

# Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	106876
<b>Local authority</b>	Rotherham
<b>Inspection number</b>	377479
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 November 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Kathryn Gethin HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	156
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Bramall
<b>Headteacher</b>	Carolyn Smyth
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 June 2007
<b>School address</b>	South Street Rawmarsh Rotherham S62 5QW
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. Six teachers were observed in six lessons, including a 'learning walk'. Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff, pupils and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence, including the school's data about achievement and progress, the school improvement plan, curriculum planning, minutes of governing body meetings and questionnaires completed by staff and 24 parents and carers.

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

- How well lessons meet the needs of more-able pupils.
- The teaching and learning of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- How the improved outdoor area has had an impact on the Early Years Foundation Stage.

## Information about the school

Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant School is an average-sized infant school. Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and deputy headteacher have been appointed and there have been several changes within the staff team. The deputy headteacher recently returned to work ahead of schedule following maternity leave. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. A small percentage of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average. A higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The school has a number of awards, including the Healthy Schools status, Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Activemark and the Warwick Enterprise Award.

**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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. All partners agree that the school has been through a period of turbulence when morale was low and pupils' attainment fell. There are good features within its provision that contribute to good personal development, for example, the way the school encourages pupils to have a healthy lifestyle, to feel safe within school and the care, guidance and support given. Older pupils take on responsibilities around school. As a result, they become more confident in learning how to interact and help others. The school makes good use of links with local schools. This enables good practice to be shared and best use made of learning opportunities. The newly created outdoor area for the Early Years Foundation Stage provides a stimulating and creative environment for children to learn. Attendance has improved; so that it is now average.

Starting points for pupils are generally lower than those typical for their age. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is average. However, reading and writing is slightly below the national average by the time they leave for junior school. This represents satisfactory progress over time. Underpinning work to effect improvement has taken place since the appointment of the new headteacher, for example, the newly introduced writing project initiative is beginning to have a positive impact in Year 2, as is the whole-school approach to improve writing across all years.

Teaching is satisfactory in the majority of lessons but is not yet consistent across the school to ensure that all pupils make good progress. More-able pupils are not provided with sufficiently challenging work to fully stretch their abilities. Where teaching is strongest, the range of teaching styles that are used allow pupils to think about how they learn, direct their own activities and work independently or in small groups. Where teaching is less effective, pupils' work is over-directed by the teacher. This leads to a lack of engagement, and a decline in behaviour. Similarly, for those pupils who have gaps in their basic speaking and listening skills opportunities are missed to move learning on in small, manageable steps. There are some good examples in teachers' comments where pupils are given clear advice on how to improve their work and evidence that corrections have been completed. There are inconsistencies in the Early Years Foundation Stage provision, where there are few opportunities for child-initiated activities across all six areas of learning.

The appointment of a new headteacher and subsequent changes within the school has led to staff being strongly motivated. The return of the deputy headteacher

further supports this and brings an added strength to the senior leadership team. The very large majority of staff say they are proud to work at the school and 'feel valued and respected'. This new found enthusiasm provides a strong foundation for the school to move forward and begin to embed good practice. The headteacher and senior management team have an accurate and realistic view on where improvement is needed. As a result, the schools' capacity for sustained improvement is satisfactory.

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

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

- Improve the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good by:
  - increasing the time and opportunities provided for pupils to work independently and in small groups
  - providing consistently high levels of challenge for the more able pupils.
- Improve the overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage by increasing the opportunities for learning through child-initiated activities across all areas of learning.

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

<b>3</b>
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Pupils' academic achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' current work, as well as the results for 2011, show that attainment is average and that the progress that pupils make from their starting points is satisfactory. Pupils enter Year 1 with skills that are in-line with the level expected. Work in lessons and in pupils' books suggests that all groups of pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make satisfactory progress in their learning.

