

# Rothwell Victoria Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121856
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	359100
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mike Thompson

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	329
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gillian Seakens
<b>Headteacher</b>	Christine Chittock
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	School Lane Rothwell, Kettering NN14 6HZ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 12 teachers and visited 16 lessons. The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior managers and some of the teaching staff, members of the governing body, and pupils. They looked at a range of information, including data showing the progress made by pupils and samples of pupils' work. Inspectors analysed questionnaires returned by 58 parents and carers and 18 members of staff.

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

- To what extent is the school able to prove its claim that, overall, all groups of pupils make at least satisfactory progress, particularly the vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals?
- How effective has the school been in improving the quality of teaching since its last inspection, and particularly in ensuring that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and provide work that matches pupils' needs?

## Information about the school

This is a large infant school. Most of its pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has risen in recent years, but remains below the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below the national average. Most of these pupils have general learning difficulties and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage comprises a Nursery, which children attend on a part-time basis, and three Reception classes. There have been significant changes in staffing over the past few years, and many members of the senior leadership team are relatively new to their posts.

The school has Healthy School status, an Activemark accreditation for its promotion of physical education and sport, and an 'Eco School' Green Flag award.

There is a Sure Start Children's Centre on site, which was inspected separately.

**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

Rothwell Victoria Infant School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. It provides effective care, guidance and support, which results in their good personal development and well-being. Most pupils say they are well cared for, knowing adults will always help them. They clearly know how to keep safe, and show good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. These achievements are recognised by the Activemark accreditation, Healthy School status and the school's Eco Green Flag award. The school invests a great deal of effort in helping pupils to develop socially. Their behaviour in lessons is invariably good, and most pupils work well with their classmates. Consequently, lessons run smoothly and pupils are invariably polite and enjoy learning.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage classes. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Children achieve well because teaching is stimulating and is well matched to their individual learning needs.

Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory in the Key Stage 1 classes. They make satisfactory progress and attainment is broadly average when they transfer to the next stage of their education at the end of Year 2. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers relate well to their pupils, explain tasks clearly and manage their pupils well. Their expectations of what pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Lessons sometimes lack pace and teachers' questioning does not help pupils sufficiently in developing their understanding. The curriculum has a satisfactory impact on pupils' achievement. The provision for the development of pupils' skills in writing has improved since the last inspection. As a result, pupils' attainment in writing, although broadly average, is slightly better than in reading or mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision has improved through investment in new resources. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use ICT to support their learning.

The impact of leadership on pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Much of the improvement currently taking place, and the direction provided, stems largely from the headteacher's strategic view. A wide-ranging development plan, supplemented by a clear and adequately detailed plan for tackling key priorities, provides satisfactory direction. The plan's weaknesses are that it does not focus sharply enough on improving the quality of teaching and learning and does not contain clear criteria against which progress can be measured objectively. The governing body ensures that legal requirements are met, but has too little impact in helping to raise standards. This is because governors have not developed sufficient knowledge and skills to provide independent challenge to the school's headteacher. Largely as a result of inexperience, members of the senior leadership team lack skills in managing their areas of responsibility. A factor contributing to the weaknesses in governance and the work of some of the senior leaders is the lack of good quality, easily accessible summary data about the progress made by all groups of pupils.

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The procedures for evaluating the school's effectiveness are sound and, together with the impact of actions taken to improve pupils' achievement, demonstrate that the school has a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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.

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

- Ensure that teachers in Key Stage 1 inject greater pace and urgency in their lessons and accelerate pupils' progress by:
  - making good use of their assessments of pupils' previous learning to provide challenging tasks for pupils of all levels of ability
  - using questioning effectively to develop pupils' understanding, particularly with regard to the most able pupils.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - ensuring that the school improvement plan includes a focus on teaching and provides greater precision and more objective measurement of success in tackling all areas identified for development
  - improving the quality and accessibility of data that summarises pupils' progress
  - developing the skills of governors and senior leaders in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school through the use of data.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

The inspection focused particularly on the achievement of vulnerable pupils and those eligible for free school meals. In the case of less advantaged pupils, this was because national data indicated that they did not do as well as their peers nationally. Inspectors found that all pupils are well integrated into the school 'family' regardless of prior attainment or background, and different groups make similar progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities learn satisfactorily in lessons. Some of these pupils have difficulty in concentrating, while others have limited cognitive skills, yet in all instances observed these barriers to learning were successfully countered through appropriate individual support. Skilled teaching assistants play a key role and ensure the good inclusion of these pupils.

In many instances, teachers provide tasks that add interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning; for example, in Year 2 English lessons, the focus on writing in the style of Lauren Child by varying the direction and appearance of text captured pupils' imagination. The task set resulted in satisfactory learning because it was suitably matched to the range of pupils' abilities through teachers' expectations of differences in the content of pupils' writing.

Pupils respond positively to the well-established and consistently applied procedures for promoting good behaviour. Instances of unacceptable behaviour generally reflect the conduct of a few pupils with identified emotional and behavioural difficulties. Pupils' strong commitment to being healthy is evident in the good attendance at extra-curricular activities, such as basketball, football and multi-sports. There are many ways in which

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pupils develop skills as young citizens and contribute well to the day-to-day life of the school. These include pupils undertaking responsibility at playtime to befriend anyone at the 'Friendship Stop'. Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider community through, for example, fundraising for various charities and participation in a local Eisteddfod. Pupils clearly know right from wrong. They respect one another and display good social skills in working and playing well together. Pupils' appreciation and enjoyment of music is evident in the quality of their singing in assembly. Their awareness of their own and other cultural traditions is as expected at this age. The school is working to broaden pupils' horizons and is developing links with a school in Leeds so that pupils can learn more about how children live in different parts of the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	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
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?**

