

# Inspection of a good school: Raddlebarn Primary School

Gristhorpe Road, Selly Oak, Birmingham, West Midlands B29 7TD

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Inspection dates:

25 and 26 June 2024

## **Outcome**

There has been no change to this school's overall judgement of good as a result of this ungraded (section 8) inspection. However, the evidence gathered suggests that the inspection grade might not be as high if a graded (section 5) inspection were carried out now. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils enjoy attending school. They feel safe and know who to talk to if they have any concerns. They value how teachers use 'CICO' every day to find out if they are worried or would like to talk to them.

The school has clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning. Pupils meet these standards and achieve well. They have a strong understanding of what it means to be respectful. They can explain how poor behaviour choices are often rooted in disrespecting others or the school environment.

The 'no outsiders' ethos contributes to the palpable warmth in how pupils interact with each other. Pupils play harmoniously at social times. They enjoy how the 'OPAL' equipment encourages them to be creative. They happily share play resources with their friends in other year groups.

There are many opportunities for pupils to take on roles and responsibilities, including as eco-councillors and prefects. Year 6 pupils talk about how these roles have helped them to feel ready for the move to secondary school.

Although there are many areas of strength to the school's work, there is more to be done to ensure that everyone in the school community feels as valued as pupils do.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Children get off to a strong start in the early years. They learn in a calm, purposeful environment and make the most of the well-resourced outdoor learning spaces. Learning

is carefully designed to enable children to do and remember more. All learning is linked to the books currently being read. A love of stories, including writing their own, is embedded. Interesting activities mean children are highly engaged and become increasingly more independent. Highly skilled staff model and extend vocabulary and thinking at every opportunity. Children talk about their learning with confidence and excitement.

From Nursery onwards, the school prioritises reading. The phonics scheme is delivered effectively and pupils learn to read well. The school ensures that pupils of all ages benefit from precise 'keep-up' activities if there are gaps in their reading skills. Pupils talk positively about reading and the books they have enjoyed.

The school has an ambitious and well-sequenced curriculum which builds learning over time. The curriculum is generally taught well. However, not all staff have the same depth of subject knowledge or understanding of how best to teach different aspects of the curriculum. This means there are some pockets of inconsistency in how well the curriculum is implemented.

Pupils engage well with their learning activities. The school follows a collaborative learning approach that helps pupils to talk and work well with each other. Pupils take pride in the work they produce and are keen to share how they have developed as learners. They achieve well in national tests.

Children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) follow an adapted version of the curriculum alongside their classmates, and are therefore sharing the similar learning experiences. The school identifies their needs and provides all staff with clear strategies for adapting their teaching for these pupils. As a result, lessons are inclusive and pupils with SEND achieve well.

Because of the strong foundations laid in the early years, pupils understand the importance of good behaviour and being respectful. This has been strengthened by the move to a restorative approach when pupils make the wrong choices. Serious consequences rarely need to be used. There is a quality and strength to the school's pastoral work. Staff know pupils and their families well. This has helped the school to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence. Attendance is now in line with national averages.

The personal development of pupils is a strength and is reflected in the way they talk seriously and sensitively about important topics, including discrimination and respect for the environment. The school has built pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development into all curriculum subjects. Pupils talk about current affairs each week. They learn about enterprise and social responsibility. For example, Year 6 pupils independently raised money for the charity Water Aid after reading about the lack of clean water in some parts of Africa.

The school has made some changes to reduce staff workload, but there is more to do. There are some staff who do not feel as valued as they would like. Most parents and

carers are happy with the education their child receives, but there are also parents who are less positive. Many want better communication from and with the school.

Those responsible for governance were not fulfilling their responsibilities appropriately and did not have a clear enough focus on moving the school forward. There is now an interim executive board (IEB) in place, bringing educational and governance expertise to the school.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The curriculum is not always implemented to a consistently good standard across the school. This is because not all staff have the same level of understanding of subject knowledge and pedagogy. The school should ensure that all staff are supported in delivering the curriculum effectively.
- The school's vision is not always communicated effectively to staff and parents. There are missed opportunities to gather their opinions on key matters. This means that some of these key stakeholders do not feel that they have a voice that is valued. The school should ensure there is a strategy for more active, productive engagement with all groups involved in the school.
- There have been significant changes made to strengthen the quality of governance. The IEB has only very recently been appointed. The board should work promptly so that there are more robust processes in place for ensuring that the school has a clear vision and strategy, and that leaders at all levels are appropriately held to account.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in October 2014.

## How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' is used to mean pupils with SEND; pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103246
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10294475
<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	424
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Charlotte Stubbs
<b>Headteacher</b>	Angela Lowry
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.raddlebarn.co.uk">www.raddlebarn.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 July 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- An interim executive board was appointed on 10 June 2024.
- The school has a Nursery.
- An external provider runs before- and after-school provision on site.
- The school does not make use of alternative provision.

## Information about this inspection

Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspectors met with the headteacher, other school leaders, the chair and members of the IEB, and representatives of the local authority.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in art and design, reading and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a

sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors listened to pupils read to a familiar adult and visited other lessons, including those in the early years.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- The inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's staff and pupil surveys. They considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including comments submitted via the free-text facility. They read letters from parents and spoke to some parents in person and via telephone.

### **Inspection team**

Nicola Beech, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Carli McCallin

Ofsted Inspector

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