The rate of progress for the more-able pupils slows when lessons do not offer sufficient challenge to stretch them to their full ability. Pupils particularly enjoy activities where they can make their own decisions about how they learn and think of different ways of tackling their work. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on multiplication and division, pupils applied their mathematical skills well by recognising that they could also use addition to achieve the correct answer. Initiatives to improve reading and writing have not been established long enough to result in good progress over time.

Discussions with Year 2 pupils reflected their enjoyment of school with almost all saying school is 'excellent'. They particularly enjoyed the 'always always' club where success is celebrated, and the wide range of after-school clubs. The majority of clubs are over-subscribed. Menus show a good range of healthy food from different cultures and pupils are aware that sweets contain sugar which is bad for their teeth. Healthy snacks are provided at playtime. All say they feel safe in school and are

confident that the 'big black gates keep kidnappers out'. Pupils know that fire practices help them know how to get out of school quickly in the event of a fire. This was demonstrated to good effect when on day two of the inspection the fire alarm sounded leading to an impromptu fire drill.

Pupils consider that behaviour in class is generally good but not as good on the playground. Pupils enjoy taking on responsibilities by listening to younger pupils read and becoming part of the school council. Regular 'dinosaur school' provides the opportunity for pupils to discuss their feelings. Good examples of pupils' responses were observed during a religious assembly, when pupils' gazed in awe as a large 'diamond' appeared at the end of the presentation.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is mainly satisfactory with some that is good. Where teaching is good lessons move at a brisk pace, questioning is used at regular intervals to assess learning. For example, a large dice with questions on each side relating to learning made it a fun way to finish the lesson as children rolled the dice and answered each question in turn. Systems for assessing progress lack a coherent format and have a focus on attainment as opposed to progress. Therefore, planning and differentiation for groups of pupils does not have the sharpness required to ensure good progress is made. Teachers have a positive relationship with pupils and plenary sessions are used well. Skilled teaching assistants make a positive contribution to lessons. They work quietly and effectively and know the pupils well providing invaluable support to small groups and individuals. Where teaching is less effective, teachers talk for too long, work is over-directed and there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge in practical situations. Some of the more-able pupils are not challenged enough. As a result, learning for these pupils is not as effective as it could be and restlessness ensues.

<sup>1</sup>The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs. Information and communication technology (ICT) features well across subjects. The curriculum is extended at the end of the school day. These additional activities are very popular with pupils and add to their learning and enjoyment. A popular activity is the 'little chefs club' where pupils learn about healthy eating. Future plans include the introduction of a breakfast club. Good use is made of skills within the staff team. For example, the silk screens created by pupils demonstrate a good level of creative input and are displayed to good effect in the hall. Visits and visitors provide additional experiences to promote learning.

Highly effective deployment of staff with specific skills ensures those pupils who circumstances make them more vulnerable are very well supported. Staff form close relationships with these pupils and ensure that external support is well coordinated. Close links are in place with the local children's centre to identify vulnerable children prior to entry. This leads to a safe, welcoming environment being provided within school where pupils flourish in the nurturing environment. Effective procedures are in place for the smooth transition from local day care into school and onto junior school. Rigorous monitoring of attendance and close partnership work with parents and carers has had a good impact on attendance figures.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, supported very effectively by staff has worked hard to instil her vision for the school and establish strong foundations for the school to move forward. The headteacher has gradually built capacity in her senior team and the purchase of new equipment for all classes and ICT equipment installed in the hall have all contributed to improving the quality of the teaching and learning environment.

The headteacher has the full support of the governing body; governors know the school well. Members of the governing body are knowledgeable on all aspects of the school and are highly committed to see the school improve further. They are actively involved in the school and recognise the need to provide clear challenge on a regular basis to assist the senior management team. Equality of opportunity is promoted satisfactorily. Effective action has been taken to improve achievement in mathematics across school. However, the effective use of assessment information to ensure that all lessons provide appropriate challenge has yet to be achieved.

