

Red Hill CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116859
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	367408
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2011
Reporting inspector	Selwyn Ward

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	241
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Ruff
Headteacher	Spencer Morris
Date of previous school inspection	14 March 2008
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who visited 18 lessons taught by 10 teachers. Inspectors spoke with staff, parents and carers, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work, the analysis of the tracking of pupils' progress, attendance records, school policies and procedures, school leaders' monitoring records, school planning and risk assessments. They also analysed the questionnaires received from 124 pupils, 24 staff and from 96 parents and carers.

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

- How well does the school cater for its more-able pupils and those boys and girls who have additional learning needs?
- What have been the barriers to learning that have prevented pupils from making faster progress, especially in Key Stage 2?
- To what extent do leaders and the governing body have an accurate view of how well the school is doing and where improvements are needed?

Information about the school

This is an average-sized school which has been in a process of transition from 1.5 to one form of entry. With the exception of the current Year 6, there is a single separate class for each year group. The large majority of pupils are White British, with the largest minority coming from Pakistani backgrounds. The percentage of pupils learning English as an additional language has been rising and it is now average. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below average, as is the proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The headteacher was appointed in January 2010. Red Hill has ActiveMark, ArtsMark and Eco-Schools Green Flag awards and Healthy Schools status.

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

Red Hill provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It has emerged from a period where pupils made less progress than they should. In only one of the last five years has attainment at the end of Year 6 been above average. This means that pupils underachieved in relation to their above average starting points following the good start they get off to in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Changes over the past year have arrested what has been a declining trend in standards. The headteacher identified that assessment was previously inadequate and introduced a more rigorous system for monitoring pupils' progress. Leaders now have half-termly updates to check on each pupil's progress and to target support for any pupil identified as falling behind. This improvement has been effective in eliminating underachievement, so that pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress. An increasing proportion are making accelerated progress and meeting or exceeding the challenging targets set for them. Although evidence available at the time of the inspection shows attainment still to be in the average range, it is rising. Assessment is satisfactory rather than good because there remain inconsistencies in marking and in the use teachers make of assessment information to match work to pupils' different capabilities. There are still too many lessons where more-able pupils are insufficiently challenged, and this is also a concern raised by some parents and carers. Sometimes, pupils are expected to sit listening for too long when they are keen to get on with activities. On these occasions, attention drifts. Teaching assistants are deployed well, particularly when those pupils who need extra help with their learning are working individually or in small groups, but they are not always used to best effect during whole-class teaching.

Although still in the early stages of development, revisions made this year to the curriculum have given an increased stimulus to learning. Pupils are increasingly using and applying in other subjects what they learn in English and mathematics. Pupils are proud of their school and take an equal pride in their work. They produce artwork of high quality and many are involved in the choir and school orchestra. Pupils' great enjoyment of school is evident in their above-average attendance and in the enthusiasm seen in many lessons. They get on well with each other and treat each other with consideration. Behaviour is satisfactory rather than good, however, because pupils do not all listen well in lessons. Even when pupils are attentively listening to the teacher, they fidget and pay less attention to each other's contributions.

Almost all parents and carers say they are pleased with the good care, guidance and support provided to pupils. They are supportive of the school and of their children's education, and they express confidence in the headteacher and the leadership of the school. Red Hill is demonstrating a satisfactory capacity for improvement. Leaders have moved this school forward a long way over the past year, but they have further to go in order to ensure that all pupils make consistently good progress. School self-evaluation has

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been overly positive. Although it is sharper now than it was earlier in the year, leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning has contributed to this by focusing more on the features of teaching and not so much on the progress made in lessons by pupils of all abilities.

