

Rowlands Gill Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131081
Local Authority	Gateshead
Inspection number	360205
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Graeme Clarke

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	360
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr John Hamilton
Headteacher	Miss Hannah Martin
Date of previous school inspection	24 June 2008
School address	Dominines Close Rowlands Gill Tyne and Wear NE39 2PP
Telephone number	01207 549359
Fax number	01207 549182
Email address	rowlandsgillprimary@gateshead.gov.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	3–4 February 2011
Inspection number	360205

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed the work of 15 teachers in the school during short visits to parts of lessons and extended visits to 17 lessons. They joined an assembly. They examined a variety of examples of pupils' written work. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, teachers and a group of pupils. They scrutinised the school's child protection and safeguarding documentation, information about the curriculum, development plans, records of pupils' progress and minutes of meetings. They analysed 137 questionnaires from parents and carers, 47 from pupils in Key Stage 2 and 21 from members of staff.

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

- Attainment and progress in English compared with that in mathematics in Key Stage 2.
- The progress of higher-attaining pupils.
- The progress of pupils with statements of special educational needs who are supported through additional resources allocated to the school.
- The way the school fosters partnerships with parents.
- How effectively the school now fosters community cohesion.

Information about the school

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school. A lower than average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. Although the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is lower than average, the school has a base with additional resources to cater for a higher than average number of pupils with a statement of support for their complex special educational needs and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is well below average and none of them is learning English as an additional language. The school has gained Healthy School status, the Activemark and the Sustrans Bike-it School award. A new senior leadership team was established in September 2010.

Privately-organised child care provision in the school for children under five years of age and for older pupils before and after school was inspected separately: the report is available on the Ofsted website.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education overall. All aspects of pupils' personal development are good. Parents are at ease with the school's arrangements to safeguard the welfare of their children. In this orderly school a calm environment prevails in which children and pupils conduct themselves considerately. Pupils behave well and politely. Many opportunities offered throughout the curriculum widen pupils' horizons and contribute to their overall good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Productive partnerships with the community and local agencies make a key contribution to all pupils' learning and development. Pupils maintain a healthy lifestyle. They contribute in many ways to their school and local community and justifiably are proud to play their part.

Pupils thoroughly enjoy school and show positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, they work well together or independently with confidence. Throughout Years 3 to 6 most pupils make satisfactory progress and leave with broadly-average attainment in English and above-average attainment in mathematics. Too few pupils make sufficiently good progress to reach higher levels in writing because teaching does not systematically extend pupils' learning with suitably challenging work. Consequently, pupils' attainment in English is lower than that in mathematics. New initiatives to improve writing are becoming established but it is too soon for them to have their full effect. When marking pupils' work, teachers do not consistently give pupils clear enough pointers for improvement. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to that of their classmates and reach levels comparable with their counterparts nationally.

The recently-established senior team fosters a strong caring ethos, and collectively all staff promote the school's values. Their drive to improve teaching and learning is beginning to pay dividends but practice remains inconsistent. Since the last inspection, clear signs of improvement in pupils' progress are evident as they move through Key Stage 1, and in Key Stage 2 in mathematics. The governing body has a clear commitment to developing its role in monitoring and reviewing the school's work, and members learn about the school through regular visits. Leaders and managers have a broadly accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. In the main, this supports their planning for improvement. However, although the plan focuses appropriately on raising attainment, the expected effect of planned activities is not identified with sufficient precision to help senior leaders and the governing body accurately judge the progress the school is making. Taking these factors into account, the school's capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve progress and raise attainment in English for all pupils in Years 3 to 6, especially in writing, by:
 - implementing new initiatives to foster good quality writing without delay
 - exploiting the skills, and sharing the successful approaches some teachers use, to increase the consistency of good-quality teaching throughout the school
 - increasing the usefulness of marking by giving pupils pointers to the next steps in their learning and following this up to help pupils move more quickly to the next level.
- Enhance the value of development planning by ensuring that actions to be taken, and criteria for success, are clear and focus sharply on improving progress.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils enjoy learning. They are attentive, industrious and work responsibly on their own or in small groups. Pupils take part enthusiastically and derive benefit from pair-discussions in pairs. For example, pupils in Year 1 and 2 shared some very perceptive ideas about the feelings of characters in Jack and the Beanstalk and used good speaking skills to present their views to the class. Pupils are keen to answer questions and often give well-thought-out replies. Their written and number work is legible and set out neatly.