The school's partnership with parents and carers is good. They appreciate how the school looks after the well-being of their children. Parents and carers are warmly welcomed into school and engage in supportive conversations with teaching staff. The launch of the school's website is planned to further improve communication and

sharing information. There are productive partnerships with a number of schools and local organisations which have helped to breakdown barriers to learning and ensure families receive appropriate support.

Good safeguarding procedures are enhanced by the rigorous and systematic approach to site safety and maintenance. Exceptionally well-maintained records are in place. Policies and procedures are clear, succinct and reviewed on a regular basis. Close working with parents, carers and other professionals ensure pupils receive swift intervention and support.

Community cohesion is actively promoted within the school community. Festivals from around the world are celebrated. For example, the children showed great excitement when learning how to play a Jewish game with a dreidel. The chocolate coins adding to the fun of the game. The school has established a partnership with a school in Kenya. Senior leaders recognise this area of work requires further attention.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Nearly all children joining the school have pre-school experience in one of the many early education provisions in the area. However, the large majority of children enter Reception with skills, knowledge and understanding below those typical for their age. Their rates of progress vary, leading to satisfactory progress overall by the time they enter Year 1. Children’s skills in communication, language and literacy remain below average. Children settle well into school as transition arrangements are generally effective and positive relationships have developed. The early morning routine works seamlessly as parents and carers spend time in the classroom helping their children improve their writing skills, making choices for lunch and keeping the reading books up-to-date.

The significantly improved outdoor area is a valuable asset. Here children confidently initiate activities and there is a sense of purpose as they explore and develop their skills. However, it is small and limits the opportunities for more energetic physical play. Adults support children effectively and children enjoy learning as they confidently build a large model from assorted boxes and containers. However,



provision within the classroom lacks the same richness and variety of resources as not all areas of learning are easy to access or readily available. Children have few opportunities to engage in child-initiated activities as tasks are predominantly adult-led. As a result, children are not always fully challenged to promote more independence in making choices about their learning.

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

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation stage</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

**Views of parents and carers**

Fewer responses were received to the questionnaire when compared with most schools. The large majority of parents and carers who did respond acknowledged that they are happy with their children’s experience at this school, with one parent/carer saying, ‘They listen, they help and are so enthusiastic’. Parents and carers also felt that the school helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle and keeps their children safe.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 24 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 156 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	13	54	10	42	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	13	54	11	46	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	15	63	9	38	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	67	8	33	0	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)	11	46	11	46	0	0	1	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	14	58	10	42	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	50	11	46	1	4	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	13	54	9	38	1	4	1	4
The school is led and managed effectively	14	58	9	38	1	4	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	14	58	10	42	0	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 is 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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



25 November 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Rawmarsh Ryecroft Infant School, Rotherham, S62 5QW**

Thank you for making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school recently. We particularly enjoyed meeting and talking to you during lessons, in the playground and in meetings. You were most helpful and polite at all times. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

You go to a satisfactory school where the headteacher, the leadership team, the governing body and all staff are working together to move the school forward to be at least good in the future. Your school is good at ensuring you are well cared for and kept safe.

I was pleased to see how your parents and carers are involved in your learning by discussing your choice of food for lunch and helping you with your writing on the menu sheet and in your 'morning book'. I also enjoyed listening to you read out your job applications for a position with Mrs Spencer Stanhope. She would have had a difficult choice to make when deciding who to appoint. I also saw how you enjoyed making potato latkes and hope they were delicious.

To help your teachers make the school as good as it can be we have asked them to give you more time to work on your own or in small groups so you can investigate things for yourself and to make sure the work is at the right level of challenge to move your learning on quickly, especially those of you who find learning easier. We have also asked them to give the children in the Reception classes more opportunities to choose their own activities.

You can help with this by telling your teachers if the work is too hard or too easy and trying hard in lessons.

Yours sincerely

Kathryn Gethin  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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