

Rawson Junior and Infant School

Rawson Street North, Boothtown, Halifax, HX3 6PU

Inspection dates 21–22 November 2013

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		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have an uncompromising passion to raise the achievement of pupils, which they have done very successfully.
- The governors and leaders know the school very well and know what the results are telling them. They make plans that ensure the school continues to reach the highest standards.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 in 2013 in reading, writing and mathematics were high and standards have been rising each year for the past three years. This is an improving school.
- Teaching is good across the whole school including in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils, including the most able, make good and sometimes outstanding progress from their different starting points.
- Teaching assistants make a highly effective contribution both in and out of lessons.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school at different times. They cooperate well with adults and each other when working on tasks and in their groups.
- High quality activities both in and out of school and specialist sports staff further enhance the excellent curriculum for all pupils.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Activities in lessons do not always precisely match the differing abilities of pupils so they do not always make rapid progress.
- Teachers do not always move pupils onto the next activity early enough.
- Teaching assistants are not always involved soon enough in some lessons.
- At times teachers do not consistently use the school's established procedures to help pupils to keep track of what they are learning and so enable them to make faster progress.

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 22 lessons including parts of lessons. All teachers were observed at least once. Two lessons were observed jointly with the headteacher and one with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspectors met with staff, pupils and parents. They held a meeting with the Chair of the Governing Body and four other governors. They held separate meetings with a current representative from the local authority and a former representative from the local authority.
- They took into account 33 staff questionnaires. They looked at information from previous surveys carried out by the school to gather views of parents and pupils. Eleven responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were also considered.
- The inspectors talked to pupils in the playground and classrooms and held discussion with pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. They listened to pupils read and observed them moving around inside and outside the school at different times of the day.
- They observed the school’s work and considered a number of documents, including the school’s safeguarding arrangements, evaluation of its performance, its improvement plan and minutes from governors’ meetings.

Inspection team

Jonathan Woodyatt, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Deane	Additional Inspector
Dave Blackburne	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The large majority of pupils are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is higher than other schools. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is much lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding is much higher than average. (The pupil premium is additional funding for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children that are looked after by the local authority.)
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a part of the North Halifax Cluster of Self Improving Schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching so that its overall quality rises to outstanding by:
 - ensuring that learning activities precisely match pupils' needs
 - making sure that pupils can move onto the next tasks as soon as they are ready
 - involving teaching assistants in learning activities early on in lessons
 - ensuring that teachers consistently use the school's established procedures in lessons for helping pupils to keep track of their learning and progress.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Outstanding leaders and managers have ensured that standards have been rapidly improving over recent years. As a result, pupils who left Key Stage 2 in 2013 reached high standards in reading, writing and mathematics, which is outstanding achievement from their different starting points.
- Children start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in Nursery with skills that are typically below those expected nationally. They make good progress and leave with skills close to those expected. Although many children continue into the Reception classes, sometimes up to a third of children leave or join the school at this point. As a result children enter Reception with skills that are typically below those of others, though this varies from year to year and on a few occasions children start with even lower skill levels.
- Pupils make good progress through Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 from their different starting points to reach levels that are close to those expected nationally in all subjects by the end of Key Stage 1.
- In Key Stage 2 the progress accelerates in all subjects. As a result a much higher-than-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 in 2013 made progress at the expected rate than did so nationally, in reading, writing and mathematics. Furthermore, a much higher proportion also made better than the expected rates of progress in these subjects. Pupils, including the most able, exceeded other pupils nationally at Level 4 and Level 5 in all these subjects.
- The attainment and progress of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is high. In 2013, Year 6 pupils did particularly well as a result of effective support by staff and teaching assistants and their attainment was well above that of similar pupils nationally by approximately three terms in English and mathematics. Although there is a gap between these pupils and others in the school of approximately one and a half terms, this gap is closing.
- Pupils who have special educational needs make good progress and achieve above similar pupils nationally due to their needs being identified accurately, and highly effective strategies being put into place to aid their learning, for example, in the small groups or one-to-one with teaching assistants. This demonstrates the school's commitment to providing an equal opportunity for every pupil and tackling discrimination.
- In 2013, a national reading check of pupils' phonic skills (the knowledge of letters and sounds to help read unfamiliar words) carried out in Year 1, shows that an above-average proportion of pupils exceeded the levels expected for their age. This is a further improvement on the above-average proportion that reached the expected level in 2012 because the leaders have successfully raised the standard of teaching through training and monitoring teachers and teaching assistants to provide excellent phonics teaching.

The quality of teaching is good

- The overwhelming majority of teaching in reading, writing and mathematics is good and some is outstanding. However, there are pockets of teaching that still require improvement for it to reach a higher standard overall. This is reflected in both the school's own records of the monitoring of teaching and in lessons observed by inspectors.
- Marking is frequently carried out and provides pupils with helpful feedback on the way they have done their work as well as suggesting improvements that they could make to do even better. When spelling mistakes are identified by teachers, they note which ones need to be learned and pupils practise in their books in order to spell words correctly.
- Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to supporting small group activities and providing one-to-one support for pupils with different needs. Observations by inspectors confirmed that they are proficient in using phonics skills, which leads to pupils successfully developing their own skills.