Children begin Nursery with skills and abilities that are similar to most children of their age. Over the last three years, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics has improved from average to above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 6 in 2010 and in previous years have not had the advantage of these higher starting points. Over the same period their attainment in mathematics improved to above average, but it has remained average in English because of lower levels in writing compared to reading. Taking into consideration pupils' starting points, progress overall is satisfactory. There is no difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in mathematics but satisfactory progress overall. For those pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities, expert support ensures that they make sound and, for some, good progress, particularly in reading. They demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning, show confidence in handling relationships and play a full part in school life. Higher-attaining pupils made satisfactory progress to reach their target for attainment in English and mathematics combined. Overall, given this pattern of satisfactory learning and progress and broadly average attainment, pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

Pupils feel safe in school and act sensibly and considerately. They are very aware of road safety and the risks of irresponsible Internet access. Pupils behave well in classrooms and the open parts of the school. Many enjoy involvement in the popular after-school activities, especially physical and sporting clubs. Pupils of all ages speak knowledgeably of the importance of a balanced diet. Through an effective school council, in helping to improve amenities and in participation in a new initiative to deal with bullying, pupils make an admirable contribution to their community. Pupils have a good understanding that their charitable work supports others less fortunate than themselves. Above-average

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

attendance, well-developed social and team working skills, experience of enterprise, and applying basic skills widely, equip pupils well for future life.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
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	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?

Teaching quality is not uniform throughout the school. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory with none that is inadequate. At its best, teachers' skilful management of learning leads pupils to make good and sometimes outstanding progress in lessons. An effective combination of detailed planning, clear learning intentions, intriguing activities, adroit questioning and every opportunity taken to challenge and reinforce understanding holds pupils' attention and engages them fully in learning. Highly-effective partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants help the most vulnerable pupils to learn well. On other occasions, however, activities such as preparing ideas for written work are too drawn out or lack sufficient challenge and insufficient attention is given to applying the skills being developed. At times, too few pupils are directly involved in discussion and in turn others lose interest. Under these circumstances learning slows. Marking of pupils' work is improving although approaches are not consistent throughout the school. The most effective marking shows that teachers share, and follow up, the next steps for learning with pupils and indicate when oral feedback is given.

Over recent years, the curriculum has been developed well so that themes, such as in history, geography and science, link effectively to allow pupils to apply their basic skills

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

widely. Of special note is the way partnerships with local heritage centres, the church, community agencies and the secondary sector greatly enhance opportunities for the curriculum to expand pupils' personal development and their spiritual, social, cultural and sporting awareness. Higher-attaining pupils benefit from good opportunities to extend their learning through partnership with local schools. Adaptations to the curriculum support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to foster their personal development particularly well. Good opportunities broaden pupils' understanding of the diversity of life locally and more widely.

Carefully-coordinated approaches by teachers and assistants ensure that a close eye is kept on pupils' development and progress to identify anyone at risk of falling behind. Effective steps are taken to support pupils at risk of underachievement. Rigorous procedures track the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and of particular note is the diligent review of provision for pupils with the most complex needs. Close links with home when children start Nursery, good arrangements as they move from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Year 1 and through the school and a strong partnership with local secondary schools successfully prepare pupils as they move from one stage to the next stage in their education. Effective cooperation with the local authority's welfare service has improved attendance.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
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?

The recently-established small leadership team works well together but does carry a substantial workload given the size of the school. Leaders are clearly committed to improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning through monitoring and support, although staff changes during the recent past have created inconsistencies yet to be resolved. Overall governance is satisfactory and developing well. Demonstrating dedication and commitment to improving the value of their role, the governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. The impact of governors' involvement is now beginning to be felt, for example, through their recent revisions to procedures for dealing with any bullying. They know their next steps are to help speed up improvement in writing. Senior leaders have improved systems for monitoring and analysing pupils' performance, resulting in appropriate priorities for attention. However, criteria for success in the school's action plan are insufficiently precise to provide an effective means of judging the success of their plans.

