

Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116846
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	379313
Inspection dates	2–3 November 2011
Reporting inspector	John Eadie

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	183
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Charles Ralston
Headteacher	Jane Woakes
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They visited 21 lessons or part lessons and observed eight teachers. Inspectors held meetings with leaders and managers, staff, pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body and the governor responsible for safeguarding. They observed the school's work and looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's improvement plan and policies and procedures, particularly those concerning safeguarding. Inspectors analysed the data showing the progress that pupils are making and evidence from the school's own monitoring as well as that of the School Improvement Partner. Questionnaires returned by 81 parents and carers were analysed, as were those completed by 93 pupils in Years 3 to 6 and 13 staff.

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

- The reasons for the apparent decline in attainment in the national assessments for Year 6 over the last three years and whether pupils are therefore still making the good progress that they were at the time of the last inspection.
- Whether there are sufficient levels of challenge for pupils in Years 1 and 2 as data suggests that the proportion gaining the higher levels in the assessments at the end of Year 2 is lower than might be expected.
- Data suggests that boys did not do as well as girls in the Year 6 assessments last year, and it is not clear whether this was an issue with this particular cohort or for boys generally in the school.
- Whether the good progress being made by children in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection as there is limited information to support the school's evaluation on this.

Information about the school

Romsley St Kenelm's is slightly smaller than the average-sized primary school. A very large majority of the pupils are White British and very few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is rising, but is still well below average. The proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. However, there are above-average proportions at the higher levels of need. Most of these have moderate or specific learning difficulties or behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school other than at the usual times is broadly average but has recently included pupils joining in higher year groups due to an increase in the size of the school. The village playgroup is in a separate building on site and shares some of the school's facilities, but this is managed privately and is 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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school which, as the result of strong leadership, has maintained and built on the strengths identified in its previous inspection four years ago. For instance, pupils' attainment by the time they leave, which was above average four years ago, is now high. Levels of attendance are also now high, which reflects the successful work done by the school to make the curriculum more engaging and interesting. Parents and carers have noted changes as well and said such things as, 'Communication between school and home has improved greatly over last few years.'

Pupils' achievement is outstanding, as a result of their high attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6. The school identified that in the national assessments in Year 2, insufficient numbers of pupils were reaching the higher level 3. Successful strategies have been put in place to address this and there are now generally good levels of challenge for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Data show a gentle decline in attainment in the national assessments at the end of Year 6 over the last two years, but this reflects differences in the relatively small cohorts rather than a drop in standards and provision. For example, in some year groups girls are doing better than the boys while in others it is the boys doing better than the girls, depending on their relative abilities.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress, particularly in the development of early literacy skills. Progress through the rest of the school is good, as a result of good teaching. However, while still good, progress in mathematics is not quite as strong as in English. The school has worked hard and successfully to raise standards of writing in particular, and has closed the gap in pupils' attainment between writing and reading. A reason for pupils' slower progress in mathematics is that they sometimes have to sit for too long listening to teachers' explanations when many have already understood and could be getting on with their task. There are also times when the pace of lessons is not sharp enough to ensure that pupils are continually engaged in challenging learning.

Pupils behave well and the school is an orderly and friendly place. All other aspects of pupils' personal development are good. The main reason why these aspects are not outstanding is that pupils are given insufficient independence to take responsibility for their learning and take a lead in promoting aspects of personal development themselves.

There is a very clear shared sense of purpose amongst all staff and governors. For

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instance, on their questionnaires, all staff were extremely confident that they knew what the school is trying to achieve and all felt involved in this. The process of self-evaluation, in which the governing body takes an active role, has built an accurate picture of the school's strengths and areas for development. Bearing this in mind, alongside the progress being made by pupils, the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the progress of pupils still further, especially in mathematics, by ensuring that:
 - all lessons move at sufficient pace so that pupils are working productively throughout
 - pupils spend less time listening and more time engaged in active learning.
- Improve pupils' personal development by giving them more independence and ownership of their learning, and encourage them to take more responsibility for their contribution to the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

At the time of the last inspection, it was noted that children joined the school with levels of skills and knowledge above those expected for their age. However, the school has grown and the area from which pupils come has widened and they now join the school with skills and knowledge generally in line with those expected for their age. Those currently at the top of the school are making good progress to reach high standards from their starting points.

