

# Ravensmead Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124056
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	380788
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 December 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mary Davis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	334
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Stephen Swatton
<b>Headteacher</b>	David Bell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Chapel Street Bignall End Stoke-on-Trent ST7 8QD
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<b>Age group</b>	4–11
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	8–9 December 2011
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 21 lessons and 14 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and groups of parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at policies, development planning, data related to the tracking of pupils' progress as well as senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning, safeguarding documents and practice, minutes of the governing body meetings, pupils' work and 158 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

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

- How effectively do pupils in current classes learn and has the recent decline in progress of middle attaining pupils in English been addressed effectively?
- How consistent is the quality of teaching across the school and how carefully do teachers plan to meet pupils' individual needs?
- How effective is the curriculum provision in promoting literacy skills across the school?

## Information about the school

Ravensmead Primary is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average although the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs and those identified as requiring external support, is rising. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The school has been recognised and has achieved a number of awards including national Healthy Schools status, Dyslexia Friendly status, Artsmark Gold, the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Eco Silver Award, FMSIS accreditation (for financial management) and the Inclusion Quality mark. The school provides a breakfast club. A privately run before- and after-school care club is on the same site.

The school has undergone considerable staffing changes over the past two years.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Ravensmead Primary is a good school. The school provides outstanding care, ensuring that all pupils feel very safe and secure. One pupil commented, 'We are like one massive family!' The school's welcoming and caring ethos is evident throughout and pupils follow the example of adults in the care they show for each other and being extremely welcoming to visitors. Parents and carers highly value and are extremely supportive of the school's work. The comment; 'staff seem to genuinely care about the children' is typical of the many positive statements made to inspectors.

Levels of attainment have fluctuated over the last three years but have generally been above average. Overall progress is good with pupils with special needs and/or disabilities and those of highest ability making the best progress. Pupils say that they are very confident that the school will keep them safe and have an excellent understanding of safety issues. For example, in recent bad weather they were quick to point out that paths needed gritting because they were slippery. They have an outstanding understanding of how to adopt a healthy lifestyle and greatly value the healthy food provided for them. Pupils sell playtime snacks and promote the importance of healthy food to others. Pupils take on many responsible roles including, through the school council, caring for younger children and instigating fund raising for children less fortunate than themselves. Their attendance is consistently high.

Teaching is good although there is some inconsistency. In the best lessons, learning moves at a fast pace because pupils are appropriately challenged and engaged in interesting tasks. In a minority of lessons however, teachers do not involve pupils sufficiently in their learning because they talk for too long at the start of the lesson or tasks are not explained well enough to enable pupils to understand what they have to do. Although most teachers plan well to meet pupils' individual needs, in some lessons opportunities are missed to move pupils on with their learning once they understand. Pupils know their targets but these are sometimes too narrow so, despite being keen to do their best, they are unable to work independently towards the next level because they do not have a full understanding of what is required. There is also some inconsistency in the quality of teachers' marking because not all provide clear enough guidance about pupils' next steps in learning or advice about how to improve. The good curriculum provides many opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills through cross-curricular topics. It is enhanced by the outstanding partnership that exists with the secondary school that includes

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mathematics tuition for the most able pupils in Year 6. Pupils facing challenging circumstances are fully included as a result of the school's outstanding care and support. A nurture group is provided to enable pupils to gain confidence and the popular breakfast club ensures that pupils are able to make a good start each morning. Parents and carers speak of the school never giving up on a child and 'going the extra mile' to ensure they are able to thrive.

