

Ravensfield Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134845
Local Authority	Tameside
Inspection number	328989
Inspection dates	15–16 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Thomson

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	350
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Ruth Dawson
Headteacher	Mrs Beverley Allford
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Globe Lane Dukinfield Cheshire SK16 4UJ
Telephone number	0161 344 2905
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Ravensfield is an average-sized primary school. It has not been inspected before. It was formed in September 2007 following the closure of Globe Lane School and Clarendon Fields School. Many of the staff are new and not from either of these two schools. There is private childcare provision on site, with both before-and after-school provision. This was inspected and reported on separately and the report can be found on the Ofsted website. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is much higher than average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is much lower than average and just a few are in the early stages of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. There is an average proportion of pupils with a statement of special educational needs.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Ravensfield has come a long way since it opened nearly two years ago and is living up to its motto of 'Soaring High'. It provides a satisfactory and rapidly improving standard of education. Good leadership and management, along with good care, guidance and support ensure that the personal development of the pupils is good and their academic achievement is satisfactory. Parental comments are overwhelmingly positive and are captured by views such as, 'My child has gone from strength to strength' and 'I am very proud that my children attend this school'.

Central to the improved success of the school is its leadership and management. The headteacher has not been afraid to take difficult decisions to secure improvements. Along with her strong leadership team, she has managed very effectively the merger of two different communities of pupils to form one school with a strong new corporate identity. There is a real sense of togetherness and common purpose amongst the dedicated staff to improve the outcomes for the pupils. There have been significant gains in the progress of underachieving groups, in areas such as reading and science, and improvement in attendance and in pupils' behaviour. Governors are well informed and offer the school appropriate challenge.

Children start Nursery with skills in many areas that are well below those typical for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, they attain standards that are just below those found nationally overall. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the good, focused support they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants. Although improved, teaching and learning are still satisfactory overall. Lessons do not always offer enough challenge, particularly to higher attaining pupils. This means that they do not make quite as much progress as they might. The curriculum is satisfactory and has impacted well on the personal development of the pupils. The school provides pupils with a good level of care, guidance and support. While the pastoral aspect of this is very good, the academic side is not quite as strong. This is because there are inconsistencies in the use of assessment procedures and, as a result, some pupils do not know clearly how well they are doing or how they can improve their work.

Pupils are welcoming and confident. They have good relationships with their teachers. One pupil said what he liked best about school was 'the really good learning'. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of being healthy. They feel safe and know that their views are valued. They say that there is always someone to help you out, including the school council. They accurately rate behaviour, which is good, as '8 out of 10', and say that they enjoy looking after each other in roles such as 'playground friends' or 'reading buddies'. They welcome the good range of clubs on offer. When asked to describe their school, one pupil said, 'It feels like a family, everyone is so supportive'.

The school is well aware of its strengths and areas for development. Although many of the school's interventions have already led to major improvements, the school recognises that it is important to embed and sustain all its strategies to maximise their effect on further raising pupils' achievement. The fact that the school has achieved so much in such a short period of time indicates that its capacity to improve further is good. The school achieves satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision for the youngest children is good because it is effectively led and managed and focuses clearly on the individual needs of each child. This results in the children making good gains in their learning, resulting in good progress from starting points that are well below those typical for their age on entering the Nursery. Although they reach standards that are below those expected at the end of Reception, their physical development is above average. As a result of focused interventions, previous relative underachievement in personal, social and emotional development and in communication, language and literacy has improved and progress in these areas is now good.

There are excellent partnerships with families. A particularly strong feature is the use of individual 'home to school' books where photographs and news are shared regularly. Children develop their language skills and confidence by working together and participating in interesting and stimulating opportunities, both indoors and out. There is a good balance of well planned adult and child-led activities to promote all areas of learning. For example, children enjoy developing their own recipe to make 'space cakes', having the opportunity to talk together, make choices, write and create. Their learning is assessed well, but the learning focus for some activities is not sufficiently precise. Staff tune in well to the needs of the children, providing them with a safe, caring and supportive environment. As a result, children show increasing confidence to answer questions, make comments and concentrate, which prepares them well to move on to Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of lessons in which pupils make good or better progress, with a particular focus on increasing the challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Ensure consistency in the effective use of assessment, with a clear focus on ensuring all pupils know how well they are doing and how they can do even better work.
- Embed and sustain all the new strategies to maximise their effect on raising pupils' achievement.

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.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Since the school opened in September 2007, standards have risen rapidly and are now just below those seen nationally by the end of Year 6. The good emphasis on target-setting and addressing underachievement has resulted in significant gains. The standards reached by pupils indicate that the achievement of pupils is satisfactory across Years 1 to 6. This represents a rapid improvement in achievement over the past two years. Standards have improved greatly this year, as a result of carefully targeted intervention work. The relatively weaker attainment in reading at the end of Year 2 and in science at the end of Year 6 in the 2008 national tests has been addressed. The school's assessment information indicates that standards in these areas are currently just below average, meaning that achievement is now satisfactory. Throughout the school, the achievement of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good.

