

Redditch, the Vaynor First School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116727
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	358016
Inspection dates	9–10 December 2010
Reporting inspector	Vivienne McTiffen

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

Type of school	First
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	5–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	408
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Karen Lumley MP
Headteacher	Sue Foster-Agg
Date of previous school inspection	30 January 2008
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Age group	5–9
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Twenty four lessons or parts of lessons and two assemblies were observed. Fifteen teachers were seen once and the majority were seen twice. Meetings were held with staff, groups of pupils and school leaders, including a member of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at development planning; tracking data on pupils' progress; teacher assessments and lesson planning; safeguarding documentation and samples of pupils' work. In addition, 131 parental questionnaires were analysed.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Has the quality of teaching improved sufficiently to ensure pupils of all ages and abilities make enough progress?
- How well do pupils know their targets and how effectively and consistently is assessment used to plan for the next stage of learning?
- How well do leaders at all levels monitor provision, especially in teaching and learning?
- What is the quality of provision in Early Years Foundation Stage and how much progress do children make?

Information about the school

This is a much larger than average sized first school. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average as is the number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below national levels.

A privately run pre-school shares the school site. This provision is subject to separate inspection as it is not managed by the governing body.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school, which has improved since its last inspection. Pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has risen to be above that expected nationally and their progress has accelerated. This is because leaders and managers have a clear focus on raising standards and keep a close eye on pupils' progress. Through very good use of rigorous tracking systems they quickly recognise any underachievement and address it with a good range of strategies and extra support.

Since the last inspection there have been fluctuations in staffing but the school has successfully raised the quality of teaching. Teachers have high expectations and engage pupils well. They make lessons interesting with plenty of opportunities for pupils to discuss and share ideas. Leaders at all levels monitor the quality of learning and teaching, although the school lacks a systematic and structured approach to help individual teachers understand how to improve further. The use of assessment in classes has improved but variations remain. In some lessons, teachers build upon previous learning well but assessment information is not always used effectively enough to ensure good match of work to ability, especially for more able pupils. Although pupils know their targets in English and mathematics, teachers' marking in books does not consistently link learning to these targets or give pupils sufficient indication of how to improve.

Pupils enjoy school and develop good personal skills. They behave well and show a good understanding of right and wrong. They make a good contribution to the school community, taking on roles of responsibility willingly. Class and school councils work to benefit others, both within the school and beyond. Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is good. They enjoy being creative and imaginative and develop a good understanding of cultures different to their own. This is because of the school's positive promotion of community cohesion and the well planned curriculum which provides ample opportunity to learn about others. Attendance is average. Although the school has strategies in place to encourage regular attendance, day-to-day monitoring of it lacks sufficient rigour.

The headteacher has created a strong leadership and teaching team, building positive relationships, recognising expertise and addressing shortcomings. She has developed stringent systems to monitor the progress pupils make and set challenging targets. This has enabled the school to identify weaknesses and effectively plan what it needs to do to improve further. Self-evaluation is realistic and plans for the future aim high. In the light of this and recent improvements, the school is in a good

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position to continue to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise levels of teaching throughout the school to be consistently good or better by:
 - making good use of assessment information in lessons to match work to the range of ability, and especially for more able pupils
 - ensuring marking relates to pupils' targets and helps pupils understand how to do better
 - monitoring teaching more systematically so that individual teachers clearly know how to improve.
- Widen the strategies employed to improve attendance, especially on a day-to-day basis.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Although there is variation from year to year, when children start in the Reception classes their abilities are slightly lower than those expected for their age and, for many, reading, writing and personal skills are low. Pupils achieve well and make good progress so that, by the end of Year 2, attainment is above average. Mathematics, reading and writing have improved considerably in recent years. Pupils develop very good speaking and listening skills. This is due to a strong focus in lessons; for example, when pupils eagerly discuss slogans for use in advertising. Good progress is maintained, especially through support provided by learning mentors and extra reading programmes, so that pupils leave school with standards that are above the expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress, as do the very few pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils benefit from good support in classrooms and small group and individual work.

Pupils enjoy working together and finding out for themselves. This was seen to good effect in an English lesson when pupils used their knowledge from a history lesson to identify famous people on bank notes. They discussed ideas with each other before beginning to write, using information they had gathered from internet research. They took an interest in famous people's contributions and were keen to find out more by asking their teacher pertinent questions. Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and feel secure in school, a view supported by the majority of parents and carers. They are aware of the need to eat healthily and take regular exercise and many are actively involved in cultivating produce in the school garden. Pupils' well developed basic skills and personal qualities equip them well for the future.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Teachers establish good relationships and know pupils well. They often give pupils practical activities which they enjoy. For example, in a design and technology lesson, pupils were set the task of designing and making their own musical instruments. They selected from a range of materials and decided for themselves what the instrument would look like and what tools they would need. This lesson made a good contribution to pupils' decision making and problem solving skills. Generally, lessons are well structured but, sometimes, introductions are too long and pupils do not have enough time to apply their skills. Teaching assistants play an important role in supporting learning but, in some cases, they are insufficiently involved at the beginning and end of lessons.

