

# Rufford Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103803
<b>Local Authority</b>	Dudley
<b>Inspection number</b>	286768
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 June 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	307
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	K Edwards
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sally Bloomer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2005
<b>School address</b>	Bredon Avenue Stourbridge DY9 7NR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818975
<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818976

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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

Rufford Primary School is situated in Lye and Wollescote, close to the town of Stourbridge in the West Midlands. Its pupils come from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. The proportions of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities are well above those found nationally. Forty-two per cent of the pupils speak English as an additional language and forty-one per cent are entitled to free school meals; both proportions are well above average. When they enter the school, the pupils' attainment levels are low, particularly in literacy. The school holds a number of national awards, including Investors in People, Active Mark, Basic Skills Mark and the Healthy School Award. During the inspection the majority of Year 5 and 6 pupils were away on a residential visit.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Rufford Primary School provides a satisfactory education. It has a number of strengths as well as areas to improve. Pupils enjoy coming to school, as shown by their improved levels of attendance and their positive attitudes to learning. The pupils report that they feel safe and free from bullying because they know who to turn to for advice if a problem should occur. The school's strong focus on developing pupils' social and emotional skills makes a positive contribution to the pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils demonstrate an appropriate respect for each other's cultures, faiths and traditions. This is an important feature in a school with a high proportion of pupils from different backgrounds, some of whom are newly arrived in this country.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some that is good. Lessons are generally well planned and have a clear structure. The best lessons have a brisk pace, with teachers making skilful use of learning intentions to determine precisely what they want the pupils to know and understand. In these lessons pupils rise to the high expectations of their teachers and make good progress. There are some good examples of target setting and analytical marking, but these are inconsistent across the school. Not all pupils are involved in setting their own targets to reflect their perceived needs. A key strength of the teaching in the Foundation Stage is teamwork, where the pupils receive effective help from adults who engage them in conversation to promote their speaking and listening skills and to challenge their thinking and good progress.

Pupils' learning is underpinned by a broad and balanced curriculum that is inclusive and supports pupils' personal development satisfactorily. Standards are well below average; nonetheless, the pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language (EAL), make satisfactory progress from their respective starting points. A focus on the teaching of mathematics and writing has improved achievement but the school recognises that further improvements are needed. The school has rightly identified that one of the next steps is to make more effective links in developing pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy across other areas of the curriculum.

Leadership and management are good. There is an appropriately strong focus on raising standards. Strategies for shared leadership are successful and result in an effective team of leaders and managers who share a strong commitment to school improvement. Good self-evaluation allows the school to have an accurate picture of what needs improving. The school is not complacent and is well aware that standards have to rise further if pupils are to access a broad range of educational and later employment opportunities.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching by sharing effective practice, moving more of the satisfactory teaching to good.
- Further raise standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6.
- Match pupils' individual targets for improvement more closely to their individual needs and ensure that group targets link better to the work that is planned.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

When pupils start school in the Nursery, the pupils' knowledge and skill levels are low. In particular, their language and communication skills are underdeveloped. They make good progress, especially in their personal, social and emotional development, and reach levels well below those expected at the end of the Reception Year. Standards at the end of Year 2 have shown an improvement each year from 2003 to 2006 in reading; current standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average.

The pupils make satisfactory progress from Year 1 to Year 6. However, there was a dip in performance at the end of Key Stage 2, where standards were exceptionally low in 2006; this is due in some part to the pupils' slow progress in developing language skills. Current standards in Year 6 are well below average in reading, writing and mathematics, with pupils making satisfactory progress from their starting points. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress because of the well-focused support they receive, for instance, from the bi-lingual staff. The school's targets for pupils are not always met and are adversely affected by the above-average number of children who start or leave school at times other than at the start of Reception or the end of Year 6.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils are sensitive to the feelings and opinions of others. They are proud that this is "a no-swearing school, and bullying is unthinkable". Behaviour in lessons, assemblies and around school is good. Pupils are polite and respectful, and warmly welcome visitors to their school.

The youngest pupils' eyes are often aglow with the wonder of new discoveries. Pupils are pleased to use their initiative, for instance, to plan fundraising activities to support many charities and school events. The School Council has made many valuable contributions to school life, and pupils feel they have a strong voice in school affairs. The pupils are confident that this is a healthy school, and think the lunches are lovely, particularly the salad bar. They approve of the school's move to extend the range of after-school clubs and identify this with "additional fitness".

