

Ratby Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119946
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379916
Inspection dates	27–28 October 2011
Reporting inspector	Ann Ashdown

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	296
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kathryn Lupton
Headteacher	Lisa Aitken
Date of previous school inspection	3 March 2009
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed teaching and learning in 17 lessons led by 13 different teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' books, pupils' progress data, safeguarding information and other documentation. They analysed 90 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from pupils and staff.

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

- Are all pupils making the progress of which they are capable, particularly at Key Stage 2 and in mathematics?
- How effective are the school's strategies to improve teaching, learning and assessment?
- Are pupils' personal development and the quality of care, guidance and support they receive strengths of the school?

Information about the school

The school is above average in size. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic groups and equally few speak English as an additional language. A below-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average but the proportion with a statement of educational needs is above average. The school has gained Healthy School status.

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

This is a satisfactory and improving school. It has significant strengths in the good quality of care, guidance and support it provides, which contributes well to pupils' good personal development. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They attend regularly, feel safe, behave well and treat each other, staff and visitors with kindness and respect. All pupils, including those with a statement of special educational needs, are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They are keen to contribute to their own and the local community and speak proudly of their work on the school council and the eco-committee. The good partnerships the school forges with parents and carers, other schools and outside agencies all help to enrich the curriculum and support pupils' learning.

Children get a good start to their education in the Reception classes, and their good progress continues throughout Key Stage 1. For the last two years, pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 has slowed. Attainment is average but targets have not been met. Through their accurate self-evaluation, the headteacher and members of the governing body have a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have rightly identified the need to eradicate underachievement, raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress at Key Stage 2. The reorganisation of teaching groups, improvements in tracking pupils' progress, better use of assessment data and improved teaching in mathematics are all contributing to the satisfactory and accelerating progress that older pupils are now making. Newly appointed middle leaders and managers are beginning to make a significant contribution to raising pupils' attainment, although their role in monitoring the work of the school is not yet fully developed. Many school improvements are recent and their full impact has yet to be felt, but pupils' progress is beginning to accelerate and their achievement is satisfactory. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve further.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, the pace is brisk and teachers set challenging work which is well matched to the differing needs and abilities of the pupils. However, this good practice is not yet fully shared across the school. In less successful lessons the pace of learning slows because expectations are not high enough and pupils have insufficient opportunities to work independently and find things out for themselves.

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

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and accelerate pupils' progress at Key Stage 2 by:
 - building on and sharing existing good practice to ensure consistently high levels of challenge and pace in all lessons
 - giving pupils more opportunities to write at length across all curriculum areas.

- By December 2012, improve the quality of teaching and learning so that 85% of lessons are good or better, by:
 - ensuring work is closely matched to the differing needs of pupils of all abilities
 - allowing pupils more time to learn independently, solve problems and find solutions for themselves.

- Further develop the roles of middle managers by increasing their involvement in monitoring the work of the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In lessons pupils were seen to be making at least satisfactory progress, and in some lessons progress was good. In a particularly successful English lesson pupils enjoyed writing good quality and very creative descriptions of 'Spooksville' in the run-up to Halloween. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational needs, make the same progress as their peers because they receive timely and sharply focused help and intervention in their learning from teachers and teaching assistants.

Although there are variations from year to year, children enter the Reception classes with skills broadly in line with those expected for their age. From their various starting points they make good progress in the Reception class and in Key Stage 1. Results of tests and assessments at the end of Year 6 in 2010 and 2011 indicate that pupils' progress slowed markedly at Key Stage 2. However, the school is now successfully addressing this weakness and work seen in lessons, displayed on classroom walls and contained in pupils' books indicates that progress is beginning to accelerate and is now satisfactory.

Pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and lead a healthy lifestyle. They feel that they are listened to, and that their opinions matter. They have a well-developed awareness of spiritual and moral issues and a growing understanding of different cultures. Pupils take responsibility willingly and most work well together in pairs and teams. These qualities, combined with satisfactory basic skills, mean that pupils have a sound preparation for the next stage of their education and future life.

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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	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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

In the faster-paced and more challenging lessons, teachers use a range of interesting resources to engage the interest of the pupils and give them opportunities to learn independently and find out things for themselves. Pupils in a Year 1 numeracy lesson really enjoyed learning when their work was made very relevant because they were ‘helping the builder’ to measure the new classroom for a carpet. In some lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2, the pace of learning is slower when teachers talk for too long and work is not as well matched to pupils’ individual needs and abilities. Work is marked regularly. There are examples of high quality assessment and feedback to pupils but, like the best practice in teaching, these are not yet shared and consistent across the school.

