

Rowanfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115591
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	357784
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Sharona Semlali

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	280
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rosemary Rowland
Headteacher	Claire Morrison & Shirley Clarke
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 13 lessons and observed 13 teachers. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a range of documentation including looking at the school development plan, policies as well as data about pupils' progress and attainment, together with other policies and information. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors met with leaders, pupils, parents and carers, staff and representatives from the governing body. In total, they looked at 45 questionnaires from parents and carers and 110 from pupils.

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

- The effectiveness of the steps taken to close the attainment gap between the boys and girls and between those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and others, particularly in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and for higher-attaining pupils, especially in mathematics.
- The extent to which the school develops pupils' understanding and knowledge of a wide range of faiths, contrasting communities and cultures that are different to theirs locally and within the United Kingdom.
- The impact of being a 'National Support School'.

Information about the school

Rowanfield Junior is larger than average. Since 2010, it became part of a two-year management partnership with Arthur Dye Primary School. Since January 2010, the deputy headteacher at Rowanfield Junior School and the consultant headteacher became the co-headteachers to facilitate leadership across both schools.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is slightly higher than the national average. This is also the case for the percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement, is high and has risen considerably since the last inspection, so that close to a third of all pupils fall into this grouping.

The school has the following awards: Healthy School Plus; International Schools; National College of School Leadership (NCSL); Eco-School Bronze; Activemark; FA Football Association Charter Standard for Schools; and FMSIS Financial Management Standards in School.

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

Rowanfield Junior School is an outstanding school. The very impressive leadership by the coheadteachers, governing body and leadership team provides a clear innovative vision for the pursuit of excellence. The school, successfully, fulfils its goal of the '4 Ds' to 'dazzle', 'dream', show 'duty' and always demonstrate 'drive'. This vision underpins the work of the whole school and inspires staff and pupils. As one pupil said, 'The 4 Ds helps us to know where we are and what we need to do next. I'm aiming for my dream now.' As a result, the school, very successfully, prepares pupils to become fully responsible citizens who are extremely proud and excited about their school.

Behaviour is exemplary. Pupils are extremely tolerant and supportive of each other. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They show respect and are highly interested in different faiths and cultures. They make an outstanding contribution to the community. Pupils enjoy school thoroughly and work exceptionally well to adopt healthy lifestyles.

The school's concerted efforts enable all pupils to make at least good progress in their learning. The school does this through providing consistently good teaching, outstanding care, guidance and support, and an excellent and dynamic curriculum. As a result, these features provide a rich range of relevant learning experiences that meet the diverse needs of all pupils extremely well.

Leaders track pupils' progress rigorously and ensure that it accelerates continuously as the pupils move through the school. They recognise that some lessons are outstanding, enabling pupils sometimes to make exceptional progress. Leaders are ambitious to make the quality of teaching and learning outstanding overall in the future. Teachers have established excellent relationships with the pupils, who all respond well to teachers' high expectations and challenge. All pupils, also, work successfully independently, but, very occasionally, a few pupils are not engaged actively enough in their learning or given sufficient time to discuss and extend their learning to best possible effect. As a result, they are not able to explain consistently what the next steps for their improvement will be.

The school's outstanding safeguarding procedures, which are monitored rigorously by the governing body, result in pupils feeling extremely safe and confident. The school has established excellent partnerships with a range of professional groups that contribute towards supporting families who find themselves in challenging circumstances. Also, the school takes the leading role with other local schools in sharing good practice that contributes to the pupils' good achievement.

The school's accurate self-evaluation is systematic, robust and rigorous, based on its own analysis of pupil and staff performance undertaken at all levels of the school community, including the excellent work of the governing body. Taking into consideration the

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significant improvements since the last inspection in the overall effectiveness of the school, a vision that drives improvement in the school continuously, an outstanding curriculum, highly effective leaders and a highly cohesive school community, the school has outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that best practice seen in outstanding lessons is embedded across the school by:
 - ensuring that all pupils have regular opportunities to talk about their learning and identify exactly what they need to do to improve
 - making sure that pupils are always engaged actively enough in their learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

1

A noticeable feature of learning in all lessons was the mature ways that pupils worked independently. Pupils' consistently thoughtful behaviour towards each other and ability to self-regulate are outstanding factors in their successful learning. For example, in one mathematics lesson, pupils had to work very closely with others to find a matching sum that made the same answer as theirs. In this lesson, pupils demonstrated immense self-control, good collaboration skills and listened attentively to each other. As a result, they gained a good understanding about what the 'equals' symbol means.

Pupils, throughout the school, have a very positive attitude for learning. They maintain good levels of concentration and show that they are ready and willing to learn. Such positive attributes contribute to their good progress and achievement. High levels of interventions, such as the use of experienced support and volunteers to boost reading and spelling, have enabled pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress in their basic skills.

All pupils are making good and sometimes outstanding progress from their starting points, in all subjects, including mathematics, and reach expected levels in their work when they leave. This includes the most able, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, boys, and those at school action on the school's register of special educational needs.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

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	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	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	1

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?

