

Rothley Church of England Primary School

Mountsorrel Lane, Rothley, Leicester, LE7 7PS

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	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.

- Pupils' behaviour is excellent and they have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe. The school is a calm and purposeful place where good manners are the norm.
- Pupils make good overall progress as they move through the school. Most achieve well, especially in their reading.
- Standards have improved in the current year and pupils' attainment is often well above average for their age.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is at the centre of the school's work.
- Teaching is good. Staff often use questions well, both to assess what pupils know and to encourage them to work things out for themselves.
- Teamwork in the school is good. Staff work well together to ensure that pupils are supported in their learning and personal development.
- Senior leaders provide strong and determined leadership that focuses on improving teaching and drives the school forward. Governors are knowledgeable about and supportive of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Occasionally, teaching is not fully effective. Some staff do not make clear enough to pupils exactly what needs to be improved in their work.
- A few staff do not organise lessons well enough and ensure that pupils are fully involved in activities.
- Some staff holding posts of responsibilities are not sufficiently involved in checking how successful initiatives are.
- A higher than average proportion of parents and carers do not believe senior leaders value their views and concerns.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 19 lessons, taught by 13 teachers. This included several joint lesson observations with the headteacher. Inspectors also listened to several pupils read and looked at samples of recent work.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the Early Years Foundation Stage staff, the special educational needs co-ordinator, the literacy and numeracy leaders and the deputy headteacher. Discussions also took place with groups of mixed ability pupils and with members of the governing body. A representative of the local authority spoke to the lead inspector by telephone.
- Inspectors took account of the views of 115 parents and carers as noted on the on-line parent questionnaire (Parent View). They also spoke to some parents at the start of the school day and to others who requested a discussion by telephone. Inspectors also noted the 39 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including the school's own information on pupils' progress, planning and monitoring information, and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

Inspection team

Sue Hall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Steven Cartlidge	Additional Inspector
Ian Hart	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average-sized primary school.
- Fewer than 10% of pupils are from ethnic minority groups, which is well below the national average. A very small number speak English as an additional language.
- A below average proportion of pupils are supported by the pupil premium, which in this school provides additional funding for those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- The school provides a breakfast club for pupils, parents and carers one day a week.
- The percentage of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is well below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- 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?

- Make sure that the quality of teaching is consistently effective and increase the proportion that is outstanding by:
 - checking that staff always involve pupils in the assessment of their work, so that they are clear about what they can improve
 - ensuring that the organisation of lessons is effective, so that pupils are fully involved throughout.
- Improve the leadership of the school by:
 - enabling all staff with positions of responsibility to develop their roles and identify areas for improvement
 - engaging more effectively with parents and carers to ensure that they feel their ideas and concerns are understood and considered.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Children enter the Reception classes with skills that are at or beyond those expected for their age. Most are confident and chatty young learners who are keen to find things out and to do well.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children make good and sometimes excellent progress, thanks especially to the strong focus on teaching the skills of early reading and writing. This was well illustrated when children collected natural items from the school grounds and wrote about how to use them to make 'Gruffalo crumble' for a character in their story.
- At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' standards were well above national averages. While standards have been maintained well in Key Stage 1, they have dipped in Key Stage 2, both in 2011 and then further in 2012. This was often because pupils who had initially done well in Key Stage 1 did not make the progress expected of them.
- During this year, the school has improved the organisation and use of assessment information to track the progress made by individuals and groups. This has helped identify which pupils need support and improved the overall rate of progress made. Standards are now well above average for the age of the pupils. Progress in Years 1 to 6 is good for all groups, including pupils of different abilities and from different backgrounds.
- A key strength across the school is how well pupils read. Many read very fluently and confidently, and boys and girls say equally that they really enjoy reading. Pupils indicate that they are well supported by their families in their reading at home.
- In recent years, standards in writing have not been quite as high as those in other areas. The school has been involved in various initiatives but has not always been able to establish consistent success at least in part because of changes in staffing. Recent samples of pupils' work indicate a stronger picture now, with many pupils writing well for their age.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics, and in some years have done better in this than in English. During the inspection, pupils in Year 5 made excellent progress in understanding angles, because the teacher used questions very well to prompt them to think of alternative ways of working out an angle. They then used the information they already had about one shape to work out the angles of another within the original shape.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs receive specific additional help in lessons, in small groups and in individual activities. Staff work successfully to help pupils grow in confidence and make good progress towards their individual targets.
- Pupil premium funding is used to fund additional staff, including the family support worker, and activities such as the breakfast club and residential visits. Last year there were too few pupils entitled to pupil premium funding to comment upon their progress without identifying individuals.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching is good overall, although with occasional variation. A key strength is that

staff in leadership roles often set an example of excellent teaching and have a strong focus on continually improving skills through coaching other staff. All staff have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and of their behaviour. Because pupils are keen to live up to the expectations of the adults around them, this helps them to make good progress.

