

Rushcroft Primary School

Trent Road, Shaw, Oldham, OL2 7YL

Inspection dates 13–14 November 2012

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Satisfactory | 3 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- This is a good and improving school. Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and really speeds up in Year 5 and 6. As a result achievement is good at the end of Key Stage 2.
- All groups perform well and the gaps between how well different groups of pupils perform are being narrowed, as a result of close and intense support.
- As a result of high expectations and constant support through training, teaching is now good with some that is outstanding. In Year 6 in writing, because of good teaching methods, pupils are making the same progress in one term as is usually made in two terms, and some make more.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Pupils learn to live with and support each other regardless of backgrounds. For example, older pupils help the children in the Reception class to settle at the start of the year as 'buddies'.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe in and out of school, for instance, knowing how to cross the road safely. They have a clear understanding of different forms of bullying including cyber bullying.
- Senior leaders, the governors and the local authority have well-defined ambitions to improve the progress of all pupils through strong procedures for checking how well pupils are performing. As a result achievement and teaching have improved to good since the last inspection.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Higher-ability pupils lack challenge in Key Stage 2, particularly in writing and mathematics. In addition, pupils' presentation of work is not always of a good standard.
- The governing body and school leaders have not given enough consideration to the progress of higher-ability pupils.
- Resources such as modern technology and adults' support in the classroom are not always used effectively.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 11 lessons, of which two were joint observations with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors made a number of shorter visits to other lessons. They also listened to pupils read and scrutinised their work.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the Chair and the vice-chair of the Governing Body and one other governor, senior leaders and middle leaders, as well as the school consultant and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at the documents relating to safeguarding, the performance management of staff, the tracking and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, records on behaviour and safety, attendance data and the school's records on the monitoring of teaching and learning. They also looked at the school's spending relating to the pupil premium.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 34 parents in the online Parent View survey and the outcome from the school's own survey of parental views. The views of parents were also sought at the start of the school day. Inspectors scrutinised 30 questionnaires completed by staff.

Inspection team

Zahid Aziz, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Elaine Maloney

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Rushcroft Primary School is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil-premium funding (additional funding provided by the government) is above average.
- The proportion of pupils supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The school provides a before- and after-school club which is managed by the governing body.
- More pupils than average join or leave the school at different points in the school year.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or outstanding by making sure that teachers:
 - make it clear to pupils their learning targets and how to achieve them, especially in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 2
 - make more effective use of resources such as use of modern technologies and adults' support throughout the school
 - insist on high standards of presentation in pupils' books.
- Ensure that the governing body and the school's leaders have further impact on improving pupils' progress by monitoring teachers' targets that focus on the progress of the more-able pupils in writing and mathematics.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress and this continues throughout the school. However, at Key Stage 2, the more-able pupils are not always given harder tasks in lessons and so their progress is not as fast as it could be. Children start the Reception with knowledge and understanding below expectations in social and language skills. They make good progress across all areas of learning. For example, in mathematics, they recognise two and three dimensional shapes such as a square and a cube. By the time they reach Year 1, children reach the level that is expected for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in English throughout Key Stage 1. In Year 1, they improve their skills in using letters and sounds well, for example, by writing simple words. In Year 2 in a lesson on history, pupils discussed and applied their writing skills to make a list about 'the Great Fire of London' linked to historical facts. As a result they improved their speaking, listening and communication skills very well.
- At Key Stage 2, pupils' progress and attainment are improving. In 2011, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 made good progress in English and mathematics compared to that found nationally. This trend is continuing in 2012, although progress in mathematics is weaker than in writing. When there was a dip in the test results last year, action was swiftly taken and the issue was resolved by better monitoring and training for support staff in Year 6.
- Pupils' work from last year, current work and lesson observations show that pupils in Years 3 and 4 are making faster progress than previously and that pupils in Years 5 and 6 are making good progress. Although pupils pay close attention to accurate spelling and grammar, their work is not always well presented.
- Pupils' skills in checking their own and others' progress are developed well at Key Stage 2. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson, pupils wrote a biography of a pop star and assessed each other's work against the expected standard. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were mesmerised by an experiment on sound waves travelling through water in a jar. As a result pupils gained new knowledge and enhanced other skills, such as research and team building, which prepare them well for the future.
- The high number of pupils leaving and joining the school at Key Stage 2 has a noticeable effect on the published test results at the end of Year 6. Those who remain in the school through Reception to Year 6 do well. Those who need support for English as an additional language are checked quickly and they receive appropriate guidance so that they settle fast and learn well.
- The needs of pupils supported by additional funding through the pupil premium, those who are disabled and those with special educational needs are identified carefully. The monitoring of the impact of the various strategies used to support them shows that these pupils make faster progress than those in other groups, especially in reading and mathematics. The gap in attainment between different groups of pupils is narrowing as a result of mostly one-to-one support.
- Most pupils enjoy reading a variety of books with confidence and understanding. They use various techniques well to sound out words they find difficult to read. As a result they make good and, in some instances, excellent progress.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is improving, with most being good and some outstanding. All parents who responded to Parent View confirmed that their children make good progress. However, teaching is not consistently good or outstanding because opportunities are missed by teachers to use modern technology to improve their teaching. Support staff are used particularly well in Year 6 but in other classes opportunities to use the extra staff in the classroom are not used to best advantage.