The headteacher and his effective team are highly regarded by parents and carers, the governing body and members of the community. As a result of the caring ethos he has established, all are made to feel welcome, pupils and staff are extremely proud of their school and teamwork is strong. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary. Self-evaluation procedures are robust, as is the tracking of pupils' progress, the identification of underachievement and the strategies employed to promote achievement. As a result, the underachievement of the most able pupils, identified by the previous inspection, has been effectively addressed. Leaders have worked hard to maintain a high quality of provision and have established thorough monitoring and progress tracking procedures. This has enabled them to tackle any areas of underachievement, despite the recent considerable staffing difficulties. Consequently, the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Further raise achievement and accelerate the pace of learning by:
  - ensuring that all teaching is consistently good or better
  - ensuring that teachers plan activities that meet pupils' individual needs and enable all to be fully involved in their learning
  - promote pupils' independence by setting challenging targets and ensuring that they understand how to achieve them
  - ensure that teachers' marking provides clear advice that enables pupils to understand how to develop their work.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Pupils usually enter Key Stage 1 with broadly average skills and understanding in most areas of learning. Year 6 attainment in 2011 was high in both English and mathematics, having risen sharply from the previous year. The schools' assessment tracking and evidence seen in lessons during the inspection indicate that this level of attainment is being sustained in English but is average in mathematics. All groups of pupils are now making good progress from their starting points, supported by the school's well focused intervention strategies. In the best lessons, teachers enable pupils to learn progressively, building their confidence by enabling them to practise new skills and apply them to new situations. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because of the outstanding support they receive, both in terms of their emotional and social well-being, enabling their full inclusion, but also from the expert support in lessons provided by teaching

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assistants. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve equally well.

Pupils are very aware of safety issues, including when using computers. Pupils look after one another in the playground and Year 6 pupils explained how they 'look out' for pupils they know to have challenging behaviour to ensure that they are safe and included in playground games. They take an active role in devising school rules and suggested that they should include 'respect for all'. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pupils are quick to respond to teachers' instructions and older pupils monitor the behaviour of younger ones around the school and in the playground. They enjoy growing vegetables and other produce in the class gardens which are supported by members of the community. Their above average basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), their confident and polite personal skills, together with their excellent attendance and punctuality, prepare them well for their future economic well-being. The school council takes an active role in the running of the school and pupils are keen to suggest ways of helping others, making regular donations to support a child in India and organising fund-raising to enable the repair of a school in Ghana. Pupils show excitement in the success of others and respect for those with different beliefs to their own. They are keen to learn about different religions and celebrations, but currently have little first-hand experience of children in other national contexts.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

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

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Pupils show excitement when undertaking active tasks and when teachers have high expectations of what they are able to achieve. For example, pupils made good progress in a numeracy lesson; they used computers to undertake complex problems and compete with each other to be the first to achieve, before going on to an extension task. In an outstanding lesson, a low ability Year 1 class made rapid progress in doubling numbers by counting decorations on a Christmas tree and explaining to each other how to do it. Here, the teacher had stepped the task so that each pupil could work at their own pace and they were able to move on to a more challenging task as soon as they were ready. This level of planning to meet individual needs has not been fully embedded across the school. Leaders have successfully established whole school practice of enabling pupils to evaluate their own learning in a variety of different ways, including showing ‘thumbs up’ to show they understand. In a minority of lessons, teachers rely too heavily on this method of assessment, missing opportunities to use questioning to probe understanding or requiring pupils to explain in detail how they arrived at an answer.

Pupils say how much they value being consulted about their learning, by being able to decide what they want to learn about at the start of each topic. The curriculum is therefore closely matched to individual needs and the interests of pupils; this enables them to develop creativity and imagination through a wide range of cultural and historical contexts. Visits and visitors enhance the curriculum, for example, Years 5 and 6 were inspired by their recent visit to RAF Cosford to research their World War II topic. This culminated in a tea dance for parents and carers where they showcased the wide variety of work they had achieved, including textiles, creative writing, singing and dancing. The partnership with the secondary school enhances the school’s provision further by providing support for modern foreign languages, sport, science and ICT.

