

Reckleford Community School and Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123726
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	340408
Inspection dates	12–13 May 2010
Reporting inspector	John Seal

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	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	98
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sam McAleenan
Headteacher	Sonia Floyd
Date of previous school inspection	6 June 2007
School address	Eastland Road Yeovil BA21 4ET
Telephone number	01935 475938
Fax number	01935 475938
Email address	sfloyd@educ.somerset.gov.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. They observed five lessons which involved seeing four teachers. Meetings were held with pupils, staff and governors. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at: data on pupils' progress and attendance; a range of policies and planning documents; minutes of meetings; the school's self-evaluation documents; risk assessments; financial information and documents relating to safeguarding. The team analysed questionnaires completed by 12 parents and carers, and 18 staff.

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

- how much progress pupils make in reading writing and mathematics over time and in lessons
- how effectively the teachers use assessment to help pupils make progress
- how well senior leaders monitor pupils' progress and the impact of teaching.

Information about the school

Reckleford Community School is smaller than the average infant school. It is part of a children's centre which includes a maintained day nursery for children aged 3 to 5 years. The nursery was included in the inspection. A high proportion of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and a larger than average proportion are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high and the proportion identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those in the nursery, is above average. Their needs include specific learning difficulties with speech, language and communication, hearing and physical difficulties. The school holds a number of awards, including Healthy School, 'I CAN Primary Talk', Activemark and the Financial Management Standard in Schools charter marks.

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

4

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: increasing the proportion of pupils attaining nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2; and ensuring that senior managers rigorously and systematically monitor and evaluate pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning.

Reckleford Community School works hard to foster a feeling of security among all of its pupils, especially for the exceptionally high proportion that are potentially vulnerable and have complex personal, social and emotional needs. The headteacher and staff know each pupil very well and have established good relationships with parents and carers. As a result, parents have positive views about the school. Those who spoke to inspectors and returned questionnaires had nothing but praise. One parent wrote: 'This is a very friendly school'.

Satisfactory teaching is supported by a broad and balanced curriculum. Teachers plan appropriate activities for pupils and provide them with practical and interesting work. Consequently, many pupils overcome their significant difficulties to make generally satisfactory progress from exceptionally low starting points. However, because of previous challenges within the school, the older pupils have not caught up the lost ground in their learning. There has been a consistent trend of low attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 over the last three years, although support from the local authority has helped to arrest further decline.

The school has struggled with a variety of challenges since the last inspection and this has led to the leadership of the school being distracted from ensuring pupils make the best progress they can. As pupils move through the school, what they are taught and learn is not monitored closely enough by the school's leaders. There are suitable tracking systems that help staff to collect information about each individual pupil. However, this information is not analysed in sufficient detail to enable senior leaders and the governing body to have a clear picture of how different groups are progressing. In addition, although the headteacher has visited lessons for monitoring purposes, this has not been carried out in an efficient or rigorous manner, and has produced an insufficiently clear view of the quality of teaching and learning and its impact on pupils' progress. Since the last inspection, the school's improvement has been slow. Significant support and resources have been put in place by the local authority. As a result, leaders and managers now have a broad knowledge of the general areas of strengths and areas

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for improvement. Consequently, while the school provides a satisfactory standard of education its capacity for improvement without external support is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining nationally expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Improve the overall quality of teaching and learning to good by:
 - using assessment information more effectively to better inform lesson planning in order to accelerate progress for all pupils.
- Ensure leaders and managers at all levels systematically and rigorously monitor and evaluate the rates of pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning.

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

A high proportion of children start the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills and knowledge which are exceptionally low in comparison to typical age-related expectations. They make good progress up to the beginning of Reception. Although overall progress of most pupils is satisfactory, those pupils at an early stage of learning English make good progress in their spoken language skills. Pupils who have complex needs and social and emotional difficulties develop good dispositions for learning. Due to the significant support from the local authority, the school has recognised that there needs to be a much clearer emphasis on targeting the progress of the different groups of pupils who have the capability to achieve higher standards. The effects of this work can be seen in the early signs of increasing progress for some pupils.

Most pupils enjoy their school life and have positive attitudes towards learning. Because of the school's hard work in achieving the Healthy School Award, an increasing number of pupils are becoming aware of how to live a healthier life. Some children were able to talk about why the free fruit and milk were important and there is good attendance at after-school events involving physical activity. Attendance is broadly average for the majority of pupils. Although pupils' overall attainment in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is low, the school's very good transition arrangements enable pupils to be ready to make a good start at junior school. There are many good examples of how pupils help each other, work in teams and are developing a good awareness of the world of work. For example, pupils visit the local shops and interview the staff. Older pupils help with translating for adults and the younger children within the school.

