



**Office for Standards
in Education**

Inspection report
Rawcliffe Bridge Primary School

East Riding of Yorkshire Education Authority

Dates of inspection: 4-5 May 2004

This inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996 and was deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act

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Basic information about the school

Name of school:	Rawcliffe Bridge Primary School
Type of school:	Primary
Status:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Headteacher:	Mrs H Leach
Address of school:	Bridge Lane Rawcliffe Bridge Near Goole East Yorkshire DN14 8PJ
Telephone:	01405 839249
Name and address of appropriate authority:	The governing body, address as above
Chair of governors:	Mrs J Pow
Local education authority area:	East Riding of Yorkshire
Unique reference number:	117893
Name of reporting inspector:	Mr J Richardson HMI
Dates of inspection:	4-5 May 2004

Introduction

1. Rawcliffe Bridge Primary School is situated near Rawcliffe on the outskirts of Goole. It is much smaller than average, having 76 pupils on roll. None of the pupils speaks English as an additional language. Seventeen of the pupils have designated special educational needs, including one who has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Twenty four per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is average.
2. The school was inspected in March 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.
3. The governors drew up an action plan to address the key issues from the inspection of March 2002. The school was visited by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMI) on five occasions to monitor the progress being made.
4. In May 2004, two HMI inspected the school, assessing the standard of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of March 2002.

Main findings

5. In accordance with section 14 of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures, since it is now providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils. The main findings of the inspection are:
 - overall, the pupils' standards of attainment are at or just below national expectations. Standards are rising in each year group, though this was not reflected in the school's results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. There remains scope for further improvement in the standards the pupils achieve;
 - most of the pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory and is often good. They know what they are expected to learn and how this builds on previous work. The quality of learning was good in three quarters of the lessons;
 - the pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good in all lessons. Their behaviour around the site was satisfactory;
 - the rate of attendance, at 94.2 per cent last year, is average;
 - provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory;
 - the quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in three quarters of the lessons. Teachers used their subject knowledge effectively to plan the next steps in the learning and to devise engaging and motivating activities that challenged the pupils appropriately. Relationships were positive and productive;
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- revisions to planning and guidance ensure that the school's curriculum is firmly based on national requirements. Thorough implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has underpinned improvements, although there is still some way to go with speaking and listening. There is effective provision for the pupils who have special educational needs, with arrangements that meet the requirements of the national Code of Practice. There is satisfactory provision in the Foundation Stage;
 - there are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' development in the core subjects and for tracking their progress. This information provides a secure basis for identifying curricular targets for individual pupils, and for setting whole-school targets based on the pupils' previous attainment;
 - following a period when there were changes in leadership, a substantive headteacher was appointed in April 2003. She provides good leadership and management. She has established stability, restored the morale of the teachers and united them in a shared vision and common sense of direction and teamwork. She is very hardworking and sets high expectations that are balanced with appropriate levels of support;
 - there are secure systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, scrutinising the pupils' work, analysing test data and checking the teachers' planning. Information from these and other activities is incorporated into a well-planned annual school self-review that involves the governing body and leads to the formulation of a school improvement plan, which sets well-judged priorities for future work;
 - the chair of governors provides good leadership. She has established reliable systems and procedures for the governing body and ensures that these are followed. She has played a key role in developing the vision and direction for the school;
 - the role of subject co-ordinators is developing but some have only been in post a short time, and they have yet to play a full part in leading improvements;
 - the local education authority (LEA) has provided good support to the school through arranging temporary leadership and staffing, through work to improve the quality of teaching and through the help over management from the school's link adviser. It has evaluated the effectiveness of its support and modified its strategies appropriately.

Key issues

6. In order to improve the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- continue to raise standards;
 - further develop the role of the co-ordinators;
 - continue to improve speaking and listening across the curriculum.
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Inspection findings

Standards achieved by the pupils

7. Overall, the pupils' standards of attainment are at or just below national expectations. Standards are rising in each year group, though this was not reflected in the school's results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. There remains scope for further improvement in the standards the pupils achieve.

8. In comparison with all schools nationally, the standards achieved by the small cohort of 16 pupils in the 2003 Key Stage 1 national tests were average in reading and mathematics but were well below average in writing. When compared with similar schools, based on the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, they were above average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing.

9. The standards achieved in the 2003 Key Stage 2 national tests by the nine pupils involved were well below average in comparison with all schools nationally and with similar schools.

