

Roundthorn Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105634
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	355809
Inspection dates	15–16 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Robert Pye

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	259
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sylvia Rimmer
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Needham
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 16 lessons and nine teachers. Meetings were held with members of the school council, representatives of the pupils' learning council, senior and middle leaders, teaching assistants and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work, and scrutinised school development plans, documentation relating to the monitoring of pupils' progress, reports from the School Improvement Partner and pupils' workbooks. The inspectors scrutinised 146 questionnaires returned by parents and carers and also questionnaires completed by pupils in Key Stage 2.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Whether the modified curriculum is having the desired impact on developing pupils' skills in English, particularly writing.
- How effectively assessment within the classroom is being used to support learning.
- The impact of the senior leadership team on improving the quality of teaching in order to drive up standards.

Information about the school

This is a larger-than-average-sized primary school. Almost all pupils are from minority ethnic groups and most speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well above that usually seen. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is a nationally accredited Healthy School and also holds, Activemark, Artsmark and the Investors in People award. As an Eco School, it received the Green Flag recently.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school and one that has self-improvement at its heart. The excellent and inspirational leadership of the headteacher is complemented very well by the senior team and the effective and supportive governing body. Care, guidance and support are outstanding and pupils respond very positively, with attendance that is consistently above average and exemplary behaviour. Parents and carers pay extensive tribute to what the school does for their children through comments such as, 'I am so proud to be involved with such a loving, caring school.' In addition, the partnerships with other schools and support agencies complement pupils' learning exceptionally well.

The stimulating and outstanding curriculum meets individual needs well and is enriched by a range of interventions and activities that provide equal opportunities for all to learn and flourish. Indeed, at Roundthorn every child does matter. As a result, pupils are avid learners.

Most children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with exceptionally low starting points and a significant number are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. All benefit from exciting and fun activities, enabling them to make good progress overall in the setting. The school recognises that the best practice in teaching language and communication skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage is not consistently embedded to enable all children to make the best possible progress in developing these skills. Carefully crafted programmes in Key Stage 1 such as those designed to developing pupils' speaking skills build their learning potential and result in accelerated learning later on in Key Stage 2. Overall, pupils make outstanding progress across the school and achieve well in their learning because the school has high expectations of them. Staff eradicate any differences in the achievement of groups of pupils. For example, the school has been highly successful in helping the visually impaired through specifically designed programmes. Such intervention enables those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to make the same exceptional progress as their peers. Pupils learning English as an additional language are helped greatly by the specialist and other support they are given and as a result, also make outstanding progress.

Roundthorn has been successful in driving up pupils' academic performance since the last inspection and sustaining outstanding practice in supporting their personal development and preparing them well for their future. Pupils feel extremely safe and secure and have a mature and very well-developed understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle. They make an excellent contribution to the school and local communities. Safeguarding procedures are exemplary. The partnership with parents and carers, and other agencies is extremely strong and underpins and supports the school's outstanding levels of care, guidance and support. As one parent commented, echoing the views of many, 'My child loves this school and has really improved in their reading.'

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Through accurate self-evaluation, leaders have brought about many improvements including building a spirited teaching team. As a result, teaching and learning are outstanding. This has led to a rising trend in attainment over the last three years, which is now broadly average. Leaders are aware of good assessment practice, although the quality across the school is variable. In a few cases, teachers do not follow up specific next step actions that enable all pupils to make consistently good or better progress in writing. The school demonstrates an outstanding capacity for further improvement based on the work it has done since the last inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment further by:
 - ensuring teachers improve the consistency of marking through regularly following up development points that will help pupils take their next steps in learning, particularly in writing.
- Ensure the Early Years Foundation Stage leadership embed strategies to consistently promote the very best practice in relation to developing children's language and communication skills.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

During the inspection pupils were seen to enter class with smiles on their faces, delighted to meet their friends and the adults who work with them. They enjoy the many opportunities they have to share ideas and are pleased when their classmates experience success in their learning. As a result of outstanding teaching and high-quality support from teaching assistants, all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make outstanding progress in their personal and academic development.

Pupils make outstanding progress from their exceptionally low starting points to attain broadly average standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6. Overall, progress is at least good throughout the school and in Key Stage 2 it accelerates to become very rapid indeed. Inspection evidence demonstrates that all year groups are currently on course to exceed their challenging targets. Progress in writing is improving but is not as rapid as that seen in reading and mathematics. Pupils behave extremely well, and are mature, polite, thoughtful and considerate young people. The overwhelming majority of pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and respond appropriately to teachers' requests. In Year 5, pupils interact extremely well to explore what it would be like to live in Pakistan, by examining and discussing food, booking flights and staying in hotels. These lessons typify the inclusive nature of the school by ensuring all pupils can access everything the lessons have to offer.

Pupils have the utmost confidence in their teachers and teaching assistants and say, 'We can go to them if we have problems and they help us to solve them.' As a result, pupils feel very secure in school and have a very good awareness of how to keep themselves and others safe. They talk accurately and with great confidence about the importance of eating healthily and with the help of the extended schools partnership take part in a wide variety of physical activities to keep fit, starting with the daily 'Wake and Shake.' Pupils willingly take on a wide range of responsibilities, such as school councillors, friendship

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leaders and learning councillors. Pupils' involvement in a variety of charity appeals reflects their generosity. Pupils' overall good achievement, their excellent behaviour and above average attendance helps prepare them well for the next stage in their education.

