secondary school and future employment.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
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	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

## How effective is the provision?

The rising trend in the rate of progress and standards during the last year is due to the staff's hard work and commitment to raising expectations, which has improved the quality of teaching. Teachers are proficient in encouraging independent learning, group collaboration and problem solving. Good use is made of information on pupils' progress as teachers coach and prompt pupils to correct misunderstandings and probe understanding. Teachers' accurate assessment of needs means that teaching assistants are effectively employed. However, there are still times when a lack of pace limits the rate of progress and the time for pupils to complete their tasks.

The curriculum has been strengthened considerably since the previous inspection. It addresses the language needs of a linguistically diverse group of pupils by encouraging the development of communication skills. However, writing skills are underdeveloped and do not always provide sufficient support for pupils whose skills in this area are limited. A good range of carefully risk assessed educational visits, sporting activities, clubs and the school's steel band provide intriguing and absorbing experiences for all pupils.

Parents and carers appreciate the good level of care and support that their children receive. Careful observation and analysis of need ensures that all pupils, including those who arrive during the school year, settle quickly. Pupils with special

<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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educational needs and/or disabilities have individual education plans tailored well to their difficulties which enable teachers and teaching assistants to meet their needs fully.

*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 headteacher provides the drive, ambition and inspiration that has enthused staff and governors to adopt and support her agenda for improvement, enabling the school to demonstrate a good capacity for sustained improvement. The governing body works hard and provides a good level of challenge. The improvement in teaching, which has accelerated the rate of pupils' progress, is a direct result of the work of middle leaders. They demonstrate good practice, give detailed and specific coaching to teachers based on analysis of pupils' progress, and supportive professional feedback on their performance in class and scrutiny of marked work. However, not all of the roles of the senior leadership team are as well developed and a lack of communication and a lack of precision in the way that some initiatives are monitored sometimes slows the rate of progress. Rigorous tracking systems and accurate assessment engender realistic but challenging targets, which enable all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability to make good progress and ensure equality of opportunity. The school pays good attention to safeguarding. Checks on the suitability of adults to work with children are thorough and child protection arrangements are secure and updated regularly. All staff have a comprehensive knowledge of processes and procedures and receive regular training in every aspect. Consequently, all pupils know that they are safe.

Community cohesion is promoted well. The school has its own common vision and sense of belonging because it celebrates the rich diversity of its population, learning from each other what life is really like in different communities both here and abroad. The school has undertaken an effective audit through its work for 'Young Gifted and Equal' and the 'International School's Award'. Links with a small county school and a school in New Zealand deepen pupils' understanding even further. However, governors recognise that the next step for them is to monitor how effective these strategies have been in strengthening the school's contribution to community cohesion.

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*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
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	3

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Nursery and Reception class with low levels of knowledge, skills and understanding. They make good progress in most areas of learning because:

- accurate assessment ensures that teachers have a good understanding of the learning and development needs of the children, so activities are planned which build upon what children already know, understand and can do
- exciting opportunities, such as sandwich making, consolidate language development effectively
- teaching assistants are well informed about the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, so they are able to provide focused support
- leadership and management are effective and partnerships with parents are good
- children are very well cared for, and safeguarding procedures are excellent.

Children achieve well in all areas of learning but not all attain the levels expected for their age by the end of the Reception Year, particularly in their language skills. In addition, planning for the outside area does not always meet the children's needs in an imaginative way.

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

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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 have positive views of the school. They are particularly pleased with the caring, friendly and welcoming ethos. Evidence from the inspection supports parents' views that children enjoy school, that care for children's health and safety is good and that the school is well led and managed. Parents said, 'The school has improved a lot since the new head has come'.



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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rowlatts Hill 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 65 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 302 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	54	27	42	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	26	40	37	57	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	31	48	31	48	2	3	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	38	32	49	5	8	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	48	30	46	2	3	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	23	35	37	57	3	5	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	45	31	48	4	6	1	2
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)	23	35	37	57	2	3	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	31	35	54	3	5	3	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	29	28	43	13	20	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	25	40	62	6	9	1	2
The school is led and managed effectively	25	38	37	57	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	26	45	26	45	3	5	2	3

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 all 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

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 pupils' 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.



7 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rowlatts Hill Primary School, Leicester, LE 5 4ES

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to you. You really helped us. We think your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education and there are quite a lot of good things about your school. These are the main things that helped us come to this conclusion:

- children in the Nursery and Reception class get off to a good start
- you enjoy school and behave well
- you are well taught, but because many of you start at a low level or have gaps in your learning, you usually achieve lower levels than those expected for your age
- the school provides good lessons and a wide range of interesting extra activities
- you have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to keep safe
- you enjoy your responsibilities, and know that you contribute well to school life
- the teachers look after you well
- your headteacher works hard to make learning better for you.

We have asked the school to do three things:

- help you to do better in English, particularly writing, by making sure that you improve your punctuation and sentence structure
- make sure that teachers increase the rate at which you learn and that you are clear about what you need to do to improve your work
- make sure that senior leaders make things better by working closely together and checking to see that improvements have been carried out.

We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and to try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Thank you again. We wish you continuing success.

Yours faithfully  
Barbara Atcheson  
Lead inspector



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