



Inspection report

Rothwell Primary School

**Better
education
and care**

Unique Reference Number 107982
LEA Leeds

Inspection number 274950
Inspection dates 16 and 17 May 2005
Reporting inspector Mr J Richardson HMI

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.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Carlton Lane
School category	Community		Rothwell
Age range of pupils	3 to 11 years		Leeds
			West Yorkshire
			LS26 0DJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0113 214 6302
Number on roll	297	Fax number	0113 214 6302
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs P Walker
Date of previous inspection	May 2004	Headteacher	Mrs J Norton

Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 to 11 years	14 June 2005	274950

Introduction

When Rothwell Primary School was inspected in May 2004, it was judged to require special measures because it was failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) subsequently visited the school on one occasion to monitor its progress, and reinspected the school in May 2005.

Description of the school

Rothwell Primary School operates on two sites and serves the small town of Rothwell on the outskirts of Leeds. The school is larger than average, with 220 full-time pupils and 77 part-time pupils in the nursery. The school community is predominantly white British. There are five pupils who speak English as an additional language. Around 20 per cent of the pupils have designated special educational needs, including two who have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Roughly ten per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is below average. The attainment of the pupils when they join Reception is average. The school plans to bring the infants and juniors together on one site in September 2005. The construction of the new building is on schedule.

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Overall effectiveness of the school

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.

Rothwell Primary School has been in difficulties for some time. However, with the very good leadership and management of the new headteacher and hard work from the teachers and support staff, the school is now providing a sound education for its pupils. Standards in the end-of-key stage tests in 2004 were well below the national average in Key Stage 1 and above the average in Key Stage 2. Standards have risen; in lessons they are broadly in line with those expected nationally overall and many of the pupils achieve well. However, some of the higher-attaining pupils do not make enough progress. The quality of teaching is good. There is a common approach to planning; lessons are well structured, and teachers use paired discussion very well. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning is developing and is good in some lessons. The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Information from assessment is used effectively to monitor the pupils' progress and to direct resources appropriately. The curriculum is broad and balanced, meeting national requirements. Plans for the move to the new building are well advanced.

Improvement since the last inspection

The inspection of May 2004 required the school to address areas for improvement concerned with the leadership and management, the use of information from monitoring, the morale of the staff and the accommodation. There has been good progress in relation to all of these areas.

Capacity to improve

The school's capacity to improve is good. Standards are rising and these gains are reflected in the work of most classes. The headteacher has restored morale and united the staff across both sites in a shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. She has established a good professional dialogue. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluation have led to improvements. The school has a reliable and detailed picture of its strengths and weaknesses and uses this information well to inform development planning. There are sound plans, supported by Education Leeds, to deal with anticipated changes to staffing and the allocation of responsibilities. Education Leeds has supported the school well. It has provided considerable help and advice with staffing matters, and the work of the specialist consultants is evident in the improvements to the quality of teaching and learning.

What the school should do to improve further

The draft school development plan recognises the areas where improvement is needed. However, apart from consolidating recent gains, particularly in the light of the move to the new building, the key priorities are to:

- continue to improve the use of ICT to enhance learning;
- continue to raise achievement, particularly of the higher-attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

The pupils enter the Foundation Stage with attainment that is average for their age. They make good progress in all areas of learning; they are on track to reach, and in parts exceed, the nationally set early learning goals.

The school's results in the Key Stage 1 national tests in 2004 were considerably lower than in 2003 and were well below those achieved by similar schools and by all schools nationally. The proportion of the pupils gaining the expected Level 2 and above fell from 91 to 73 per cent in reading, from 97 to 73 per cent in writing, and from 97 to 92 per cent in mathematics.

The picture at Key Stage 2 is much more positive. In comparison with 2003, the proportion of the pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above in the national tests in 2004 rose from 75 to 93 per cent in English, from 80 to 85 per cent in mathematics, and from 90 to 95 per cent in science. The school's overall results were in line with those achieved by similar schools and above those achieved by all schools nationally. The pupils made good progress.

Standards are rising and in most classes, including in Year 3, they were broadly in line with those expected nationally. Many of the pupils knew what their targets were and worked with a sense of urgency, building well on their previous learning and making good progress. Nevertheless, some of the higher-attaining pupils underachieved because the work they were set was not always challenging enough.

Personal development

The pupils' attitudes towards their work and their behaviour in lessons are usually very good. Consistently applied routines and common expectations support the pupils to develop the social skills necessary to work successfully in a variety of settings, including class, paired and group work. Through classroom activity, assemblies, quality circle time, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and the school council, the pupils are offered the opportunity to reflect upon their needs and those of others. Opportunities to take responsibility and participate actively in citizenship help the pupils to form a deep commitment to the school, each other and the staff.