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	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
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 ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teachers plan lessons that are effective in encouraging pupils' positive attitudes to learning. For example, the class of mixed Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were learning to write fantasy stories. To improve their writing skills, a fairy-tale castle had been built in order to provide motivation and excitement. Lesson plans provide suitably structured lessons, but assessment information is not used effectively to provide sufficient detail to meet the specific learning needs all the pupils. As a result, pupils' overall progress is no better than satisfactory. The well-trained and experienced learning support assistants are effectively deployed to support pupils who have emerging skills in English or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This support helps these pupils make good progress from their very low starting points.

Because of falling numbers of pupils, the very recent reorganisation of classes has combined pupils of different ages in the same class. Subsequently, the school has adapted its curriculum planning to cover all the required subjects appropriately. However, the school acknowledges that it has yet to meet the learning needs of some of the older pupils sufficiently well. Learning for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is suitably planned. A good range of additional activities during lunch times and after school enhances the curriculum.

The school's work with an extensive range of agencies and the close working relationship with the community centre are strengths. As a consequence of the school's productive work with its partners, it has created an environment that encourages children and pupils to come to school more often, enjoy their learning and behave well. Pupils at an early stage of learning English and those who have special educational

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needs and/or disabilities receive good support from the special educational needs coordinator and the experienced team of learning support assistants.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher and her team successfully provide pupils with a secure environment in which they can thrive both socially and emotionally. They also ensure all groups of pupils are treated equally well within the school community. The use of data to support improvements in pupils' learning and progress is underdeveloped. As a result, the impact of leadership and management on raising attainment is inadequate. Safeguarding procedures are robust and conscientiously maintained. The governing body carries out its statutory duties appropriately and on occasions challenges the school with regard to financial and organisational issues. A good start has been made in auditing the various faiths and cultures within the school community and the school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

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Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make a good start to school life because of the positive links established between nursery staff and parents, carers and other agencies. Children enjoy their learning and are happy, confident and engaged. Children's behaviour is good and their social development is well managed. The leadership of the nursery is good, with effective training and strong links with the children's centre and well-managed transition into the Reception class. However, the overall leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory rather than good because the separate leadership of the nursery and the Reception class leads to a lack of consistency and accuracy in tracking and evaluating children's progress across the whole stage. The school's assessment information suggests that children make good progress during their time in the nursery, but the less accurate information about their development of knowledge and skills during Reception and children's work seen during inspection is leading to only satisfactory progress overall. There is also some disparity in the provision: the nursery learning environment has easy and well-used access between indoor and outdoor activities but in Reception this free-flow, while managed adequately, is more restricted.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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

All of the questionnaires returned by parents and carers were very positive with no one raising any concerns. Although inspectors endorse many of the views expressed, they found evidence that the school could be managed more effectively and that many pupils could make more progress in their reading, writing and mathematics.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Reckleford Community School and Children's 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 12 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 98 pupils registered at the school including the Nursery.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	11	92	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	11	92	1	8	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	11	92	1	8	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	12	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	75	3	25	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)	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	10	83	2	17	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	7	58	5	42	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	8	66	3	25	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	9	75	3	25	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	92	1	8	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 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). 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"> ■ 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.



Dear children and pupils

Inspection of Reckleford Community School and Children's Centre, Yeovil BA21 4ET

We enjoyed our visit to your school recently and want to say thank you for your friendly welcome. We thought your behaviour was good and that you enjoyed your learning. It was interesting to watch you learn and play and see how well you got on with each other and all the adults who work with you.

We found that your school does some things very well but needs help to do other things better, so the school will receive what is known as a notice to improve. This means that it will be visited again by inspectors who will check that things are improving.

Some of the things the school does well are:

- helps you feel safe
- cares for you and looks after you when you are finding things difficult
- works well with your parents and other adults who look after you.

After talking to your headteacher, staff and governors about what we saw, we have asked them to work on improving three things:

- helping all of you make even more progress in reading, writing and maths
- helping your teachers plan your lessons even more carefully to make sure you all learn as much as you can
- checking that you are learning as much as you can all the time.

You can all help the school by carrying on being well behaved and attending regularly.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

John Seal

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