The quality of teaching is inconsistent. Some of the teaching is good or better, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, but too much is satisfactory. In all lessons, teachers are good at developing pupils' confidence as learners. Good teaching is characterised by the skilled ways in which teachers use a variety of techniques to inject pace and urgency in pupils' learning and use assessment well to provide individual challenges. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher made effective use of what she had learned from pupils' previous learning to define the focus for individual pupils as they wrote about 'Mr Wiggle and Mr Waggle'. A skilled teaching assistant made good use of ICT by using a video clip to

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remind a group of less able pupils about the story acted out the previous day. This review then led to individual targets being set for each pupil to achieve. In many instances, learning in lessons is only satisfactory. This occurs when lessons lack pace, for example when teachers talk for too long, and when they do not set out precisely what they expect of pupils of different levels of ability. Sometimes teachers miss opportunities to probe the understanding of pupils who do not volunteer answers, and do not use questioning effectively enough to challenge more able pupils. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, and some pupils benefit from well-focused feedback. Others require more precise guidance about how to improve.

The curriculum in reading and mathematics is satisfactory. However, there are insufficient opportunities for more able pupils to develop advanced reading skills, such as drawing inference from text, and to explore problem-solving in mathematics. Teachers work closely in year group teams to plan lessons. This helps to ensure consistency across classes but can also adversely affect pupils' learning when year group leaders do not check the detail carefully. For example, planning for Year 2 science lessons about the development of people from birth to old age contained activities that focused more on consolidating pupils' skills in literacy than on developing expertise in science. Provision for pupils' personal development is an established strength, reflected in pupils' positive attitudes, relationships and behaviour.

The good provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils permeates all aspects of school life. The needs of individuals are well known, and pupils feel valued members of the school 'family'. There are very clear, well-established, arrangements for induction of pupils into school and strong links with the local junior school enable pupils' smooth transition to the next phase of their education.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

This is a welcoming and inclusive school in which discrimination has no place and which gives pupils a clear sense of belonging. The impact of leadership on pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The extent to which leadership embeds ambition and drives improvement stems largely from the vision of the headteacher. The governing body satisfactorily holds the school to account. It is supportive, but some elements of the challenge required could be sharper. For example, the governing body is too reliant on the headteacher to inform its monitoring and members lack sufficient skills in analysing data about the school's performance. Some senior leaders also lack skills in monitoring and evaluating the performance of their pupils. This is largely because of inexperience. Pupils' progress is

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closely monitored by staff, for example in regular year group meetings, and suitable actions are put in place to close the gap where pupils are found to be falling behind. A number of good partnerships help provide specialist support for pupils with severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Close links with the Children’s Centre enable the smooth induction of children into the Nursery.

Almost all of the parents and carers who returned the inspection questionnaires felt that the school is good at looking after their children. The headteacher is rigorous in ensuring that staff keep the premises secure and that day-to-day procedures to ensure the safety of pupils are followed closely. A strong focus is placed on health and safety. All of the required safeguarding documentation is in place, although the inspection uncovered minor weaknesses in some of the paperwork which have now been addressed. The school's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. The school knows its own community very well and is working to help broaden pupils' horizons.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage enjoy school and each other's company. Smiles and laughter are everywhere as children discover that learning is fun. From starting points that are in line with what is expected for three year-olds, children make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. Consequently, the large majority attain the expected learning goals and many exceed them by the time they move into Year 1. Children make good progress in developing personal and social skills and in their ability to communicate effectively. They quickly adapt to routines, share resources amicably, respect others and behave well. Adults have a good understanding of how young children learn and provide clear guidance to help accelerate their progress. All areas of learning are covered well and there is a good balance between opportunities for children to learn



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through play and direct teaching, both indoors and out. Leadership and management are good, and effective action has been taken to improve provision since the last inspection. Teamwork among staff is a strong feature in this area of the school.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
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

The number of questionnaires returned is fewer than is normally found for a school of this size. The large majority of parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive in their views about most aspects of the school, but one in eight of those responding showed some concerns about the progress made by children, the extent to which the school listens to the views of parents and carers, and the leadership and management of the school. Inspection findings are that both pupils' progress and school leadership need further improvement. There was no evidence available to support or refute the views related to communication between the school and parents and carers.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rothwell Victoria Infant 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 58 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 329 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	74	12	21	3	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	36	62	21	36	1	2	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	22	38	31	53	5	9	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	28	48	21	36	7	12	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	32	55	23	40	2	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	45	27	47	5	9	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	47	30	52	1	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)	35	60	18	31	3	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	31	53	22	38	4	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	38	28	48	4	7	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	41	25	43	5	9	2	3
The school is led and managed effectively	20	34	31	53	5	9	2	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	52	27	47	1	2	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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



16 February 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Rothwell Victoria Infant School, Kettering, NN14 6HZ**

I would like to thank all of you for being so welcoming and helpful when my team of inspectors visited your school. We found that your school provides you with a satisfactory education. This means that there are a lot of things that the school is doing right and some things that need to be better. All the adults who help to run your school want it to improve. For this to happen, you need to make better progress in your work.

Here are some of the things that are best about your school.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress.

You say that you feel safe because the adults in school take good care of you.

You behave well and get on well with each other.

You know a lot about how to keep healthy.

You do a lot to help in school and to help other people.

Here are the things that need to be done to improve your school.

I would like your teachers to try to help you make better progress by planning more difficult work for you and by using questions that really make you think hard. I am sure that you are ready for these challenges!

I have asked your headteacher to help your school governors and your senior teachers to become more expert in checking on how well you are getting on in your work. To do this, your headteacher needs to give them more information about your progress.

I would like you to play your part in helping the school to become even better. The best way for you to do this is by continuing to try really hard in lessons.

I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mike Thompson

Lead inspector

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