Up to 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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By the start of the spring term 2012, further accelerate pupils' learning and progress in lessons by ensuring that:
 - the work in lessons is always matched to pupils' different capabilities, particularly to extend the more able
 - teachers routinely reinforce good listening skills so that pupils listen to each other's contributions as well as to the teacher
 - lengthy periods of passive listening are not allowed to limit the opportunities for pupils to get on with practical activities
 - teachers direct questions rather than always taking answers from volunteers
 - teaching assistants are given an active role during whole-class teaching
 - pupils' writing and mathematics is always appropriately recorded
 - leaders' lesson observations focus on the progress made by all groups of pupils.
- By the end of the autumn term 2011, improve assessment and the impact of marking by:
 - consistently giving all pupils clear guidance through marking in all subjects that shows them what they need to do to improve their work
 - giving pupils time to read and respond to the comments teachers make in their marking
 - ensuring that all pupils know and make routine use of their individual targets
 - making consistent use throughout the school of the recent initiative to encourage pupils to check and mark their own and each other's work
 - making full use of assessment information to plan and deliver work that is appropriately matched to pupils' different capabilities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Attainment has mostly been average at the end of Key Stage 2. This means that it has been lower than it should be in relation to pupils' above average starting points and most Key Stage 1 assessments. A sharp rise in national tests results in 2009 was not sustained, and attainment fell even more sharply in both key stages in 2010. This represented significant underachievement, especially for pupils learning English as an additional language, those known to be eligible for free school meals, and for more-able pupils. The school has responded well to this over the past year, overhauling the curriculum and systems for tracking pupils' progress. As a result, pupils are now making satisfactory

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progress in lessons. Though attainment remains in the average range, it is rising as pupils catch up on previously lost ground. Pupils are especially motivated by the imaginative links made between subjects. In a particularly successful English lesson in Year 4, for example, pupils drew on what they had learnt in history as the teacher encouraged them to think themselves into the character of a Second World War evacuee, parent or host family member as a prelude to a piece of empathetic writing. Because 'thought tracking' to share ideas was so well established in the class, pupils were unselfconscious, threw themselves into role, and came up with some thoughtful and moving responses. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers. They benefit from often well-targeted support in lessons, although provision is better for these pupils in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1 because the targets in older pupils' individual education plans are more sharply focused.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe, for example when cycling. They appreciate the importance of a healthy diet and regular exercise. The good relationships throughout the school mean that boys and girls from different backgrounds get on well together and treat each other with respect. They take an interest in each other's faiths and beliefs. Pupils confirm that incidents of poor behaviour are rare: this is an improvement over the past year. Pupils are keen to take on responsibilities, including as school councillors and peer mediators, and they have taken part with enthusiasm in local community and inter-school events, including several involving musical talents. Attendance is above average. Pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy prepare them satisfactorily for the next stage of their education.

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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	3
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 ¹	2
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?

Pupils are well motivated because they like their teachers and are keen to please them. They respond well to the encouragement they are given, although a parent expressed concern that their Key Stage 1 child had 'lost interest in doing homework because it isn't marked.' Marking varies in quality. Some gives clear guidance to pupils on the steps they need to take to improve their work but this is not a consistent feature of marking throughout the school. Often teachers' advice goes unheeded because pupils are not routinely given the time to read and respond to teachers' comments. There are examples of pupils using the success criteria given to them by teachers to evaluate their own and each other's work, but pupils' books show this has tapered off. Pupils have individual targets, for example in writing, but they do not all know what their targets are and they do not routinely refer to them when they are working. Questioning is often used well in lessons to extend pupils' thinking, for example in explaining how they have arrived at the solution to a mathematical problem, but teachers mostly take responses from those who volunteer to answer. This leaves some more passive members of the class less actively involved. In some classes, too much of the pupils' work is done on individual whiteboards rather than in drafting books. This means that pupils' work is simply erased and lost at the end of the lesson.

The improving curriculum has helped to better engage the interest of boys and girls of different abilities. At the start of a new topic, pupils are invited to record what they

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already know about it and what they would like to find out. This helps to make the topic relevant to the pupils and gives them 'ownership' of their learning. They enjoy the good range of clubs and extra-curricular activities on offer, and many learn musical instruments and take part in choral or orchestral performances. Although cross-curricular links are making a positive contribution to improved attainment in literacy and numeracy, some of the impact is dulled when teachers demand less rigour of pupils' punctuation and spelling when writing in subjects other than in English. Red Hill is a caring school where pupils are helped to feel secure and where they grow in confidence. There are good arrangements for supporting pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable, with the school drawing well on partnerships with other agencies. Systems for ensuring good attendance have proven effective.

