

Robert Le Kyng Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126281
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	381205
Inspection dates	20–21 September 2011
Reporting inspector	Rob Crompton

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	410
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Stephen May (Acting Chair)
Headteacher	Maran White
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2009
School address	Westcott Street Swindon Wiltshire SN1 5HS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 36 lessons and observed 16 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body and staff and talked with pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, policies, assessment and tracking systems, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors examined questionnaires from 205 parents and carers, as well as those from 51 staff and a representative sample of pupils.

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

- The school's effectiveness in addressing inconsistencies in pupils' progress and attainment in reading and mathematics.
- The extent to which the school promotes equal opportunities to help ensure all groups of pupils achieve well.
- The accuracy of the school's judgement that it provides outstanding care, guidance and support.

Information about the school

This large school serves an urban area close to the centre of Swindon. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Most of these pupils have learning difficulties and some have social, emotional or behavioural problems. The school has a special resource unit to support pupils with multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including cerebral palsy and spastic diplegia. More than a quarter of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and about one in five of this group are learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils who join or leave the school during each academic year is higher than average. The school has Healthy School Status. A privately-run children's centre and nursery share the school site and are subject to a separate 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

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds and with a variety of individual needs thoroughly enjoy learning in this good school. Many parents and carers paid tribute to the outstanding care, guidance and support their children receive. One wrote: 'I am delighted with this school. Every effort is made to make learning fun and enjoyable.' Another commented: 'This is a wonderful community of children who are aware and respectful of the needs of others.' Respect for the needs of others is indeed a strength of the school. Pupils strongly support their classmates who have profound physical difficulties, for example. They successfully encourage them to take as full a part as possible in lessons, including dance and drama, and are quick to defend the right of everyone to be included. These positive attitudes and strong sense of fairness are central features of pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Pupils achieve well due to good teaching, underpinned by a curriculum which engages and motivates them. A drive to raise pupils' attainment in writing has borne fruit, with the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels being above the national average for the first time this year. A dip in attainment in reading is being addressed successfully and previously reluctant readers are becoming far more enthusiastic. Increasing the rate of pupils' progress in mathematics, rightly, remains a school priority. Some pupils, including many of those who join the school at different times during the school year, lack a grounding in basic number skills. Others, whose basic skills are more secure, lack confidence in applying them when solving mathematical problems.

There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils, and a calm, harmonious and purposeful atmosphere pervades the school. The very large majority of lessons run smoothly enabling all groups of pupils to make good progress. Teachers generally use the well-established assessment systems to pinpoint where pupils are and to set them work with an appropriate level of challenge. They are ably supported in this by a team of highly skilled teaching assistants. Occasionally, teachers set tasks which are not pitched at the right level. This means that pupils, whose behaviour is generally very good, sometimes lose concentration and their learning suffers. Pupils usually work very well when they are set individual, paired or group tasks but, at times, teachers spend too long introducing lessons, leaving too little time for independent work.

The headteacher plays a pivotal role in driving improvement and has the confidence

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of pupils, parents and carers, staff and the governing body. The senior leadership team carefully monitors the school's work through an in-depth analysis of pupils' performance. This precise evaluation provides a clear picture of strengths and areas for development, which means that leaders can intervene swiftly when anomalies in pupils' progress emerge. Such insights, together with the school's track record, indicate a good capacity to sustain improvement. The school has developed outstanding partnerships with support agencies, local businesses and schools. These are mutually beneficial. They help to provide additional expertise, resources and experiences for pupils. In turn, staff share their expertise, particularly in regard to enabling all pupils to take a full part in school life.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress in mathematics by:
 - ensuring pupils are well grounded in basic numeracy
 - increasing pupils' confidence in applying numeracy skills when tackling mathematical problems
 - implementing the planned support for individuals and groups.
- Improve the quality of learning by sharing the successful practice evident in most lessons in relation to:
 - ensuring a good balance of introductions to lessons and time for pupils' independent work
 - ensuring the tasks set are suitably challenging for all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils greatly enjoy school and achieve well in their academic work and in their personal development. They display good attitudes in class, where they are attentive, cooperative, interested and keen to do well.

On starting school in Reception, children's social and language skills are below those typical of the age group, yet by the time they leave Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. Staff work hard to address any gaps in pupils' learning and to make sure they make good progress. This was confirmed during the inspection in the lessons observed and in pupils' books. During a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils quickly learned how to check division sums by using the inverse operation. One succinctly explained this process: 'If you times the answer by what you divided by, it should make what you started with.' Some pupils are less confident in numeracy, however. Several pupils in Year 6, for example, were unsure of basic number bonds to make 10, such as $7+3$, $2+8$ and so on. Where pupils' basic skills, such as doubling numbers, are more secure, they often lack confidence in identifying where these can be helpful in making estimates, such as double 158 is near 300, when tackling mathematics problems.