10. Many of the pupils enter the Foundation Stage with limited educational experiences and communication skills. They make good progress in terms of personal and social development, learning to share and take turns, and sound progress in other areas of learning. Standards remain below those expected of pupils of this age as they enter Key Stage 1, especially in language development.

11. In Key Stages 1 and 2 most of the pupils make progress that is at least satisfactory and is often good. They know what they are expected to learn and how this builds on previous work. The quality of learning was good in three quarters of the lessons.

12. Standards in English are generally below national expectations in the earlier years but close to them by the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, the pupils establish a basic narrative structure to their writing and some use extended sentences and adventurous language. However, a number of them still have weak strategies for handling difficult spellings, and some have only an erratic grasp of basic punctuation. By the end of Year 6 most of the pupils show an understanding of the conventions required for different types of writing such as formal and informal letters. Most have a firm grasp of complex sentence structure and write with enthusiasm. Despite this, standards of punctuation, for example in handling dialogue, are weak and in some cases show little improvement over the year.

13. Standards of speaking and listening are well below expectations in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, where the pupils are hesitant in explaining their work and use only a limited vocabulary when talking. They do not engage in effective dialogue with each other very often. In the older classes, standards of speaking and listening are higher but still below those expected; some of the pupils speak well in whole-class work, but some pupils do not listen to each other well in group activities. Pupils tend to speak about their own ideas in isolation rather than responding to points made by their classmates.

14. Standards in mathematics varied widely in Year 2; around half the class reached the expected standards. They knew by heart all the pairs of numbers with a total of 20 and counted in tens from a three-digit number. However, some of the class struggled to cross the

hundreds boundary when adding one to a three-digit number. In Year 6 there was less variation and standards were only slightly below those expected, due in part to the positive effect of the additional 'catch up' sessions that the school has directed towards particular individuals. Most of the pupils have reasonable recall of the requisite multiplication and associated division facts and use a range of strategies for mental calculation efficiently and accurately.

15. In science, the pupils cover an appropriate range of topics and most reach the standards expected for their age. At the end of Key Stage 1, many of the pupils describe their findings clearly, using a variety of ways, including diagrams, charts and writing. There is a similar picture in Key Stage 2 where, for example, in a Years 3 and 4 science lesson, the pupils achieved levels in line with those expected for their age. They devised a simple branching database to classify animals.

The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons were good. Around the site, their behaviour was satisfactory. There have been one permanent exclusion and two fixed-term exclusions this school year. The pupils understand and follow the expectations of their teachers. The management of the more challenging behaviour shown by a small minority of the pupils has improved and is now effective and unobtrusive. Routines for changing from one activity to another are well established. Most of the pupils are keen to learn, try hard and take pride in their work. During lessons, groups not under the direct supervision of an adult work quietly but do not always interact as effectively as they might. The rate of attendance, at 94.2 per cent last year, is average.

17. The school's provision for the pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The school has established the use of major themed activities, such as a Mexican week, and has also set up a school council. Overall, the learning environment promotes high aspirations and makes a positive contribution to the school's ethos, and on occasions is used effectively as a resource for learning.

18. Regular lessons in personal, social and health education and in religious education contribute to the pupils' development. Although some references to these themes are made in some of the planning for other subjects across the curriculum, in practice they receive little direct attention during most lessons. Opportunities to advance the pupils' moral and spiritual development are sometimes lost and their awareness of other cultures is generally limited. Assemblies follow broad moral or spiritual themes and include appropriate acts of collective worship.

The quality of education

19. The quality of teaching was never less than satisfactory and was good in three quarters of the lessons. Teachers used their subject knowledge effectively to plan the next steps in the learning and to devise engaging and motivating activities that challenged the pupils appropriately. Lessons were planned and structured well, with learning objectives that were shared with the pupils and revisited in concluding plenary sessions. Teachers made good use of assessment to ensure that tasks were accurately matched to the pupils' different learning needs and, in the best lessons, modified tasks as they received feedback from the pupils. Some of the teachers used questioning very effectively to probe and challenge the pupils' understanding and to expose and rectify misconceptions in a supportive manner.

Marking, though generally frequent and accurate, did not always indicate the next stages of learning. Positive and productive relationships underpinned the unobtrusive management of the pupils' behaviour, in a culture of praise and reward. A variety of resources was used to model concepts effectively and to gain and sustain the pupils' interest, and most lessons were conducted at a brisk pace. Most classrooms provide a bright and attractive environment that celebrates the pupils' achievement and promotes learning; in the best lessons, teachers referred to the display and used it to help the pupils make progress.

