

Raeburn Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105020
Local Authority	Wirral
Inspection number	308743
Inspection date	20 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Thompson

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	4-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Charlton
Headteacher	Mrs E Lester
Date of previous school inspection	7 February 2005
School address	Morland Avenue Bromborough Wirral Merseyside CH62 6BD
Telephone number	0151 327 2215
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school, the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, care, guidance and support, and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, assessment data, school documents and parents' questionnaires. In addition, there were discussions with the headteacher, staff, the chair of governors and pupils. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This is a much larger than average school; numbers have risen over the last four years and the school is oversubscribed. Fewer than average pupils are eligible for free school meals. Almost all pupils are of White British origin and come from a wide range of social backgrounds. An extremely small proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of special educational need is above average. The school is part of the local authority's Extended Schools provision and has Health Promoting status together with Artsmark and Activemark Awards.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with a very happy atmosphere in which pupils greatly enjoy their education. Consequently, achievement is good and standards are above average.

When children enter the Foundation Stage their skills are broadly in line with expectations for their age. Standards by the end of Year 6 have been consistently above average since the last inspection, and achievement has been high in relation to pupils' starting points. In 2006, the level of pupils' achievement put the school in the top 15% nationally. Standards at the end of Year 6 declined in 2007, although remaining above average. Pupils' achievement was good but not as high as previously. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2007, boys did better than girls in English, mathematics and science and their results were higher than for boys nationally. The school identified the reasons for the rate of progress in Key Stage 2 slowing and has taken positive action to reverse the trend. Subject leaders have worked successfully to improve teaching and learning methods in addition to monitoring classroom standards more rigorously. Improvements have been made to the curriculum, for example, to identify and plan opportunities to promote progress in literacy and numeracy in all subjects. Nevertheless, the achievement of a minority of girls in Key Stage 2 is still not as good as it should be.

Pupils' outstanding personal development contributes significantly to their good achievement. Their excellent attitudes and behaviour contribute much to the lively atmosphere in the school. They get on well and work together harmoniously so that they contribute to each other's learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils show mutual respect. Consequently, pupils have the confidence to speak out and contribute. Many are very articulate in their appreciation of all that the school offers. Attendance is well above average and contributes positively to good achievement. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the principles of healthy lifestyles. A striking feature of the school is pupils' awareness of the needs of others which they show in their charitable work and contributions to the school and the wider community. Pupils show that they are very well prepared for the next stage of their education by the way that they work well together and their above average standards of literacy and numeracy. Older pupils show great care for younger children. Pupils have a voice in school affairs that they are confident is heard. They listen to each other well, for example, the views of the youngest pupils are treated with respect in the active school council.

Pupils' appreciate the high level of care and guidance that they receive. Comments such as, 'this is a great school', and, 'learning here is fun', typify pupils' views of the school. The great majority of parents share their children's positive views. A few expressed a wish to be informed more frequently about pupils' progress and the school has clear plans to increase the flow of information. Pupils say that they feel safe and well cared for in the school. They know that they will be helped to resolve any difficulties they may face. The guidance and support for the very few pupils with behavioural difficulties is excellent. The school has examples of pupils with difficulties in earlier years now doing well. Parents confirm that the school works very well with families to offer support and to resolve problems. Safeguarding arrangements meet requirements.

Teaching of the good curriculum is planned well to interest and motivate pupils. Teachers make learning enjoyable and active - very active in the case of the interpretations of the 'Robin Hood' legend in Year 5. This lively approach successfully engages pupils in learning, builds confidence and gives relevance to their work, for example, in imaginative writing. Classroom management is good, building on well established relationships. This, together with pupils' excellent attitudes

means that no time is wasted. A variety of activities maintains interest and pace, giving scope for developing independence. The recent focus on developing key skills has sharpened learning across the curriculum. Teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support learning. They make good checks for understanding through targeted questioning. In the best lessons teachers use demanding, additional questions to stretch pupils and make them think for themselves. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do at least as well as their classmates because of the sensitive and effective support they receive both in and out of lessons.

Good leadership and management stem from the headteacher's strong drive for improvement. She is well supported by the reorganised team of senior and middle managers. Among them there is a sense of common purpose and a fund of mutual goodwill. Roles have been reorganised recently with a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Responsibilities and accountability are clear. However, the wealth of diligently collected information about pupils' progress is not yet consistently analysed and presented in a form that is readily accessible to teachers. Consequently, it is sometimes not clear where pupils are having difficulty. Work to improve this is underway but there is still much to do. Governors support the school well, but have not always held it to account rigorously enough for its performance. However, effective steps are being taken to ensure that they are better informed and aware of their responsibility to challenge the school. The school's self-evaluation is sharply focused and, consequently, accurate. It is used well to identify areas for improvement and to monitor the progress and effectiveness of innovations, for example, in the curriculum and in teaching methods. Consequently, the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children enter the Foundation Stage with a wide range of previous experience and varied levels of language development. Achievement is good with particularly rapid progress in language development and social learning. By the time that they enter Year 1, the majority of children are working securely within the goals expected for their age and some attain beyond. Children with learning difficulties make particularly good progress because of the skilled way that staff identify and meet their needs. Teaching and learning are good and ensure that children make good progress from their different starting points. This is because staff use continuous assessment very well to monitor children's progress and adjust learning carefully to match their needs. Supportive relationships ensure that children are happy, develop confidence and settle well to school routines. Children's particularly good progress in personal, social and emotional development lays a very strong foundation for their excellent personal development in Years 1 to 6. The wide and varied curriculum meets children's needs well with a good focus on developing independence and social skills through, for example, imaginative outdoor learning. Leadership and management are good. Well developed home/school relationships are a key feature in maintaining children's well-being. Parents note their appreciation of the warmth of welcome they receive and the detailed knowledge that staff have of their children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve girls' achievement in Key Stage 2.
- Ensure that information about pupils' progress is consistently analysed and readily available to help staff in planning for individual learning needs.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
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	3
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

Inspection of Raeburn Primary School, Wirral, CH62 6BD

I really enjoyed my day in your school because of your friendly welcome. It was good talking to so many of you and hearing how proud you are of your school. We had some lively conversations. You will be pleased to know that I agree with you that yours is a good school. What impressed me most is how well you behave towards each other - it's a big part of the happy atmosphere in the school. There are lots of things that help make yours a good school but the most important are these.

- The school is run well so that everyone can get the best out of it.
- You receive good teaching that helps you to achieve well and to reach above average standards.
- The school provides you with lots of activities that are interesting and fun so that you enjoy learning and become confident in yourselves. I particularly enjoyed the Robin Hood rehearsals!
- Everyone in the school knows and cares for you very well so that you feel safe and looked after.

Part of my job is to suggest things that will help to make the school an even better place to learn. I have asked your teachers to make sure that all girls do as well as they should in Years 3 to 6. I have also asked the school to make sure that teachers always have the information they need to help each of you make as much progress as you can.

Thank you again for helping me with my work. I wish you well for the future and hope that you will all continue to play your part in making Raeburn a happy and lively place to enjoy learning.