- Strong relationships exist between adults and pupils. Pupils respond very well to the good guidance they receive.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers make learning exciting. Adults develop children's language through a range of experiences including celebrating festivals from different countries such as Diwali from India. In one session, focused questioning and the use of key mathematical words were used to describe different shapes of Indian sweets. As a result children improved their mathematical language skill.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and share the lesson's objectives with pupils. They use a range of methods to improve pupils' mathematical skills. In Year 6 for instance, a teacher specialising in mathematics gives carefully planned support to those with weaker mathematical understanding. As a result, these pupils make faster progress with a clearer understanding of concepts such as fraction of a number.
- Checking and marking are regular, with excellent examples in Year 6 for literacy. However, some pupils are not always clear about their targets for improvement or how to achieve them.
- Pupils enjoy taking work home, such as investigating 'the sky at night'; as a result pupils' learn and extend their knowledge through independent learning.
- Classroom displays celebrate pupils' success such as 'writer of the week' and 'mathematician of the week', sharing successful role models of people who are disabled. These help to reinforce learning and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diverse culture of Britain.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Pupils' behaviour in school is exemplary in classes and the playground. This is because of the school's strong commitment to learning and care. Pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of contributing to the school's aims. They are eager to support their own learning and that of the others.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is extremely effective in enabling pupils to get on with each other and care about those who are from different situations to their own, such as those who are disabled or who have medical conditions.
- The school is a calm community where all pupils have opportunity to participate in all that it offers. Pupils have very positive relationships with each other and adults.
- The school is an example of excellent practice of integrating those who are disabled, those with special educational needs and those with behaviour difficulties into the daily life of the school with the help of the external agencies. As a result these pupils are very happy and enjoy school life.
- Pupils understand the different forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying. The use of bad language and bullying incidents are very rare, but whenever they occur the school deals with them effectively. Pupils feel safe in and out of the school because, 'Adults around us help us, and Shaw is a small community and we know each other well and we look after each other.' a mature response from one of the Year 6 pupils. They have a good understanding of the safe use of the internet.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average. There is no persistent absence and pupils come to school on time as a result of the school's focused action from well trained staff as well as support for the groups whose circumstances have made them hard to reach.
- The before- and after-school clubs provide a valuable resource and help to strengthen the link between school and those pupils whose circumstances might put them at risk.

The leadership and management are good

- The strong leadership team, led by the headteacher and supported by the senior leaders, provides a clear focus for improvement. Their high expectations and ambitions are shared by the

governing body and supported by the local authority. As a result achievement and teaching are now good, which is an improvement since the previous inspection.

- A thorough process of checking the progress of each pupil takes place half termly. As a result new targets are set for pupils and staff so that those who have fallen behind can make quick progress through the use of various teaching methods and one-to-one support. This results in improving the progress of targeted pupils in one term, rather than the usual two terms, especially in reading and mathematics. However, the progress of the more-able pupils in writing and mathematics has not been a focus of teachers' targets. And in consequence their work is sometimes not challenging enough.
 - The headteacher and the deputy headteacher observe lessons, and feedback is given to teachers to help them improve through team teaching and training support for all staff, including the newly trained teachers. This is linked well with annual targets for improving the rate of pupils' learning to achieve the goals set for them. Consequently, pay progression is linked with improvements in pupils' results, and in teaching, through performance management.
 - The school's effective self-evaluation and analysis of how well pupils are achieving, has been an important contributory factor in identifying the support needed to achieve both pupils' and teachers' targets. The issues identified in the last inspection report have been tackled successfully.
 - Planning for learning in all subjects has a strong focus on reading, writing and mathematics. There are focused targets and marking across these subjects. The creative subjects provide a broad and balanced study which offer a range of learning experiences and after-school activities for all pupils.
 - The partnership between the school and parents is very strong. Almost all parents feel that school provides a caring environment and that their children are happy and enjoy coming to school.
 - The local authority has provided effective support to the school since the last inspection. However, there is now only light touch support as a result of recent improvements.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors are very much part of the daily life of the school. They have appropriately supported the school leaders to raise achievement and improve teaching, although they have not helped the leadership identify the need to focus on the progress of the more-able pupils. They have regular governing body meetings instead of sub committees so that all governors have a clear picture of school's progress. They are very keen to develop themselves to support and give additional challenge to the school by having training in the 'Governor Mark', the qualification for school governors. Safeguarding procedures, including safer recruitment arrangements, are vigorous.
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What inspection judgements mean

| School | | |
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| Grade | Judgement | Description |
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 2 | Good | A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | <p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> |

School details

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| Unique reference number | 105695 |
| Local authority | Oldham |
| Inspection number | 405006 |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 201 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mark Barber |
| Headteacher | Jane Sheridan |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 November 2010 |
| Telephone number | 0161 770 8236 |
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