



Ravenhurst Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120098
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 284347
Inspection dates 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006
Reporting inspector Dilip Kadodwala HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary	School address	Ravenhurst Road
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leicestershire LE3 2PS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2897808
Number on roll	535	Fax number	0116 2892389
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Sheila Stevenson
Date of previous inspection	24 January 2000	Headteacher	Ms Nicola Webb

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British origin with about 18% being Indian and a few being of white and Asian heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is high at 20%. A few pupils from Polish backgrounds are at an early stage of speaking English. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities, including those who have a statement of special educational needs, is below the national average. The eligibility for free school meals is below the national average. When the school was inspected in November 2004 it was judged to require special measures.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

Since her recent appointment, the headteacher has succeeded in uniting staff to a common sense of purpose. She provides clear direction and there is an unrelenting focus on raising standards. Governance has improved. Governors are better informed about the work of the school. However, they have some way to go in holding the school to account for standards achieved. School development planning is at an early stage and it is anticipated that all who have an interest in the school will contribute to it. Standards are broadly average and the improved quality of teaching has resulted in pupils making satisfactory progress overall. However, pupils' attainment in writing is not high enough. Standards and the quality of provision in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in lessons and around the school are good and many pupils are keen to take responsibility, including the school council. Systems for assessing the pupils' attainment and tracking their progress are having an impact but there is scope for further development.

The inspection of 2004 required the school to address issues concerned with leadership and management, standards and teaching, and the balance of the curriculum. Overall there has been good progress and the school is well placed to continue to improve. Senior leaders have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses and suitable plans to tackle these robustly. All staff are committed to raising standards and improving the pupils' progress. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

The school's development plan recognises the areas where improvement is needed. The key priorities now are to:

- continue to raise standards in writing by ensuring that the basic skills, such as spelling and punctuation, are more securely established
- continue to develop the use of assessment to inform teachers' planning and teaching
- continue to increase the rigour with which governors hold the school to account.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children's attainment when they join the school is broadly average. However, their communication skills are often weak. More able children make good progress in language and literacy. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage across all areas of learning and their attainment is broadly average when they start Year 1.

Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average and achievement is satisfactory. The standards attained in the national tests in 2005 were average. Standards were

better in mathematics and reading than in writing. More able pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing but do not achieve higher standards because of weak spelling and punctuation.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average and pupils' progress is satisfactory. The 2005 national test results of the more able pupils improved from the previous year so that they are average in mathematics and science. In English, the results for the more able are below average. These pupils do not achieve higher standards because spelling continues to be weak and the organisation and purpose of writing are insufficiently clear. The school's analysis of data shows that pupils' progress in writing lags behind reading, mathematics and science.

The progress of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is satisfactory. They receive well focused support and meet the targets set for them. The progress of pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language is the same as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils behave well, work hard and are keen to learn. They are happy to come to school and feel safe and secure. Rates of attendance are just below the national average. However, the school is working hard to promote regular attendance. The higher than expected proportion of authorised absence is accounted for by a number of pupils taking extended and family holidays in term time. The school is targeting this group closely.

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies promote a good sense of community and pupils' relationships with one another and adults are good. The school council is active and pupils feel it enables them to make a positive contribution to school life. For example, pupils have helped to improve the playground resources. They develop a good understanding of the world's religions and cultures through subjects, assemblies and the celebration of festivals.

The school promotes healthy eating well and pupils talk confidently about how healthy food and exercise helps their concentration and energy. Pupils are encouraged to eat healthily and to participate in sport in after school clubs. They contribute to the community effectively through charitable fundraising. The pupils make satisfactory progress in developing the key skills required to prepare them for their future education and working life. Older children look after the younger children and learn how to manage simple budgets through fundraising activities, such as 'Jump for Heart.'

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Throughout the school there are aspects of good teaching, particularly in how teachers explain to pupils what they want them to learn. This sets a clear purpose for lessons and sparks pupils' interest. Teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach and share this effectively so that pupils develop a clear understanding, for example, of mathematical and scientific vocabulary.

Teachers have good information about the attainment and progress of the pupils and this is used effectively to group them by ability. However, the use of assessment information is inconsistent and lacks rigour in planning work to challenge pupils to achieve standards of which they are capable. For the more able pupils there are insufficient opportunities for them to plan their work, develop their ideas, and devise their own ways of recording. This slows their pace of learning and the development of their independent learning skills. Teachers are providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills but the expectations of what pupils can achieve in their writing, in subjects other than in English, are insufficiently high.