Pupils' learning is typified by engagement and interest. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, where pupils were exploring a problem related to number patterns, there was much effort and endeavour as they tried to spot possible patterns. The final results showed considerable sophistication. Similarly, in a lesson where pupils were comparing Tudor theatre with theatre today, they were enthusiastically discussing in small groups the differences and coming up with good ideas. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the careful planning of small steps in learning, well matched to their specific needs, which enable them to progress at the same rate as their classmates. This is particularly the case when they are withdrawn individually or in small groups for extra help.

Pupils feel safe in school and know there is always someone to whom they can turn if they have a problem. However, there is a very small minority of pupils who have concerns over how the behaviour of other pupils might affect them. Inspectors found that incidents are usually dealt with well and pupils are not at risk. However, there are occasionally times when teachers do not take action sufficiently quickly to deal with low level disruptive behaviour within the classroom. Pupils have a very good

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knowledge of healthy lifestyles and engage well in a range of sporting activities, but not all have progressed to carrying this knowledge forward into their personal dietary choices. Pupils carry out a good range of responsibilities and know that their views are taken into account, but they do not take the initiative to put forward their own ideas often enough.

Pupils are keen to know about the world around them, and this has been enhanced by the developments in the curriculum. They welcome new experiences which broaden their understanding, such as engaging enthusiastically in artistic, sporting and cultural opportunities. Pupils engage well with a range of different peoples around the world through the links that the school has established, and have developed significant understanding of global communities.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	1
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	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are generally planned to contain a good range of interesting and engaging activities. Good links are made between subjects, for example, by giving pupils opportunities to practise their literacy skills in subjects such as history. Teachers make good use of a range of resources which retain the interest of pupils. Interactive whiteboards are used well to involve pupils in lessons. Teaching assistants and volunteers play a valuable role, particularly for those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These adults also sometimes work with more-able pupils, giving them opportunities to extend their learning. Teachers use assessment well to identify any potential underachievement and put good

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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strategies in place to prevent pupils from falling behind: the accelerated learning group has been particularly successful in this. Teachers are also good at adapting their day-to-day planning on the basis of the success or otherwise of learning in previous lessons. Although targets are set for the next steps in pupils' learning in writing, these are at present limited in mathematics, so that pupils and sometimes staff are not always fully aware of the next steps each pupil needs to take.

There is a good range of curriculum opportunities, and parents and carers are particularly pleased with the variety of extra-curricular activities in which large numbers of pupils take part. The curriculum is enhanced well by a good breadth of visits and visitors which interest and engage the pupils. The school has recently implemented a more creative approach to the curriculum, but this has not yet been in place for long enough to have had a significant impact on pupils' learning and progress.

The school provides good levels of care, guidance and support for pupils. It is a very caring community where the needs of each individual and their circumstances are well known to all adults. Parents and carers spoke highly of how successfully their children settled into school, including when they joined in classes further up the school. Work with other agencies, for instance health and behaviour support, is effective in supporting pupils' development and well-being. The school has recognised that the monitoring of the effectiveness of some strategies, for example those put in place to support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, has not previously been sufficiently rigorous and is addressing this by gathering and analysing useful data.

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	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides very clear direction for the school and is very well supported by her deputy and all the staff. There is a very clear sense of ambition to maintain the high standards and increase pupils' rates of progress still further. Very careful analysis of the performance of groups has been carried out and used well to improve provision. The governing body supports this drive well and governors visit regularly and therefore have good first-hand knowledge of what is going on in the school. They are fully involved in monitoring the effectiveness of development planning and the relatively new Chair of the Governing Body has put in place a number of initiatives to improve the effectiveness of the governing body even

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further, though these have not yet been in place for long enough to have had a full impact.