- Occasionally, in a few lessons, the work provided by teachers is not precisely matched to the varying abilities of all pupils and this prevents them from making progress at a rapid rate. For example, pupils in one lesson were not clear enough about what the different instructions meant so they could not work through the tasks.
- Teachers regularly check pupils' learning during lessons to ensure that they have understood what they need to do so they can move on with the activities provided. However, sometimes pupils are not moved onto the next activities quickly enough once they have understood what to do.
- Where teaching is most effective, pupils are fully involved in their own learning through group work, discussions and independent work. Teaching assistants are able to give very close support to these groups or to individual pupils as it is needed. However, sometimes teaching assistants are not used soon enough in lessons to help pupils and groups and so all pupils spend too long doing whole-class activities rather than moving onto work to suit their ability.
- School leaders and teachers have put in place well thought-out procedures to ensure that pupils can keep track of what they are learning and make a record to help them remember between lessons and therefore make further improvements to their work. One example seen by inspectors that worked very well is the use of displays for pupils' learning, known in the school as 'working walls'. However, sometimes teachers do not always use this facility in lessons to full effect.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils behave well in classrooms, outside and inside the school. They are polite to visitors and to each other. They are good at sharing resources when involved in group activities in their lessons and good at cooperating with each other when they work in pairs.
- Evidence from lesson observations carried out by inspectors shows that teachers are skilled in managing behaviour well. Because the school has a consistent behaviour-management system in place and pupils are clear about the consequences, they rarely needed to use it during the inspection. This is supported by the school's own records, which show few incidents of misbehaviour.
- All pupils say that they feel safe in the school. When talking to inspectors they explained that they know about different types of bullying and are aware of how to keep themselves safe when using computers. Surveys carried out by the school with pupils and parents and conversations with parents fully support what the pupils are saying about feeling safe.
- Attendance levels are similar to those in other schools. The school's leaders have provided clear messages to parents about the importance of coming to school and this is ensuring that pupils' attendance continues to improve over time.
- In lessons, pupils' behaviour is often related to the quality of teaching. On the occasions where teachers do not move pupils onto the next tasks quickly enough or when pupils are not fully involved in their own learning, they lose concentration and very occasionally misbehave.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- Pupils exceeded national expectations for progress and attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 2 in 2013 by a considerable margin. This outstanding improvement over time is a result of concerted actions by the governing body, senior leaders and middle leaders to raise standards in teaching.
- The governing body and school leaders at all levels are closely involved in rigorous monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance. This has led to a very accurate and honest analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses which, in turn, have led to rapid school improvement as teachers are held very closely to account for the progress of their pupils.
- The performance of teachers is exceptionally well managed by leaders through straightforward,

measurable targets which are linked to pupils' progress, school improvement priorities and pay progression. Staff responses indicated that they are very clear about what is expected of them and how well they are being supported to make improvements.

- Staff development of the highest quality is a key reason why pupils are making outstanding progress. Leaders and managers ensure regular, high quality training opportunities for staff which, together with a very strong team approach by middle leaders, is improving the quality of teaching. Teachers, and increasingly more teaching assistants, are improving in their proficient analysis of results of the assessments they make and deciding on the next steps in learning which they apply more and more successfully in the classrooms.
- The effective partnerships championed by the headteacher, such as the school's involvement with the North Halifax Cluster of Self Improving Schools, gives teachers excellent opportunities to share examples of the best practice used by others, such as the 'working walls'.
- The extensive curriculum developed by the leaders is enhanced considerably by a range of extra-curricular activities, visitors to the school, trips and residential activities, such as the Year 5 trip to Scarborough. The additional primary school sport funding has ensured that pupils receive extra time with a specialist sports teacher and can attend competitions with other schools as well as a pre-school gym club to help pupils develop their movement skills.
- The headteacher has appointed a spiritual, moral, social and cultural coordinator who oversees all the activities to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. There are well planned opportunities provided for pupils to improve their understanding and experiences of these. For example, pupils raise money for the homeless and they support children in other countries.
- The local authority recognises that the school is improving and, as a result, it currently provides termly support.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body plays a significant role in holding the school leaders and teachers to account for the performance of the school and in contributing to the 'next steps' that the school needs to take. They do this by keeping a close watch on the results through regular checks on pupils' progress and by visiting classrooms and taking part in monitoring the standards of teaching. Minutes of meetings demonstrate that they ask questions that ensure they clearly gain an insightful view of many aspects, including knowing how well the headteacher has performed towards her targets and what the quality of teaching is like in every classroom. They rigorously make plans for the school to improve, which it clearly has done over recent years. The governors have carried out their statutory duties to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are in place.
- The governors use their financial skills to great effect, which enables them to increase staffing in order to secure extra support for pupils. They have a clear understanding of how the pupil premium is making the difference for pupil's performance and are developing the use of the sport premium well.

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	107477
Local authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	425758

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	324
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ian MacPhail
Headteacher	Jean Healey
Date of previous school inspection	24 January 2012
Telephone number	01422 351291
Fax number	01422 351291
Email address	admin@rawson.calderdale.sch.uk

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