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 2010 results came as a shock to the governing body, which had previously had an overly rosy view of the school's effectiveness. They realise now that there has been a degree of complacency within the school and that the governing body has not done enough to challenge leaders over pupils' attainment and progress. This is already changing, with governors having taken on training so that they are more confident in interpreting performance data and are not dependent on staff for information about how well the school is doing. The governing body has provided challenge this year, for example over the need to ensure continued financial stability as the school completes its transition to having one class for each year group. The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met, including those relating to pupils' safeguarding. Equal opportunities are promoted satisfactorily. The school has been successful over the past year in tackling underachievement among specific groups, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, but it is still the case that more-able pupils do less well than they should.

Much of the drive for improvement over the past year has been the result of the headteacher's analysis and identification of areas where the school had been failing to meet pupils' needs. Staff have appreciated the need for change, although not all of those with subject and other leadership roles have a complete enough overview of their areas of responsibility. This means that there is not always a consistent whole-school approach, for example to the teaching of letters and the sounds they make (phonics), which differs between Reception and Year 1.

The school is a harmonious community. Interfaith links are promoted well and the school plays an active role within the local community. There are links with a school in Tanzania,

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which has been the focus of a topic of study for pupils in Years 3 and 4. There are productive ties with other local schools catering for pupils with a more diverse intake.

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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
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

Children make good progress in both the Nursery and Reception Years in all areas of learning. This is because they are taught in a stimulating environment and the adults plan for them to have a wide range of activities to choose from. These are well planned to cover all areas of learning and they take account of children's interests from home. There is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities. The outdoor area is used well and the 'cover' enables it to be in use whatever the weather. The range of activities is good but the adults are not always as focused in their teaching as they are indoors.

A particular strength in the teaching is the friendly, supportive and encouraging manner in which teachers talk to the children. They make each child feel special. This raises the children's self-esteem and significantly contributes to their good progress in personal skills, their good behaviour and their confidence to select activities and follow classroom routines. The teaching of number is good. Progress in learning letters and the sounds they make is slowed because children at different levels of development are all taught together.

Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress and there are good partnerships with external providers to support their learning and to meet their specific learning needs. The children who join the Early Years Foundation Stage speaking a language other than English make good progress in learning English and also in all other areas of the curriculum. Their good pace of learning is due to the adults providing a constant good level of spoken language at all times and identifying English words for the children as they play and take part in activities.

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Observations of children's learning are used well to identify their next steps in learning and individual records of progress are well maintained. However, the Early Years Foundation Stage leader has a clearer picture of the progress of children in the Reception Year than of those in the Nursery.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

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

More than a third of the parents and carers returned questionnaires. Their views are mostly positive but a number express concerns over the behaviour of a small minority of children and several feel that more-able pupils are not stretched enough. Behaviour seen during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, and lapses were in attentiveness rather than examples of ill-discipline. Inspectors found that work in lessons does not always extend more-able pupils.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Red Hill CoFE 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 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 241 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	56	39	41	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	49	51	43	45	3	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	39	41	49	51	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	38	47	49	11	11	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	42	44	50	52	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	25	62	65	3	3	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	39	55	57	3	3	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)	34	35	54	56	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	29	56	58	4	4	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	23	24	54	56	10	10	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	33	50	52	3	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	40	42	44	46	2	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	42	44	46	48	5	5	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



20 June 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Red Hill CofE Primary School, Worcester WR5 2HX

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to visit your school. Children have not always done as well as they should at your school, especially after the good start you have in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, we were pleased to see that things are improving this year. You are benefiting from a satisfactory education and standards are beginning to rise as you make faster progress in lessons. We have suggested some ways in which teachers can help you to make even better progress in lessons and we have asked them to further improve assessment arrangements. You can help to do better too, by trying hard to listen carefully in class, not just to your teachers but also to each other. You can also help by taking care always to read the comments your teachers make when they mark your work and by doing your best to follow their advice.

You enjoy your lessons, and especially the topics. I hope those of you in Years 3 and 4 had a good day at the Three Counties Show as part of your Market Garden project. We were pleased to see how well you all get on together, and that you know a lot about how to keep safe and healthy. One of the reasons you feel safe at school is that staff take good care of you. You also look out for each other, and treat each other with kindness. This all helps to make your school such a happy place.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Selwyn Ward

Lead inspector

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