The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet pupils’ needs satisfactorily. A range of visits and visitors to the school enhance pupils’ enjoyment of learning. Pupils enjoy some after-school activities but say they would like more, particularly those involving sport and science. The school has begun to link together different subjects but pupils have too few opportunities to practise their basic writing skills across all areas of the curriculum.

Parents and carers and pupils are very appreciative of the good care, guidance and support the school provides. Pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable and those with a statement of special educational needs get timely and sensitive help, supported by good links with a range of specialist outside agencies who provide

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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expert help when this is needed. Good transition arrangements ensure that younger children settle quickly into the Reception class and older ones move smoothly to the next stage of their education.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has been instrumental in bringing about school improvement. Her clear vision for the school has been successfully communicated to all staff. Rigorous systems for using assessment data to monitor pupils' progress have been introduced, and regular lesson observations are followed up with constructive help to enable staff to improve their teaching. The full impact of these improvements has yet to be seen, as the roles of newly appointed middle leaders are still developing. Governance is satisfactory. The members of the governing body are very supportive of the school and recognise its strengths. Their role in monitoring the school's work is developing and they are becoming increasingly involved in determining its strategic direction. Safeguarding procedures are robust. Staff are well trained and fully aware of risk assessment and child protection issues. This is a very inclusive school. All pupils are given good equal opportunities to succeed and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Links within the local community are good, but those with communities further afield are in the earlier stages of development.

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	2
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

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

The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Teaching is consistently effective, enabling children to make good progress from their individual starting points in all areas of learning. Staff set high standards in modelling what children are expected to learn, and provide a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated activities. Children were seen making good progress in their learning as they created their own stories using familiar characters. One child’s story was particularly creative when she decided that Jack and Jill had met Baa Baa Blacksheep and they all got married and went on holiday to Scarborough. Behaviour is consistently good because all of the staff instil a strong sense of what is right and wrong from a very early age. The children are confident when speaking to adults and cooperate extremely effectively with one another. They are taught how to stay safe and healthy, and have high standards of personal hygiene. All children were expertly supported by constant reinforcement and feedback from the staff. Outdoor provision is used effectively to support learning. The leader has a strong sense of purpose and a vision that is well communicated to all staff. The results of comprehensive assessments are analysed well to ensure that all staff and children know what the next steps are in learning. These are also conveyed effectively to parents and carers through the children’s learning journals.

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

Most of the parents and carers who returned questionnaires are entirely happy with the education the school provides. They particularly appreciate the way in which the school keeps their children safe, encourages them to stay healthy and enables them to enjoy learning. Inspection evidence entirely supports these views. A few parents and carers felt that the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. Inspectors found behaviour to be good and any incidents of challenging behaviour to be well managed by staff.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ratby 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 90 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 296 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	57	39	43	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	63	31	34	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	39	43	47	52	4	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	40	44	42	47	7	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	43	48	40	44	6	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	41	46	44	49	3	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	42	50	56	2	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)	37	41	43	48	3	3	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	39	43	40	44	7	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	33	37	45	50	7	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	34	51	57	5	6	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	38	42	46	51	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	48	53	36	40	3	3	2	2

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 8 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.



31 October 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ratby Primary School, Ratby, LE6 0LN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we inspected your school. A particular thank you to those of you who were keen to talk with us and told us about the things you enjoyed doing at school.

This is what we have said about your school in our report.

- Yours is a satisfactory and improving school where you are given good care, guidance and support.
- Your achievement is satisfactory because you make satisfactory progress and your attainment is average.
- You behave well, attend school regularly and have a good understanding of how to stay healthy.
- The way your school is led and managed, the curriculum you follow and the quality of teaching and learning are all satisfactory.

This is what we have asked your school to do to make it even better.

- Help you to make faster progress by:
 - asking teachers to share their best ideas to make sure your work in lessons is briskly paced and challenging
 - giving you more opportunities to practise your writing in all lessons.
- Make your lessons even better by:
 - making sure the work you are given is at exactly the right level for you
 - giving you more opportunities to work on your own.
- We have asked teachers who are in charge of subjects to check more regularly on how well you are doing and on the quality of the lessons you receive.

All of you can help your school to improve by continuing to attend school regularly, behaving well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Ashdown
Lead inspector

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