The school promotes equality of opportunity effectively and is careful to ensure all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities play a full part

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

in school life. The many activities that foster partnerships with parents and carers include: a thriving parent-teacher association; evenings to inform parents and carers about progress, curriculum and family learning; participation in assemblies and communication through newsletters and a website. Nevertheless, a small minority of parents expressed disquiet about aspects of the school's work. Effective partnerships with support agencies, local services, the church and community organisations enhance the quality of education. Pupils benefit from the school's good contribution to community cohesion and links with schools abroad are beginning to widen pupils' appreciation of life in other countries. The governing body is diligent in ensuring that all measures for safeguarding the welfare of pupils are in place. They effectively ensure that provision is reviewed, that staff are trained to a high level and that the curriculum enhances pupils' awareness of looking after their own safety.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children develop confidence and make good and sometimes outstanding progress, for example, in aspects of their personal development. They have the basic building blocks necessary to get off to a good start in Key Stage 1. In recent years, children have typically ended the Reception Year with levels of personal development and communication, language and literacy skills that are well above expectations for their age. However, their mathematical development was broadly as expected. Children settle in quickly, behave well, play happily together, are highly-motivated and thoroughly enjoy learning.

Staff plan activities that interest children so they benefit from a good balance of play and organised activities, and of activities led or supported by adults and those they can initiate themselves. Teaching and support is sharply-focused on developing children's communication, language and literacy skills as well as their grasp of mathematics. Children

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

in the Nursery class were intrigued by and engrossed in a range of activities centered on Chinese New Year. Reception age children spoke confidently and informatively when describing the properties of common 3D shapes. Assessment is used conscientiously to plan activities and to keep journals of children's learning which, in turn, are appreciated by parents and carers.

Experienced teachers and expert support staff ensure that routines are well-established and followed diligently. Good caring and working relationships prevail throughout. Following staff changes, the leader has ensured continuity of provision throughout the stage and sustained children's good learning and progress over recent months. Plans for development build on the strong base of good progress and above-average attainment laid in recent years.

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

An average proportion of parents and carers returned questionnaires. Almost all feel that their child enjoys school. Most feel the school keeps their child safe and that it helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle. The inspectors uphold these views. A small minority of parents and carers voiced concerns about the leadership and management of the school and that the school does not take account of their views. A very small minority is concerned that their children do not make enough progress and that misbehaviour is not dealt with effectively. Some parents and carers wrote of their concerns about bullying. The proportion of parents and carers registering concerns reflects the national picture. Inspectors followed up these matters. A new leadership team, established at the start of this school year, is showing a coherent approach to managing the school, although it is too early to see the full effect of their work. Inspectors found that pupils are well-informed about the different aspects of bullying. They told inspectors they feel very safe in school, that bullying is rare and they know how to report any incidents. Should an incident occur, pupils are confident that it is dealt with promptly. Pupils are proud to be part of a recent initiative on bullying which they feel is effective. During the inspection, behaviour was good in and out of lessons, and pupils were invariably polite and considerate. The school surveys parents' and carers' views and promotes their involvement in many ways through written communication, a website and meetings. The governing body is keen to satisfy any parental concerns and provides opportunities for discussion to resolve them.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rowlands Gill 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 137 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	72	53	60	44	2	1	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	74	54	57	42	4	3	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	42	31	80	58	13	9	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	35	66	48	14	10	6	4
The teaching is good at this school	59	43	63	46	7	5	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	56	41	63	46	13	9	4	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	57	42	71	52	4	3	1	1
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)	50	36	61	45	15	11	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	34	71	52	10	7	7	5
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	24	78	57	19	14	4	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	26	69	50	20	15	3	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	20	59	43	28	20	13	9
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	38	66	48	15	11	2	1

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.



7 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rowlands Gill Community Primary School, Rowlands Gill, NE39 2PP

My colleagues and I really enjoyed our visit to inspect your school last week. Thank you for helping us when we came to see you in lessons and an assembly and when we met you. You were always polite and very helpful. We did enjoy talking with you. We were delighted to see how much you like to take part in lessons and that you were well-behaved in classrooms and around the school. We were very pleased to see how willingly you contribute to school life and in ways to help others.

Your school gives you a satisfactory education. All the adults in the school look after you very well and ensure arrangements keep you safe. We were pleased to see how successfully the special support the school gives some pupils helps them take part in school life. We have seen that the results in assessments in Year 2 improved to above average in recent years. Over the same period in Year 6, mathematics results rose to above average but English results have remained average each year because levels in writing have not been high enough. We have asked the school to see if they can help more of you do well to lift your writing results above average in future. When we looked at your books we liked the way many of your teachers let you know how well you are doing and we have asked all of them to give you clear pointers in your written and mathematics work to help you reach the next level.

We have also asked your headteacher and the governing body to be very precise when they plan to help you improve so that they can check carefully how well you are doing.

You have many opportunities at Rowlands Gill Primary School to learn about life and these help you to prepare for the future. We hope that you all do really well.

Yours sincerely

Mr Graeme Clarke

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.