The school makes excellent use of external agencies to meet the needs of those pupils and their families whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. Transition into school is highly effective, as is that between Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. Leaders recognised that some children were not fully ready to move on and would benefit from a joint Reception/Year 1 to consolidate learning skills. Parents and carers also express their gratitude at the ‘seamless’ transition to secondary school as a result of regular visits.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

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The inspirational headteacher is supported by a strong team, who share in the robust monitoring activities and action planning. Teachers are held to account through regular meetings where the progress of every child is examined, and support strategies are identified if any pupils are falling behind. The governing body are well organised and informed and provide good support and challenge. The safeguarding governor has been particularly effective, giving expert advice on health and safety issues and ensuring that there is a comprehensive understanding of and a commitment to the safeguarding of all pupils throughout the school. The outstanding work to engage parents and carers has resulted in all parents and carers attending progress meetings. Parents and carers are extremely positive about the way the school enables them to be involved with their children’s learning, the provision of training and support for families and the availability of the headteacher and other staff to discuss concerns. Very strong partnerships with external agencies and local schools provide outstanding support for pupils’ well-being and learning. The school has a clear understanding of the progress of all groups of pupils and is highly focused in ensuring that all are included. Parents and carers are effusive in their praise for the school’s work in this respect and the resulting progress that has been seen. Effective links are promoted within the local community and internationally. The school is a highly cohesive and harmonious community. Leaders recognise the need to develop links with schools in different national contexts to further enhance pupils’ experience of British multi-cultural society.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills and understanding generally below national expectations and in some areas of learning are well below expectations particularly in

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speech and language. Good leadership and management have contributed to recent improvements in provision, so children settle quickly and make good progress through this key stage. This is because they are offered an exciting range of activities that capture their interest and imagination and move their learning on. Teaching is good and there is a strong sense of teamwork and a high level of care and support is evident. Adults use questioning techniques effectively to model language for the children. There is a strong emphasis in learning to read and write and children are motivated by the daily 'phonics' sessions practising sounds and learning letters. The outdoor area is used well to support learning and children are able to move freely between indoor and outdoor provision. Children's learning is carefully documented and illustrated in learning journals which are used well to plan next steps in learning and to inform parents and carers about their children's progress.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

There was a good response to the questionnaire. The overwhelming numbers of replies were positive with all saying that the school keeps their child safe. Parents and carers expressed particular gratitude for the efforts of the school in the support of pupils and families facing challenging circumstances and those with specific learning or emotional needs. A very few expressed concern about bullying. Inspectors investigated this and pupils told them that conflicts are resolved quickly and that adults provide excellent support.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ravensmead 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 158 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 334 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	111	70	42	26	5	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	124	78	31	19	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	97	61	54	34	1	1	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	110	69	36	23	5	3	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	111	70	44	28	2	1	3	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	112	71	38	24	4	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	103	64	53	33	2	1	1	1
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)	97	61	55	34	1	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	108	68	45	28	4	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	79	49	72	45	4	3	2	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	79	49	70	44	3	2	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	113	71	38	24	4	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	121	77	33	21	2	1	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**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.**



12 December 2011

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Ravensmead Primary School, Stoke-on-Trent, ST7 8QD**

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do and we were impressed by how polite and considerate you are. We particularly enjoyed watching the Nursery Christmas performance and the World War II tea dance.

Our inspection has judged that you go to a good school. The excellent care that the school provides ensures that you are well known to staff and feel very safe. The standards that you reach are above average and you are keen to do well. You behave well and your attendance is excellent. You have an exceptional understanding of how to stay healthy; make an outstanding contribution to your school and local community and enjoy taking responsibilities. We were particularly impressed by your care for each other and for children in other countries such as India and Africa. You are friendly towards each other and are respectful of those with different beliefs to your own.

Your teachers provide lessons that are fun and interesting, enabling you to make good progress, although not all teachers ensure that your rate of learning is fast enough. So we have asked leaders to continue to make certain that teachers always plan lessons that challenge all of you and to ensure that they set you more challenging targets and that you know how to reach them. We have also asked teachers to explain in more detail how you can improve when they mark your work.

We know that you are rightly proud of your school. Leaders are working hard to make sure you learn well and develop well as young people. All of you can help by continuing to work hard and being 'the best you can be'. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis  
Lead inspector

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