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Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points. They enjoy working on letters and sounds in small groups. Across the school, pupils are developing increasingly positive attitudes to reading. Previously reluctant readers are responding extremely well to the sensitive encouragement of the teacher with special responsibility for nurturing their enthusiasm. Pupils’ skills in writing are moving on apace. Year 5 pupils made excellent progress as they considered how to ensure their writing engaged the reader. They showed considerable flair when prompted to use stimuli and personification to describe Pandora’s dilemma when tempted to open the box. One wrote, for example: ‘It was extremely annoying...My hand had a mind of its own and it was sprinting towards the box.’

Pupils say they feel safe in school; they have a good understanding of what constitutes healthy living and participate widely in physical activities, reflecting the school’s Healthy School Status. They have a strong sense of responsibility. This is illustrated by the sensitivity with which pupils help those who are physically disabled, for example. They are not overprotective, however, understanding that this might constrain independence. For their part, pupils under the wing of the special resource unit play a full part in school life, including membership of the school council. Pupils’ cultural development is enhanced through art, music, drama and visits. Working and playing alongside pupils from a wide range of backgrounds provides first-hand experience of cultural diversity. Most pupils attend well, but figures are slightly depressed by parents and carers taking their holidays in term time and a small number of pupils with long-term serious illnesses.

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	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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	3
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

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How effective is the provision?

Admirable relationships create an environment in which pupils are very well motivated to learn. Prompts for learning abound in classrooms and pupils regularly review their own progress, often using criteria they have helped to devise at the beginning of a topic. Staff keep a close eye on pupils' progress and use their assessment information to provide work at an appropriate level of challenge for the large majority of pupils. Occasionally, however, the more able pupils go over old ground before moving swiftly on to more challenging work and, conversely, less confident pupils sometimes find the work too difficult. Almost all lessons proceed at a brisk pace with a good variety of approaches that keep pupils engaged. Teachers use questions well to draw out pupils' existing understanding before moving on; they give time for pupils to consider their responses and avoid 'spoon-feeding'. Occasionally, teachers spend too long on whole-class introductions. This limits the time available for independent work and for teaching assistants to support individuals and groups. Well-qualified and experienced support staff make a significant contribution in most lessons. They work skilfully with individuals and small groups. When supporting a child with cerebral palsy, for example, a learning support assistant was able to communicate with her because she knew every nuance of the child's movement and facial expression. This is typical of the first-rate provision for pupils based in the special resource unit.

A flexible approach to curriculum planning helps to sustain pupils' interest and engagement. At the end of each year, staff consult pupils to gauge their response to previous topics and review their skills before planning subsequent work. Staff and pupils based in the special resource unit are fully involved in this process. Pupils pointed out that teachers take account of their preferred learning styles as, 'some of us prefer practical work and some like learning from books'.

Well-established partnerships with local companies and other schools help to extend pupils' experiences and an extensive programme of visitors and educational trips contributes to their academic and personal development. Recently these have included performances by theatre companies and a military band. Pupils were keen to explain how much they enjoy such activities and the wide range of sporting activities on offer. Pupils have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their computer skills, particularly in their independent research. Reading and writing are also promoted well across the curriculum. The 'Rebel Readers' project that encourages reluctant readers to engage with books is exemplary. Plans are in hand to set up small tuition groups for numeracy, similar to those that are well established for literacy. However, there is not always sufficient emphasis on helping pupils to reinforce and extend their basic numeracy skills outside mathematics lessons.

Transition arrangements for new entrants, at whatever stage they join the school, are well established. The school ensures the needs of all groups of learners are identified as early as possible in order to ensure appropriate support is available as

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they start. The school has a justifiable reputation for its work with families in difficult circumstances and for its support for pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable. Pupils with severe physical difficulties are cared for extremely well and are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. A senior member of staff inspires, motivates and raises the aspirations of learners. A well-run breakfast club provides a warm and secure environment for those attending.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers at all levels provide the school with a strong and effective focus on continuous improvement. The headteacher and senior managers successfully embed ambition and monitor the quality of the school's work. Improvement on several fronts since the last inspection is due to the determination and efforts of leaders, the governing body and staff.