Teachers create a learning environment in which pupils are motivated, challenged and are eager to learn. Good use of resources such as the interactive whiteboard and teaching assistants help to support the pupils to gain good knowledge and a better understanding of the subjects taught and helps pupils to clarify any lack of understanding or misconceptions in their learning. For example, a teacher used actual examples of sounds on the interactive whiteboard so that pupils could understand fully the meaning of 'onomatopoeia'. All teachers use the success criteria effectively in order to support pupils reaching the 'tbat' (to be able to). The success criteria help pupils to assess whether they have reached their targets. Teachers' good use of challenging and thought-provoking questions enables all groups of pupils with abilities to make good progress. Occasionally, teachers talk for too long and pupils are not actively engaged in their learning as a result; they do not always have enough time to discuss how they are going to make improvements.

Some teaching is outstanding. One of the striking features in such lessons is where teachers asked pupils to use the 4Ds target (duty, drive, dazzle and dream) to assess where they are currently and to say what steps are needed to get to the next level, with a partner. Excellent use of time prompts enable pupils to produce high volumes of work, persevere and concentrate.

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Care, guidance and support are embedded deeply at all levels in the school. The school's highly effective work with families, in partnership with a wide range of agencies, support and sustain the learning development of individual pupils. The school provides a very safe and welcoming learning environment enabling all pupils, whatever their backgrounds or difficulties, to benefit tremendously from all that the school has to offer.

The curriculum is planned exceptionally well to make learning extremely meaningful and highly relevant to pupils by making very useful links between subjects. There is a strong emphasis on promoting pupils' understanding of key skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Older pupils benefit from visits to the Eden Camp in York and to the Forest of Dean. Pupils' interests are consulted regularly through questionnaires. The results are planned into their learning experiences. Carefully customised and personalised learning programmes are provided for individual pupils according to identified need, particularly in English, mathematics and for those needing extra social and emotional support. These, successfully, help close the gaps in their learning, including their personal and social development, leading to outstanding outcomes. There is a high take-up of clubs. The take-up has helped the school achieve awards that reflect pupils' very healthy lifestyles.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
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?

A major factor to the school's success since the last inspection is the relentless drive, determination and passion to pursue excellence. The promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is at the heart of all its work. Therefore, the gaps in the outcomes between the different pupil groups are rapidly reducing. Commitment to community cohesion is excellent. Extensive evaluations are made of the school's religious, ethnic and socioeconomic contexts. Strong local, international and national links with other organisations help the pupils to have a very good understanding of a community. One of the ways in which the school has benefited from its high commitment to working in partnerships with other schools and organisations is from sharing staff expertise and knowledge. This has very successfully improved provision contributing to better pupil outcomes. As a result of the school's excellent leadership work, it has become a 'National Support School' and is part of the National College of School Leadership. Therefore, future trainee headteachers have placements at the school to learn from the excellent leadership model provided.

The school's excellent high-quality safeguarding procedures meet the legal requirements fully and have created a learning environment where pupils feel extremely safe in its care. The school is a leader of high-quality practice for other schools. The governing body,

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regularly and rigorously, monitors all areas of the school's safeguarding procedures. The governing body makes an exceptional contribution to the work and direction of the school and holds the senior leaders to account rigorously, particularly in relation to the outcomes for pupils.

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	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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

Views of parents and carers

The response from the parents and carers was a little lower than average, but those who responded were highly satisfied and supportive of the school. There were a few that were concerned about the school having to share the leadership with another primary school, but the inspection found that the school had many benefits from this arrangement. A few feel that their concerns and suggestions are not taken sufficient account of. The inspection team found that Rowanfield Junior School gained many benefits from having a shared leadership with Arthur Dye Primary School, especially through enrichment activities such as the interschool sports events and shared international school council events. Inspectors also found that leaders are always willing to listen to parents' and carers' concerns or suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rowanfield Junior 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 45 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 280 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	20	44	22	49	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	22	49	19	42	3	7	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	42	23	51	1	2	1	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	42	23	51	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	20	44	23	51	0	0	1	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	31	28	62	0	0	1	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	17	38	24	53	3	7	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)	16	36	26	58	0	0	1	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	13	29	29	64	1	2	1	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	42	20	44	4	9	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	9	20	27	60	5	11	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	13	29	25	56	4	9	1	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	20	44	22	49	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 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 2010/11 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.



12 May 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rowanfield Junior School, Cheltenham GL51 8HY

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school recently. You were very polite, happy and friendly. You enjoyed talking about your school as you are very proud of it. Therefore, I would like to share the findings with you.

We found that you go to an outstanding school. These are some of the many things we liked:

- Your behaviour is exemplary.
- You are very proud of your school and you like it very much.
- You try very hard and this helps you to learn new things well.
- You understand and use the school's vision of the 4Ds (dazzle, dream, drive and duty) to help you to improve your learning.
- You feel extremely safe in the school and have an outstanding understanding about how to be healthy.
- You take your responsibilities very seriously by visiting the elderly people in your area and you sponsor a boy in Zambia so that he can also go to school.
- Teachers work hard to provide good lessons for you. They care for you in an outstanding way and provide you with many interesting things to do.
- All of the adults are constantly working very hard to improve your school.

To help you to 'dazzle' and improve further, we have asked the school to make sure that there are more outstanding lessons. In particular, so that you always have time to talk about your learning; be more active in lessons; and are helped to identify what you need to do make improvements.

All of you can help by continuing to work hard and by thinking about how you can help yourself to achieve your dreams. Keep up your good attendance. Best wishes to all of you.

Yours sincerely

Sharona Semlali

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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