

Radleys Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	104207
Local Authority	Walsall
Inspection number	355541
Inspection dates	7–8 March 2011
Reporting inspector	David Carrington

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	211
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian Veness
Headteacher	Lynne Caley
Date of previous school inspection	16 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 19 lessons led by eight teachers and two teaching assistants. Meetings were held with the headteacher, deputy headteacher, senior leaders and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at school planning, assessment data, records of pupils' work, the school's checks on the quality of teaching and a number of policy documents. The team received 52 questionnaires from parents and carers and also evaluated those from pupils and the school staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The degree to which all staff and the members of the governing body are focused firmly enough on raising attainment and progress.
- Whether attainment and progress are rising rapidly enough, particularly in mathematics and among boys, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and vulnerable children.
- The use of assessment to enable a close enough match of work and degree of challenge in relation to pupils' abilities.
- How far attendance levels, especially among persistent absentees, are rising.
- Pupils' understanding of the lives of people from different societies and cultures in the United Kingdom and overseas.

Information about the school

Radleys is an average size primary school. Almost a fifth of the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, but the majority are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is similar to that in most schools. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities has been rising for a number of years. The proportion is a little below average. There has also been an increase in the number of children with vulnerabilities. The proportion of pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has Healthy Schools and Eco Schools status. There has been a significant change in staff since the previous 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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Radleys Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. They make satisfactory progress and reach average attainment levels by the time they leave for secondary school. Pupils are well behaved and enjoy good relationships with each other and the adults in school. They have a good awareness of how to keep healthy and safe, which is underpinned by outstanding procedures for the safeguarding of all pupils. The quality of care, guidance and support is good and assists the vulnerable pupils and those with some form of barrier to learning to settle to schoolwork and progress appropriately. Attendance levels are average. They are rising gradually due to the school's successful work to encourage full attendance. The level of persistent absence is being addressed with due urgency.

School leaders and members of the governing body provide a firm drive towards improvement. The rest of the staff are united in their quest to make pupils' progress brisker. The staff changes of two years ago caused some difficulties with assessment which was not then always accurate. This led to insufficient challenge in the school's targets for attainment. While assessment accuracy has been improved well, and learning targets are now better matched to pupils' abilities, work to ensure all pupils make consistently good progress has not yet been completed. Examination of pupils' books shows that progress is rising, especially in mathematics. This also holds for boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there is still variation from class to class in the progress made by different groups. The books also show that the marking of work is inconsistent in clarity and helpfulness for pupils. Some samples show very competent marking, but these strengths are not yet shared enough across the school. Similarly, discussion in class about pupils' targets and how effectively they are being achieved is not frequent enough and does not always include sufficient time for pupils to reflect on their learning.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The proportion of good teaching is rising and some is outstanding. However, as pupils' books show, much improvement in teaching and learning arose towards the middle of last term, so there has not yet been enough time for this better quality teaching to work through and maximise progress for all pupils. The amount of practical activity and problem solving and investigation work is increasing, which is significant in the success of the best lessons in promoting good progress. In some lessons however, there is too much teacher -directed work and not enough opportunity for pupils to work independently and use their initiative.

At present, the school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily rather than well. This is because pupils do not have a full understanding of the lives and beliefs of the different people who live in the United Kingdom. Their understanding of differences and similarities

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in the lives of people in other countries is good and there is an appropriate community feeling within school and locally.