Relationships between pupils and adults are good and pupils are eager to do their best. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy learning. Many say that lessons are fun. Consistency in the way that teachers use agreed strategies, such as marking, is successful in helping pupils to improve their work. It builds pupils' confidence and increases the pace of learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum includes the full range of required subjects and is organised so that most lessons build systematically on what has gone before. The exception is when the planning is not adapted sufficiently well to take account of the pupils' levels of ability so that they can progress quickly. In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is satisfactory, but some difficulties arise when planning in the mixed Reception age and Year 1 class provides activities that are too difficult for the younger children to understand. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved with more computers available for pupils. The use of ICT to support learning across subjects is developing, with more regular opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate their skills. Pupils need better and sustained opportunities to develop and practise their writing to raise standards further.

The school offers pupils a good variety of activities to enhance the curriculum. A wide range of visits and visitors add to pupils' experiences and enjoyment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils are well cared for and are frequently reminded by staff about the importance of staying safe. The school provides well for health education and focuses successfully on pupils knowing the need for a healthy diet and regular exercise to grow fit and well.

Staff provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and have a good knowledge of pupils' social and emotional needs. Most pupils are set clear and challenging targets. Many know how well they are doing and what they need to do to get better. Pupils' progress towards the targets is adequately monitored and reported. There are rigorous child protection procedures in place, and staff know what to do if they feel a child is at risk. There are effective links with parents, carers and support agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are well understood. Parents are pleased with the help their children receive when they first start school. They feel they get a good start to their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The inspection of November 2004 judged the leadership, management and governance of the school to be unsatisfactory. Leadership and management are now satisfactory overall and particularly good at the very top. The headteacher has led the school determinedly since her arrival in November 2005, building rapidly on the initiatives set in train by the acting headteacher and senior leaders. The headteacher's dynamism has engendered a sense of common purpose with an unrelenting focus on raising standards. She has allowed staff to flourish and to take significant responsibility for the continued improvement of the pupils' learning. The senior management team is dedicated and supports the headteacher well.

Systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is leading to improvement and contributes well to senior leaders' accurate picture of the school's overall strengths and weaknesses. It is recognised that the evaluation of teaching needs to focus more sharply now on the impact it has on pupils' learning. Leadership and management of subjects are satisfactory. Strategies to bring about further improvements are in place but these have yet to filter through to an improvement in standards, particularly in writing.

Governors are closely involved in the school and governance is satisfactory. They are frequent visitors and monitor the school's finances and staffing closely. Systems for checking the standards achieved are at an early stage of development but governors share the staff's commitment to ensure that all pupils make expected progress. Governors have a secure understanding of what more needs doing, particularly their role in providing a strategic direction to the school. A school development plan is at an early stage but key priorities are accurately identified. The views of parents and

pupils are being sought and will help inform the plan. The improvements brought about so far, and the shared sense of direction, bode well for the future.

The local authority has provided the school with good support to help it improve. The school has benefited from support for senior managers and training for staff and governors.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for all your help during our recent visit to your school. As you know, your school was thought to require special measures in November 2004 because at that time it was not providing a good enough education. Since the spring term 2005, I have been visiting your school to see how well it was progressing. Each term I have seen improvements. It is time now to congratulate you and all the people who work to help you. Ravenhurst Primary School no longer requires special measures!

Because of everyone's hard work, there are many things about your school which are at least satisfactory and some that are good. Your teachers teach you really well. Some of you said to us that one of the best things about your school is the lessons. This is helping you to make much better progress in your subjects. You have good attitudes to your work and you are helpful and polite to each other. Many of you have said that learning is fun. I am impressed by your well organised school council. Although it is still quite new, you are keen that it helps you to explain your opinions and that Ms Webb and the other teachers listen. I am pleased that through the school council you have been able to improve the playground.

Standards in your school are rising. Ms Webb and all staff at your school want to improve standards even more, with your help. We have asked your teachers to keep up the good work and also to do a few more things to make your school even better. These are:

- to make your writing better in all your subjects, paying particular attention to spelling and punctuation
- to make sure that all teachers, when they are planning your lessons, use the information they have about your abilities and the progress you are making towards your targets.

We have also asked that your governors to continue to keep a close eye on how well the school is doing.

I have always enjoyed coming to your school, but I am delighted that you no longer need me to do so. Ms Webb and the senior team have good plans to carry on improving the school and will need your best efforts to make the school even better. Congratulations again on your achievements and best wishes for the future.