Members of the governing body understand clearly where the school's strong features lie. They monitor the school's work well, keeping a close eye on fluctuations in pupils' performance. They challenge and probe thoroughly when allocating resources, although their evaluation of the impact of these is less systematic. Equality of opportunity is at the heart of the school's work and helps all groups of pupils to achieve well. There is no evidence of discrimination. On the contrary, all pupils are treated as individuals and their different needs are carefully and accurately identified. The governing body pays close attention to safeguarding. It regularly monitors the security of the site and ensures that policies, such as risk assessments for outside visits, and safe recruitment, are implemented effectively.

Highly effective partnerships, such as those with the neighbouring children's centre and other schools, considerably enhance the school's provision. Partnerships with a wide range of outside bodies, such as a local secondary school, enable the school to provide many stimulating and enjoyable experiences for pupils. Members of staff make a significant contribution to supporting other institutions, such as the outreach work undertaken by the leader of the special resource unit, a Year 2 teacher and a teacher with a responsibility for pupil support.

The school promotes community cohesion well. Its influence stretches into the local community through support for parents and carers. The school's inclusive ethos promotes a strong sense of belonging where pupils from different ethnic groups

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share a sense of common purpose.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
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	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	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	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enjoy school and soon settle in due to the warm relationships adults establish with them. Good teaching channels their enthusiasm and they make good progress in learning so that levels of attainment in all areas for their learning are broadly average as children move into Year 1. From the start, a strong emphasis on personal development helps children to develop an eagerness to learn. This was evident from how settled and inquisitive children were within a few days of starting school.

Well-organised transition arrangements mean that staff soon get to know the children well and adapt their expectations accordingly. They use praise frequently and appropriately. Children get to know one another quickly and respond well to opportunities to play together. This was evident in the classroom ‘pet shop’ where they took turns in serving and using the till. ‘I think this dog collar will fit,’ said one. ‘That’s 15 pounds!’ demanded her playmate. There is a strong focus on linking sounds and letters. For example, in the outdoor area children were searching for hidden letters and pegging them on a washing line while saying words that began with the letter sound.

The skilled leader has established a strong team and provides a good role model for colleagues. Classroom resources are appealing and immediately accessible to children when pursuing activities led by adults and when choosing for themselves. Outdoors, the range of resources is more limited and the activities do not always provide enough focus or challenge. The highest attention is given to children’s

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health, safety and well-being. Added to this, relationships are excellent and staff are developing very good relationships with parents and carers, making certain that those new to the school are reassured that their children are settled and happy.

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

The proportion of questionnaires returned was above the national average. The overwhelming majority of parents and carers were extremely positive in their views of the school. Almost all parents and carers were happy overall with their children’s experience at the school. They were unanimous in their opinion that their children are kept safe. There was no pattern to the other issues raised by very few of the parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robert Le Kyng 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 205 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 410 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	123	60	78	38	2	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	128	62	73	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	97	47	96	47	8	4	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	94	46	98	48	10	5	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	105	51	93	45	3	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	92	45	103	50	5	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	102	50	100	49	1	0	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)	91	44	90	44	3	1	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	89	43	99	48	5	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	91	44	97	47	6	3	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	71	35	111	54	8	4	1	0
The school is led and managed effectively	104	51	90	44	2	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	120	59	82	40	1	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 08 April 2011 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.



23 September 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Le Kyng Primary School, Swindon, SN1 5HS

Thank you for making us so welcome during our recent visit. You were very helpful and keen to tell us how much you enjoy being at Robert Le Kyng Primary School. You go to a good school where each one of you is cared for extremely well. You rise to the challenges given, and make good progress throughout the school.

Your behaviour is really good and we were impressed by the way adults and children get on together. You are polite and helpful and show a great deal of respect for one another and the adults who work with you. You told us how your teachers are always looking for ways to make lessons interesting and fun. We saw this for ourselves during almost all the lessons we observed. Occasionally, you spend a bit too long listening to lesson introductions when you are raring to get on with some independent work, so we have suggested that there is a good balance of activities in all your lessons. It was good to see how many of you have been switched on to reading and how well your writing is coming on. We noticed, however, that some of you are not always sure of basic number facts like number bonds or of skills such as doubling and rounding up. Also, you do not always see how these skills can help you solve word problems. Your teachers have some good ideas to help you do this. You can help by practising using numbers as often as you can.

What a lot of extra activities you have! It was great to see how much all of you in Year 6 were enjoying your first session of street dance. The way those of you in wheelchairs joined in is typical of your determination to get the most out of school life, and also showed how keen your classmates were for you to take part with them.

One of the main reasons why your school has continued to improve since it was last inspected is that all the adults work well together. We are confident that with the positive attitudes you have to your work, you will try your hardest to help the school go from strength to strength.

Yours sincerely

Rob Crompton
Lead inspector

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