- In the Early Years Foundation Stage unit, the two classes work closely and effectively together and make good use of the shared outdoor area to promote learning. During the inspection, children had the chance to act as explorers using binoculars, and were asked to describe toy dinosaurs in a tray containing jelly. Because the activities interested the children, their language developed well. The strong emphasis on promoting writing is also having an excellent impact on children's skills and progress.
- Teaching is particularly effective in Years 5 and 6 because staff continually monitor and evaluate different groups, and vary activities in order to keep pupils' interest. Their books show very effective examples of feedback to pupils; this enables them to understand what they need to do to achieve the next level and encourages the pupils to achieve more. However, this strong practice is not consistent throughout the school. As a result, some pupils are unclear about their targets and how to improve their work.
- No lesson planning was seen during the inspection, so inspectors were not able to evaluate the quality of planning. Occasionally, lessons are not well organised. For example, in some reading sessions staff sat with their back to the majority of pupils and did not notice several were not concentrating. Similarly, group tasks working out a message to a Viking included too many pupils sharing a scroll so some were uninvolved and peripheral to the activity.
- The school places a strong focus on staff training activities to ensure a continuing emphasis on what makes effective teaching. Teaching assistants work in partnership with teachers to support individuals, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Staff also support those entitled to pupil premium funding and carefully check their progress to ensure equality of opportunity for all.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are excellent

- The behaviour of pupils is typically excellent in and around the school. Pupils are consistently polite to each other, to staff and to visitors. This is shown in the very calm arrival of the pupils each morning and the sensible way that they move around the school site. The school's strong focus on the personal development of the pupils supports their social and moral development very effectively.
 - Pupils have a keen sense of caring for the environment. This is shown in their considerable interest in the growth of the school chicks and in what is happening to the eggs on the nest containing a web-cam. Pupils also care for their classmates and for others. This was illustrated when unprompted two girls explained how they had recently turned £10 into almost three times this amount by making and selling cupcakes for charity.
 - Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. They listen carefully to the explanations of staff and to the ideas of others. This was very well illustrated in Year 6 when pupils avidly watched a short video clip of a stranded person and then animatedly joined in a discussion about what they thought had happened to him. Work is usually neatly presented, and pupils take pride in themselves and their school.
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- Pupils can clearly explain that bullying is a repeated action and know that inappropriate behaviour is never tolerated in school. Pupils understand how to keep safe and can explain what cyber-bullying is and what to do if it occurred. Attendance is high and pupils arrive punctually.

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders and governors are ambitious for all pupils to do well. The headteacher provides very determined leadership, promoting a clear focus on continual improvement. She drives school improvement with a clearly articulated vision for the future. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher through excellent teaching and coaching of other staff.
- The school places a high priority on improving teaching and continuing professional development. Teachers' performance is checked and information is used from lesson observations and from data about pupils' progress to decide on the next objectives in order to further develop individual performance. Staff are involved in training and work with other schools, as appropriate. Senior staff lead by example, continually enhancing their own qualifications and debating educational practices.
- The monitoring of the work of the school is effective. The headteacher and deputy headteacher carry out lesson observations and give feedback to staff with points for development. Some staff with posts of responsibility are new or have recently returned to their roles. They are very keen to develop their effectiveness further, but as yet have had limited opportunities to assess how successful recent initiatives have been and identify areas for further improvement.
- The school has recently improved the way in which it collects and uses information about the progress pupils make. Leaders and staff have focused on discussing and understanding performance data. The school collects information about children's skills on entry and through their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage. At times this does not appear to reflect the sometimes high levels of children's achievement including, for example, in the most recent assessments of writing.
- Pupil premium funding is used appropriately and has helped develop the role of family support worker. Pupils identified in need of additional support, including those eligible for pupil premium funding, disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, are well supported. The school evaluates this expenditure through data which show that such pupils are making similarly good progress to their classmates.
- Responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and discussions with some parents and carers indicate a well above-average proportion do not agree that provision in all areas is good. Several do not believe the school is well led and managed, or that the school responds well to any concerns they raise. School leaders are keen to move forward by engaging with parents and carers in a positive and supportive manner.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a key strength of the school, epitomised in an excellent assembly focused on a 'chick update'. Pupils watched a video about the development of the chicks recently hatched in school intently. When a live cockerel was produced, pupils' behaviour was excellent and they focused exceptionally well on their responsibilities to care for their environment and others.
- The school receives 'light touch' support from the local authority because it is perceived as

successful. This appears to be appropriate, given how the school has tackled recent issues.

- Procedures to safeguard pupils meet current government requirements. Staff ensure that all pupils have equal access to learning and are provided with suitable opportunities to achieve well. The school fosters good relationships and tackles discrimination effectively. Overall, the school demonstrates it has the capacity to continue to improve.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very committed to and supportive of the school. They meet regularly and consider achievement, teaching, behaviour and leadership in their committees. Some also visit the school regularly to share their expertise, for example in budget setting. Governors liaise well with the local community and the diocese, especially in relation to the proposed new build of the school. They have a good understanding of what the data tells them about standards and pupils' progress. They support the headteacher in managing teacher performance and pay-related matters. They are aware of their responsibilities to ensure that pupil premium funding helps to raise achievement for those who are entitled to it. Governors also liaise with parents and carers, and help try to resolve identified concerns. They are keen to develop further their skills in challenging the school to ensure that all improvements are carefully considered from all viewpoints.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
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

Unique reference number	120155
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	413033

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	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Robert Gladstone
Headteacher	Fiona Parr
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2009
Telephone number	0116 230 2106
Fax number	0116 230 2106
Email address	admin@rothley.leics.sch.uk

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