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	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Classrooms are delightful, rich environments, both indoors and out, with imaginative activities and vibrant displays to capture and respond to pupils' interests and enthusiasm. Overall, teaching is outstanding. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and teachers' subject knowledge is strong. Technology is used well to make lessons interesting. Teachers draw upon first-hand experiences and use discussions to promote language development. Teachers are very well supported by knowledgeable and proactive support assistants who make a significant impact on learning throughout the school. For example support assistants treated the pupils with dignity and respect as they led sessions modelling attitudes towards behaviour. Marking clearly signposts the next steps in learning. However, occasionally teachers do not always insist that advice is followed up, especially in relation to writing.

The skills-based curriculum meets the needs and interests of all pupils exceptionally well. It is complemented by exciting enrichment activities including themed weeks such as health living. Regular extra-curricular clubs like martial arts together with a wide range of

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educational and residential visits, provide outstanding opportunities for pupils to reinforce and broaden their personal and academic skills.

The school is rightly proud of its outstanding care, guidance and support. The most vulnerable pupils benefit greatly from a wealth of excellent strategies, such as programmes to support reading recovery. The inclusion team, bilingual support and learning mentor provide a wide range of support to enable all pupils to play a full part in school life; they are also very successful in supporting families. Moreover, all staff, including the outstanding team of teaching assistants, ensure that individual pupils can benefit from all the school has to offer. Pupils, too, are actively involved in supporting their classmates and younger pupils. Procedures for helping pupils to settle into school and to transfer to the next stages of their education are highly regarded by pupils, parents and carers and ensure that those in Year 6 are fully prepared for entry into secondary. For example bilingual support enables pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language to quickly settle to daily routines.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been instrumental in developing a team of highly skilled practitioners. Staff feel empowered and foster the highest expectations to ensure that the school's overriding aim, 'We place every child at the centre of the learning process' is achieved. As a result, learning and progress have improved significantly since the last inspection. Senior and middle leaders ensure outstanding promotion of equality of opportunity and reject discrimination in all its forms. Leadership has been innovative in its thinking, modifying the curriculum and pupil support strategies to ensure outstanding pupil outcomes. Leaders and managers are expert in ensuring the smooth day-to-day running of the school and in the accurate self-evaluation of its performance.

The governing body is fully supportive of the school, knows it well and has an accurate view of its performance. It holds the leadership to account with increasing rigour and is taking effective action to increase this further. The school has exemplary policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection. All risk assessments and staff vetting procedures are in place. The school's promotion of community cohesion is outstanding because it strives, with exceptional success, through the 'Linking School' project to remove cultural barriers within the local area and beyond. It is a cohesive and peaceful community in which all get on very well together.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with exceptionally low skills for their age. This is partly because the vast majority enter the setting with English as an additional language, with many at the early stages of learning English. Children make good progress overall, because good account is taken of their starting points and a supportive environment is provided that encourages them as individual learners. There are effective support strategies for those who speak English as an additional language. However, the most effective practices in teaching language and communication skills are not consistently embedded to enable all children to make the best possible progress.

Although children make good progress and achieve well from their very low starting points, many still have skills considerably below the level expected for their age when they start Year 1. Children's personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. They behave very well and play and share happily together in the role-play areas indoors. Children willingly show their work to visitors. Teaching is good and when learning is at its best, children are captivated by the exciting experiences offered. For example, when going on a 'bear hunt' the children really enjoyed re-enacting experiences from the story book. There is a good balance of indoor and outdoor learning with adults actively promoting good health and well-being through daily routines, demonstrating high levels of care.

Leadership and management are good. Staff promote the welfare of each child and safeguarding policy and practice are strengths. Continuous monitoring of children's progress leads to an accurate evaluation of their performance. However, this does not always transfer to changes in their learning through creating further opportunities to develop their language and communication skills. Parents and carers play a positive part in supporting their children's learning through active involvement in the home-school diaries and a before-school reading club.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	2
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

There was a higher than average return of questionnaires. All parents and carers who responded believe that their children enjoy school and the vast majority are entirely happy with their children's experience at Roundthorn. Moreover, the vast majority are of the opinion that the school helps their children lead a healthy lifestyle. Parents and carers who came to speak with the inspectors feel the headteacher is committed to the development of the whole child and that as a result, their children make good progress personally and academically. Furthermore, they feel the school helps them understand how they can support their children at home. A very small minority expressed concerns about how the school deals with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found no evidence to endorse this view and found pupils' conduct in lessons and around school to be exemplary. A small minority of parents and carers do not believe the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. Again, inspectors found no evidence during the inspection to endorse this view and judge the school's partnership with parents and carers to be outstanding.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Roundthorn Community Primary 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 146 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 259 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	74	51	72	49	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	82	56	62	42	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	56	38	85	58	5	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	50	34	90	62	5	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	69	47	74	51	2	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	38	84	58	6	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	70	48	74	51	1	1	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)	52	36	80	55	5	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	56	38	79	54	7	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	60	41	73	50	8	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	46	32	80	55	13	9	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	53	36	86	59	4	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	65	45	78	53	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



21 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roundthorn Community Primary School, Oldham, OL4 5LN

Thank you for your warm welcome when we came to visit your school recently and for taking the time to talk to the inspectors. We really enjoyed meeting you and seeing you work and play. Many of your parents and carers wrote to say how pleased they were with the school. We came to find out as much as we could about your school. We judge it to be providing you with an outstanding education.

Your headteacher and teachers make it a very caring, happy and welcoming place. You and your parents and carers agree, adding that you feel very safe when at school. You are respectful, polite and considerate towards each other. We really enjoyed looking at your work and watching you thrive in the 'forest school.'

Your headteacher and teachers are determined to help you succeed, as are your parents and carers. Therefore, we have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- make sure you always take notice of the advice they give you about how to improve your work
- continue to develop your language and communication skills in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Once again, it was very good to meet you all and would like to wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robert Pye

Lead inspector

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