The small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups and in the early stages of learning to speak English achieve as well as others with similar starting points.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The personal development and well-being of children is a strength of the school. Pupils understand and express their own feelings and appreciate each other. They enjoy school greatly, including the range of rewards and incentives which are used and celebrated through assemblies. These include 'you've been spotted' cards to acknowledge positive attitudes as well as the 'magic mirror' which reflects the names of those who have achieved well on a weekly basis. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good in every aspect. Pupils contribute their views through the school and eco councils, and enjoy taking on responsibilities and helping their community. In lessons pupils show an increasing ability to get on independently. Together with satisfactory academic progress, this means that pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future. Pupils are well aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, through events such as planned sporting activities at lunchtimes and beyond the school day. They have a good awareness of how to stay safe.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The proportion of teaching and learning that is good has improved, but the school acknowledges that this is still not high enough. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good. Pupils are eager to learn and cooperate well with their teachers and with each other. Most lessons have appropriate interesting activities, but sometimes these are not tuned finely enough to meet the needs of all pupils. Tasks are not always challenging enough, particularly for higher attaining pupils, resulting in their progress not being as high as it might be. Increasingly literacy and numeracy are being integrated well into other subject areas. Teachers explain to the pupils what they should be achieving and check their learning at the end of the lesson. Learning support assistants work very effectively in partnership with class teachers, ensuring that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Marking is carried out regularly, but does not always inform pupils clearly enough how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good aspects. It encourages pupils' personal development well. A good range of responsibilities including school and eco councils gives pupils lots of chances to help others and raise their self-confidence. The school frequently focuses on particular areas of learning. For example, 'health week' enabled pupils to design a healthy lunch box. Safety education is enhanced by visitors such as the police and fire services. The oldest pupils take part in the 'crucial crew' initiative, which enables them to learn about what they can do if they find themselves in an emergency. Teachers often base their planning around themes which appeal to pupils. For example, pupils collected information about favourite pets recently and this motivated them to learn about presenting summary information on bar charts. Provision for literacy and numeracy is improving rapidly and although this has resulted in improved progress, more time is needed for this to impact fully. Leaders regularly monitor

the curriculum and know that more needs to be done to challenge more able pupils and also to develop pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel safe in school, say they know who to turn to and say any instances of bullying are dealt with effectively by the staff. Health and safety and procedures for child protection are securely in place. Current government safeguarding requirements are met. The school provides very good care for its pupils to ensure their welfare is a priority. Parents expressed delight in the support their children receive and say they have 'nothing but praise for these teachers'. Through strong teamwork by the staff, including learning mentors and families, the support pupils receive is personalised to their individual needs and well planned across the school. It works very effectively with outside agencies to ensure pupils receive any specialist support they require. As a result of careful planning and monitoring, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Pupils whose spoken language is not English and those with reading difficulties receive skilled specialist support and are included well in the welcoming ethos of the school. Systems for tracking pupils' achievement over time are in place and pupils have a good understanding of their targets. However, not all know clearly the next steps in their learning to achieve them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher has provided the school with a clear vision and direction that is now coming to fruition. She has reorganised staffing and made some very good appointments that are resulting in significant improvements. Although some of the middle leaders are relatively new in post, there is evidence that they have a good understanding of what needs to be done in their areas and that they are already making an impact. Team spirit is robust and everyone's contribution is valued. It is currently too soon for this strong impetus to be demonstrated in sustained success but it is clear from all that has been achieved so far that improvement has been rapid. The school clearly knows its strengths and areas for development very well. The effective partnerships with other organisations, such as the local authority, have played a major part in the school's improvements. There are many strong links with the community that allow pupils to engage with, and develop a better understanding of the United Kingdom and global communities. The school works hard and successfully to promote equal opportunities and eliminate discrimination. For example, pupils who recently underachieved now make progress in line with their peers. Governors are well informed and both support and challenge the school effectively in its drive towards further improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

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?	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We greatly enjoyed our visit when we came to inspect your school. Thank you very much for the very warm welcome you gave us. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing all the interesting work that you do. Your school is satisfactory and is rapidly improving. Your personal development is good and your progress in your work is now satisfactory. You like coming to school and you are keen to learn. You know how to be healthy by eating the right food and by exercising. The adults in the school make sure that you are very safe and well cared for.

Here are some of the things that we have asked your headteacher to do:

- increase the number of lessons in which you learn particularly well, by making the work a little harder for those of you who find learning easy
- make sure that you know how well you are doing in all your subjects and how you can do even better
- Keep using all the new ideas for helping you to achieve as well as possible.

You can help by working with your teachers to check how well you have understood your work.

Thank you once again for helping us. We wish you well when you move to your new building in September.