Equality of opportunity is high on the school’s agenda, as demonstrated by the work done to ensure that all groups make similar progress. Pupils are prepared well to challenge stereotypical views, particularly those relating to religion and gender. This is linked to the efforts to promote community cohesion. Whereas this is strong within the school and local community, pupils’ knowledge of the range of cultures in the United Kingdom today is less well developed. Good links have been established with communities around the world and in this country, but some of these are in their early stages and have not yet had a full impact on improving pupils’ awareness.

Safeguarding procedures are good. Policies and procedures are in line with recommended good practice and risk assessments take into account the views of parents and staff, though less frequently those of pupils. These are then acted upon to make effective improvements. The school has integrated safety and safeguarding into the curriculum although this is not always explicitly identified in planning.

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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and join Year 1 with above average attainment. This is particularly the case in their attitudes towards their work and in areas of their early literacy development. For example, a nationally used scheme of phonics (learning the sounds that letters make) has been in place for some time and children were seen enthusiastically practising these and several are already using them well to build words.

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The classroom and outside area are planned well and include a good range of stimuli for learning across the areas of learning. For instance, the current topic on 'aliens' has caught the imagination of the children and they were excitedly creating their own aliens in a variety of media. Number work is reinforced well, for example when the children are asked how many are present when the register has been taken. A good aspect of planning is the sheets outlining learning opportunities, which are to be found in all areas, such as the role play and writing corners. These mean that teaching assistants and volunteers can focus the children onto specific learning outcomes.

Good leadership in the Early Years Foundation Stage has been sustained under new leadership. Good practice has been built upon well through the introduction of some new initiatives. Systems of assessment are thorough and, as a result, adults have good knowledge of what children have learnt and understood. However, at present there are limited opportunities for parents and carers to contribute to the assessment of their children's progress by informing staff of their developmental steps outside school.

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

There was an above average return rate for the questionnaire for parents and carers and these were mostly positive. Parents and carers are particularly pleased with the quality of teaching and the way their children are encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle. A number of positive comments were made, such as: 'The parent workshops have been fantastic! Very well presented/delivered and exceptionally helpful.' Another parent commented: 'There is always a warm, happy atmosphere in school. The children are made to feel part of a large family.'

A small but significant minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about the way that unacceptable behaviour is dealt with. Although behaviour is good and very rarely disrupts learning, inspectors found that there are occasions when the staff do not take actions to deal with minor incidents of unacceptable behaviour in lessons sufficiently quickly.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Romsley St Kenelm's CofE 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 183 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	67	24	30	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	51	63	24	30	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	45	56	31	38	3	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	46	57	25	31	7	9	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	57	33	41	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	47	58	31	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	42	52	37	46	1	1	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)	43	53	27	33	2	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	38	47	37	46	4	5	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	25	31	34	42	13	16	3	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	39	48	34	42	3	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	45	56	30	37	5	6	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	51	63	26	32	2	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	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.



4 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Romsley St Kenelm's CofE Primary School, Romsley B62 0LF

Thank you very much for welcoming us so warmly when we visited your school recently. We really enjoyed meeting you and hearing how much you enjoy school. We are not surprised, as you attend a good school.

These are some of the best things we found about your school.

- You are reaching high standards in English and mathematics by the time you leave at the end of Year 6.
- You are making good progress because you are being taught well.
- All adults look after you well and keep you safe. You told us that there is always someone to turn to when you have a problem.
- Rates of attendance have improved and are now high.
- Your headteacher and staff have worked hard to make your lessons more interesting and you told us that you enjoy the topic work.
- Your headteacher, the governors and staff have good ideas to continue to improve your school.

There are two things we have suggested need to be improved.

- In some lessons, you spend too long sitting listening and not enough getting on with your tasks; we have suggested that you need to spend more time working yourselves. There are also occasions when lessons move at too slow a pace.
- There are times when you are not given sufficient responsibility for your own work or actions. We think you could manage this well.

I know you will all help the school to continue to improve by carrying on with your hard work and finding ways in which you can take more responsibilities.

Yours sincerely

John Eadie
Lead inspector

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