The process of improvement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is going well, although it is not yet complete. The new outside area has been developed as a high quality resource but is not yet used to full effect, as the phase leader recognises. The school's improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory and it has the necessary capacity to maintain its rise. This is because school self-evaluation is now more rigorous than in the past and priorities much more focused on achieving challenging targets for pupils' progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- In order to accelerate progress and raise attainment, make sure pupils have enough opportunities to reflect on their learning targets and understand how to improve their skills and knowledge by:
 - creating sufficient time in lessons for pupils to talk together about the successes and difficulties of their work
 - sharing pupils' evaluations of their own and other pupils' work with their teacher as the lesson progresses and again at the end
 - using the marking of pupils' work to indicate what has been achieved and what has to be improved so that they can meet their targets in good time.
- Strengthen the opportunities for pupils to manage their own learning by:
 - providing more consistent opportunities for pupils to work independently and use their initiative
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to undertake practical work, make investigations and solve problems.
- Give pupils more direct experience of meeting and communicating with people from different faiths and cultures in the United Kingdom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

After a period when attainment and progress were clearly not good enough, the school has made satisfactory improvements. At present, attainment is average in mathematics, reading and writing. This represents satisfactory progress from children's below expected levels of skills and knowledge when they start school. Progress is not yet good because it is inconsistent from year to year, group to group and subject to subject. School leaders have had success in boosting the performance of key groups, such as boys and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Some good progress was observed in lessons. In a Year 5 mathematics lesson the pupils were particularly motivated by the nature of the problems they had to solve. These went beyond the usual parcel weighing and postage calculation to deciding the order of loading parcels into the van so that effort was minimised on unloading. The ongoing self-evaluation of learning was a notable feature of this lesson. It enabled pupils to overcome difficulties themselves rather than rely on the teacher. Other lessons do not stimulate pupils' enquiry and evaluation so markedly and so progress is less brisk. The pupils' books

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show that most of them work productively and purposefully although some long gaps between pieces of work suggest greater progress could have been made, especially prior to the midpoint in the autumn term.

The pattern of attainment and progress shown leads to the satisfactory development of skills and knowledge for pupils' future education. There are some good opportunities for pupils to show entrepreneurial skills, as in the organisation of the Eco Council or raising funds for charity. The development of pupils' independence, teamwork and self-reliance is satisfactory rather than good because opportunities for consolidating such skills in lessons are inconsistent. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered effectively. Their cultural awareness is rather less well promoted than their spiritual reflection, although choir and drama activities such as the concert at Symphony Hall, Birmingham, are useful in building a suitable awareness of key elements of British heritage.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	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	2

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

How effective is the provision?

The Year 5 class were captivated by their work to research whales in their English lesson. The work was thought-provoking and inspiring and provided ample challenge for each ability group. The pupils organised their own learning with great maturity and style. This contrasts with some lessons where the step-by-step development is spelled out by the teacher and pupils respond to instruction rather than plan their own approach. The

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evidence of lesson observations indicates that the frequency of these less-involving lessons is falling and that all staff are keen to improve learning quality. Several members of staff reacted to feedback from the inspection quickly in modifying and strengthening learning in their own lessons successfully. The second visit to a class was often marked by an improved lesson.

The curriculum has a number of strengths including provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and the programme of out of school activities, which have made a particularly valuable contribution to the improvement of behaviour. The focus on the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is appropriate. Curriculum planning is geared more at present to the identification of what will be taught rather than how it will be learned.

Parents and carers hold the school's work in caring for, guiding and supporting their children's learning in high esteem. All staff are watchful of pupils' welfare. Vulnerable pupils are counselled sensitively; the provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is successful in enabling these pupils to make satisfactory progress. Behaviour and attendance are managed well. As senior leaders have identified, planning for the deployment of teaching assistants is effective in the main sections of each lesson, but can be less effective when the teacher is explaining or summing-up the lesson.

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 is resolute in her determination to bring vital improvement to the school. Other senior leaders contribute successfully to the strategic management of the school. The improvements emerging in the quality of teaching and the rate of progress made by pupils are due to their guidance for staff. However, these senior leaders recognise that their work is not complete and that more time and effort are required to ensure every pupil in every year makes enough progress from their starting point.

The work of the governing body has been improved substantially in recent years. It operates as a probing group where governors set pupils' achievement as their benchmark for evaluating the school's performance. It has already started to gauge the impact of the drive and ambition shown by the adults in school on the process of setting increasingly challenging targets for attainment and progress. In this way it has overcome any past complacency in school. The governing body plays a significant role in school self-evaluation and has a good grasp of what the progress tracking data mean for judging school performance.