The curriculum imaginatively provides interesting learning experiences and increasingly aims at a personalised approach to match pupils' needs and interests. It makes a good contribution to the development of skills and talents, especially through art and performances. There is a good range of sporting activities, some of which are the result of well developed partnerships. There are good examples of pupils using their literacy, numeracy and information and technology (ICT) skills in other subjects, particularly in history, art and geography.

The school offers a good level of care to all pupils. Effective links with external agencies are well established as are the school's own monitoring programmes,

¹ 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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especially for those pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable. There are clear policies to encourage good behaviour. Good arrangements exist for pupils moving to the next stage of education and for those starting school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have a shared determination to move the school forward, building upon strengths and tackling weaknesses. Their vision is effectively transmitted to staff, who work well together to develop their roles and responsibilities and address key areas for improvement. The governing body has the capacity to meet the school's needs and has strengthened its monitoring role, evaluating how well the school is doing. It is successfully raising its profile within the school and local community. There are clear channels of communication with parents and carers who are increasingly involved in their children's learning. Recent workshops have been popular and parents and carers value the opportunity to gain an understanding of pupils' work in school. Equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled. Gaps between different groups of pupils are identified and are closing. For example, extra support for boys who did not achieve their reading targets is having an effect in raising their attainment. Safeguarding regulations and arrangements are met satisfactorily, in line with government requirements. The school promotes community cohesion well, forging links with schools and communities beyond the immediate locality. For example, pupils visit those in another first school and have e-mail contact with pupils in Australia. This strengthens relationships with others and promotes positive attitudes towards those from different backgrounds.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2

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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	2
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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children get off to a good start in the Reception classes. By the time they enter Year 1, some do not reach the levels expected for their age but most make good progress in their communication, language and personal development. This is because strong emphasis is placed on learning through play. The colourful and well-organised classes encourage children to explore and find out for themselves. For example, during the inspection, children used the inviting resources on offer to busily become Santa’s helpers, wrap gifts, count presents and develop their own role play. Others, in the outdoor area, worked together to build Santa’s sleigh which they photographed to show others. There are very positive relationships; children are happy and behave well. Because of the emphasis on welfare, children learn how to keep safe and healthy and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported. A good balance exists between adult led activities, with a focus on literacy and numeracy, and tasks children choose for themselves. However, for these tasks, planning does not sufficiently outline how adults can extend learning, especially for more able children. Those in charge have successfully built upon existing provision. They recognise areas that still need to develop such as extending the curriculum in the outdoor area. There are plans in place to make improvements. Some arrangements, such as the key worker system are relatively new, but ensure adults have a common purpose in promoting children’s learning and maintaining links with parents.

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

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The majority of questionnaire returns from parents and carers are positive. All agree that their children enjoy school and they are kept safe. A very small minority feel the school does not keep them informed about their children's progress. Discussion with leaders and managers revealed that there are termly progress updates and the school has clear lines of communication to enable parents and carers to contact staff. This is reflected in a comment from one parent, 'The class teacher communicates well with us and the headteacher is always welcoming.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Redditch, the Vaynor First 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 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 408 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	85	65	46	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	83	63	46	35	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	45	34	72	55	9	7	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	59	45	66	50	3	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	62	47	67	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	54	41	71	54	5	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	59	45	67	51	2	2	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)	44	34	67	51	4	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	57	44	66	50	6	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	30	75	57	3	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	34	70	53	8	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	53	40	66	50	3	2	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	66	50	62	47	1	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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring term 2009/10 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. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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.



13 December 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Redditch, the Vaynor First School, Redditch, B97 5BL

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed talking to you and looking at your work.

You attend a good school and this is what we found out about it. By the time you leave the school, you reach levels above those expected for your age in reading, writing and mathematics. Your speaking and listening skills are very good. This is because teachers make sure lessons are interesting and give you chance to talk about your ideas with each other. You enjoy taking on responsibility and helping others. You all get on well together because your school helps you to understand and learn about other people.

To help you and the school to do even better, we have asked your headteacher and her staff to make the following improvements.

- Make sure teachers use the information they have about your learning to give all of you work that matches your ability, and especially for those of you who are more able.
- Improve teachers' marking so it helps you to understand when you have achieved your targets and how you can do better.
- Create better systems to make clear how teaching can improve.
- Improve attendance by frequently checking the reasons you are not in school when you are absent.

All of you can help the school to achieve these things by always trying your best and making sure you come to school regularly.

Yours sincerely

Vivienne McTiffen
Lead inspector

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