20. Revisions to planning and guidance ensure that the school's curriculum is firmly based on national requirements. An overview of the curriculum is complemented by medium-term subject plans and by detailed weekly programmes of work for each class. Shared planning and common formats provide consistency across the school. Thorough implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy has underpinned improvements although there is some way to go in speaking and listening.

21. The provision for the pupils in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The pupils are provided with interesting and varied activities, linked to the six areas of learning, that enable them to make sound progress. There is a reasonable balance of adult and child-initiated activities and work generally recognises the pupils' different learning needs. The nursery nurse knows the pupils well and has organised time, space and resources efficiently, managing shortcomings in the accommodation well.

22. There is effective provision for pupils who have special educational needs, with arrangements that meet the requirements of the national Code of Practice. Structures for drawing up individual education plans have been improved and the identified targets are appropriate to the needs of each pupil. The re-organisation of pupil groupings in the infant class has made the planning for pupils' individual needs more effective during the morning sessions.

23. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing the pupils' development in the core subjects and for tracking their progress. This information provides a secure basis for identifying curricular targets for individual pupils, and for setting whole-school targets based on the pupils' previous attainment. Reference is sometimes made to targets when work is marked and, in some classes, the pupils are involved in assessing the extent to which they have met their targets.

Leadership and management

24. Following a period when there were changes in leadership, a substantive headteacher was appointed in April 2003. She provides good leadership and effective management. She has established stability, restored the morale of the teachers and united them in a shared vision and common sense of direction and teamwork. She is very hardworking and sets high expectations that are balanced with appropriate levels of support.

25. The chair of governors provides good leadership. She has established reliable systems and procedures for the governing body and ensures that these are followed. She has played a key role in developing the vision and direction for the school. Governors have visited the school and produced well-focused reports on the quality of provision in their nominated areas.

26. The role of subject co-ordinators is developing but they have yet to play a full part in leading improvements.

27. Staff in their different capacities have worked hard to improve the school. Teamwork is evident in the common approach to planning and in the consistency of approach from class to class. Those recently appointed have been encouraged to play their part and a newly qualified teacher has improved in confidence and practice.

28. There are secure systems for monitoring the quality of teaching, scrutinising the pupils' work, analysing test data and checking the teachers' planning. Information from these and other activities is incorporated into a well-planned annual school self-review that involves the governing body and leads to the formulation of a school improvement plan, which sets well-judged priorities for future work.

29. The LEA has provided good support to the school through arranging temporary leadership and staffing, through work to improve the quality of teaching and through help over management from the school's link adviser. It has evaluated the effectiveness of its support and modified its strategies appropriately.

Implementation of the action plan

30. The inspection report of March 2002 required the school to address four key issues. These principally related to: improving the quality of leadership and management; improving the quality of teaching; raising standards, particularly in speaking and listening; and establishing a whole-school approach to curriculum planning and assessment. Overall, reasonable progress has been made and most tasks have been completed.

31. Changes in the leadership of the school and subsequent restructuring of responsibilities have been supported by effective training from the LEA. Subject co-ordinators are developing in their roles. Changes to staffing have been supported well by the LEA. Training for teachers has been focused on areas of weakness and complemented by a sound programme of monitoring classroom practice and providing advice. A policy and scheme of work on speaking and listening together with training from the LEA have contributed to improvements in this area, although there is still some way to go. The school's curriculum is now based on national requirements and is closely monitored. The school has developed a secure system for collecting, analysing and monitoring information about the pupils' attainment, and this is used consistently.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

The school was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in March 2002. The inspection was critical of many aspects of the work of the school and, in accordance with that Act, the school was made subject to special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

The school was visited by HMI in September 2002, in January, June and October 2003 and in January 2004 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report of March 2002.

In May 2004, two HMI returned to inspect the school for two days. The inspection was carried out under section 3 of the School Inspections Act 1996, which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 10 inspection under the same Act.

Eight lessons or parts of lessons, two assemblies and two registration sessions were inspected. The pupils were observed at break and lunch times and samples of their work were inspected. Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior staff and a representative of the LEA and informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was also taken of the evidence from previous monitoring inspections.

The inspection assessed the quality of education provided and the progress the school has made, in particular in relation to the main findings and key issues in the inspection report of March 2002 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

Notes