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The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Senior leaders accept that pupils need to develop a better understanding of the range of faiths and cultures represented in the United Kingdom. The governing body is determined to make the promotion of community cohesion as effective as the outstanding safeguarding of pupils already in place. Watchfulness and vision that anticipate any threats or risks are the mark of safeguarding at Radleys.

The pace of improvement, especially of progress and attainment, is growing. Nonetheless, the remaining inconsistencies in provision and pupils' achievement indicate that the promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory rather than good. There is, however, absolutely no tolerance of discrimination in any form.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Provision in the Early years Foundation Stage has been suitably improved since the previous inspection. All members of staff are now to be observed making valuable interventions in children's learning to ensure that they derive benefits from the different experiences they meet. This is assisting the satisfactory and increasing progress that the children are making.

The children enjoy their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They sing well-known songs such as 'Going to the Zoo' with gusto. They also enjoy versions with different words ? for example the humorous touches about Michael Monkey in 'You'll never go to heaven'. They can relate these songs to the things they have learned already about their Rainforest topic.

The phase is led appropriately. Priorities for improvement have been chosen wisely. Capturing the potential of the much improved outdoor area and involving children more

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fully in the evaluation of their learning are two such priorities that inspection shows to be timely. Assessment is reliable and completed regularly, which has a benefit for matching tasks to children's needs. Most children reach the levels expected of them by the end of Reception, although in the past too few have gone beyond them. The staff know that there is a greater proportion of higher ability children in the current classes and that their good progress is a central priority. As in other parts of the school, enabling them to develop independence and enquiry in learning is the key next step.

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

The response rate for the questionnaire was similar to that in most primary schools. Generally, parents and carers are very pleased with the school and hold very high opinions about its work. This was shown in the fact that positive comments about the children's enjoyment of school life, the caring nature of staff and the support for children with barriers to learning very much outweighed the few written concerns. Each of these covered a different matter, and so no major trends in parents' and carers' concerns were apparent. The evidence from the inspection about pupils' personal development and their welfare echoes the positive views of the large majority of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Radleys 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 52 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 211 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	39	75	11	21	2	4	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	42	81	10	19	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	29	56	18	35	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	22	42	26	50	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	56	22	42	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	29	56	21	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	29	56	23	44	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)	24	46	23	44	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	27	52	22	42	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	52	20	38	2	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	44	23	44	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	75	12	23	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	67	16	31	1	2	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 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 pupils' 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.



9 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Radleys Primary School, Walsall WS 4 1JJ

Thank you for your enthusiastic welcome when we visited your school recently. You were very keen to share your thoughts and ideas about Radleys and we were impressed with your behaviour and attitudes to learning.

We have written a report to show what your education is like. We judge it to be satisfactory. These are the key things that help you to learn and to make satisfactory progress.

- You reach the expected standards by the time you leave for secondary school.
- Children in Nursery and Reception enjoy coming to school and they make the expected progress.
- You have good knowledge of how to keep healthy, fit and safe.
- Your teachers are improving their lessons. You are taught satisfactorily and there are now more good quality lessons than there used to be.
- You are well looked after which means you have few worries and can concentrate on your learning.
- Your headteacher and all the staff want to make even more improvements.

Like your teachers, we think you can reach even better standards. You already work hard, which is a great help. There are three main areas for your teachers to work on now to help you do as well as possible.

- Give you more time to think and talk about how well you are learning and what you need to learn next.
- Make sure there is plenty of work where you have to decide how to complete it rather than expect the teacher to tell you what to do.
- Help you learn more about different people's lives in other parts of the United Kingdom.

To help your teachers make these improvements you could start by researching the different groups of people who live in other cities in this country. Share your findings with your parents, carers and teachers.

Yours sincerely

David Carrington

Lead inspector

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