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teachers' expectations are mostly high, with the work pitched at the right level and building on what the pupils know and can do. In these cases, teachers know what they want the children to learn and make it clear to them. However, on occasions this is not made as explicit as it could be because teachers plan to do too much in one lesson and therefore pupils are unsure of what it is the teacher wants them to learn. In the best lessons, the teachers' questions are tightly focused on the learning objectives, with pupils given time to discuss their thinking with partners; this in turn stimulates involvement in the lesson. The school is aware that teachers' knowledge of some of the subjects they are teaching is not as effective as it could be, sometimes resulting in pupils' misconceptions going unchallenged.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

A soundly planned curriculum provides a broad range of learning opportunities to meet the interests and needs of pupils. The new system of planning, which sets tasks for groups of pupils, is beginning to adapt to the curriculum well to meet individual differences, but it is not used consistently throughout the school. When applied well, as in some of the Years 2, 3 and 4 lessons observed, it leads to better concentration and good progress.

Well-conceived social and health education activities enable pupils to grow in maturity. The curriculum stresses pupils' health and safety aspects well; therefore, pupils develop a good awareness of risks and hazards. The arrangements for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are good. Their individual learning plans contain precise targets which teaching assistants use well to enable the pupils to build up skills and confidence. Pupils value the expanded range of activities involving visits and visitors. "We love the trips and learn a lot of stuff from them." The development of skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) across the full range of the curriculum is at a basic level of planning.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school is a welcoming community and provides a satisfactory level of care, support and guidance to its pupils and parents. There are appropriate links with the local community which promote an increasing and supportive partnership with parents. Most parents are confident that their children are cared for well. Pupils express a similar view. Procedures for child protection are robust and the school takes health and safety issues seriously.

A system of targets in English and mathematics provide pupils with an appropriate focus on what to do to improve their work. Pupils say they like having targets to work to, and enthusiastically check if they have reached their goal at the end of lessons. They also value the teamwork in discussions within lessons, because "it helps us solve problems in maths." However, there is sometimes inconsistency in the linkage between these targets and the intended learning identified for future lessons.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The effective leadership of the headteacher is the key to the school's improving performance. Based upon a clear understanding of the school and where it needs to go next, the headteacher is taking steps to strengthen the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle managers, most of whom are newly appointed to post. They have clear roles and responsibilities and have an accurate understanding of what needs to be done to improve standards across the school. They provide good role models for other staff to emulate. In the short time since their appointment, they have carried out lesson observations, scrutinised teachers' planning and monitored children's work. An effective strategic plan with carefully judged priorities with clear timescales and well-thought-out success criteria underpins the school's drive to raise the pupils' attainment. A rigorous approach to the monitoring of the school's work has led directly to an improvement

in the quality of teaching and learning and the school is well aware that there is further work to do in this area.

Effective assessment arrangements support the school's commitment to tackling underachievement and the development of personalised learning for pupils. Pupils are assessed regularly to check that they are making sufficient progress. If they are not, well-judged support is provided to get them back on track. The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Governors spend a lot of time in school, which gives them a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Dear Pupils

Rufford Primary School, Breedon Avenue, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY9 7NR

Thank you very much for being so welcoming and friendly towards us during our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you and your teachers about how well you are doing. We thought you would like to know what we have said about your school. Overall, we decided it was a satisfactory school.

You behave well and you are kind and considerate to each other. In lessons, we think you listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and you try hard to do your best. It was good to see that lots of you are really involved in school life. It is good to see that you have been given Active Mark and the Healthy School award. You should be proud of these achievements. We were very pleased to see how efficiently some of you run the school office at lunchtime – it shows how the adults in the school trust you to take responsibility.

We have made some suggestions to make your school get even better. By the end of Year 6, some of you do quite well in the tests but we have suggested to your teachers that some of you could do even better. We have asked your teachers to make sure that they keep referring to your targets for improvement in as many lessons as possible. We have also asked them to make as many of your lessons as good as they possibly can be.

We know that you are proud of your school and you, together with your teachers, can make it even better. Please keep working hard and doing the best you can.

We wish you well in the future.

Jacqueline Wordsworth Her Majesty's Inspector