As a result, the school has created a secure and supportive environment where the pupils learn and the teachers teach. Behaviour around the school is very good. The pupils understand adult expectations, collaborate to support each other and 'look out' for those who can easily become inattentive. The ethos created motivates the pupils to want to attend and, with the exception of some parentally condoned absence, attendance remains just in line with the national average at 94.6 per cent.

Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Through the taught curriculum and themes adopted for assemblies, the pupils, in this predominantly monocultural school, are introduced to an extensive range of ideas and stimuli that help them develop a wider understanding of society than their immediate locality. At the heart of the school ethos is respect for self and others. This is modelled well by the staff in their dealings with the pupils and is expected from the pupils when dealing with each other.

The ethos, supported by a simple and sensible behaviour code, ensures the pupils have a clear understanding of what is considered right and wrong. Pupils are considerate of each other in classroom activities, and through both key stages they show maturity when working in pairs to discuss or tackle issues. Because of the strong understanding by pupils about adult expectations, they are able to participate in lessons without fear of ridicule. Support for the pupils designated as having special educational needs is also effective in enabling these pupils to participate in lessons and make important contributions to discussions.

Displays around the school and files of activities show that the pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to participate in productions, musical events, specific activity days and sporting events. These, along with a basic classroom experience that challenges but supports, help contribute significantly to the personal development of young people who, as they move through the school, are able to demonstrate self control, good motivation, empathy for others and an enjoyment of learning.

Quality of provision

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since May 2004. At that time, roughly one fifth of the teaching was unsatisfactory. Now the teaching is never less than satisfactory. It was good or very good in over half of the 19 lessons. Teachers planned effectively; lessons were structured well, with clear learning objectives that were shared with the pupils and revisited at various points in the lesson. Teachers have started to make use of assessment to match tasks to the pupils' different abilities, but in too many lessons the higher-attaining pupils were insufficiently challenged. A variety of resources and strategies, including the use of paired discussion, captured the pupils' interest and developed their speaking and listening skills. Some teachers have started to use interactive whiteboards well but this technology has yet to be fully exploited. Questions and prompts made links to previous learning and extended and developed the pupils' thinking well. Teachers established a very positive, productive climate for learning underpinned by good relationships and very efficient and well-established routines. The contribution made by additional adults has improved; many made effective contributions to the pupils' learning,

leading group work, supporting individuals during whole-class sessions and making observations and assessments of the pupils' responses. In the satisfactory lessons, time was not always used well; introductory sessions were too long.

There are reliable procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment, monitoring their progress and setting them targets. Information from assessment is used well to tackle areas of underachievement by adjusting planning and directing resources appropriately.

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 detailed weekly programmes of work for each class. Shared planning and common formats provide consistency across the school.

The provision in the Foundation Stage is good. A broad range of activities is well-planned to meet accurately the pupils' different needs. The curriculum is lively and exciting, with a well-judged balance between effective adult intervention, which often introduces more formal work on language and number, and tasks that the pupils choose themselves.

Due regard is paid to the pupils' health, safety and well-being. Governors have overseen the resolution of health and safety concerns. Relationships between adults and pupils are very good. The school has a supportive ethos in which the pupils feel safe and cared for.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are good. There is a full complement of governors, all of whom have received some training. Appropriate committees have been established and their terms of reference agreed. Attendance at meetings is good. Governors receive regular, detailed reports on the pupils' attainment and attendance from the headteacher. Senior staff have also presented reports on provision in their areas.

The leadership and management provided by the headteacher are very good. She has restored morale, shared a clear vision for the school, united and energised the staff in a shared commitment to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards, and improved the status of the school in the community. She has clarified roles and responsibilities and set high expectations that are underpinned by an appropriate degree of support. She has dealt very effectively with unforeseen staffing difficulties. She is ably supported by the deputy headteacher, who has played an increasingly effective role in leading improvements, including the system for monitoring the pupils' progress and arrangements for the induction of new teachers.

Middle managers have improved the part they play in leading their areas, partly because the headteacher has drawn together their work in a cohesive manner and arranged appropriate support and training. Their observations of lessons and scrutinies of the pupils' work have given them a clear picture of what should be done next. There are sound plans for reassigning responsibilities.

Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are good and have provided an accurate and detailed picture of its strengths and weaknesses. There is a good policy that includes appropriate guidance. This is underpinned by a well considered programme of monitoring activities, including: observations of teaching, checks on planning, scrutinies of the pupils' work, and analysis of information about their progress. A key strength is the manner in which information from monitoring has been used to develop strategies to tackle the remaining areas of weakness.

The effective support provided by Education Leeds has helped the school to improve the quality of teaching and to develop and strengthen leadership at all levels. The regular inspections to check progress have provided the school with valuable feedback as well as allowing Education Leeds to evaluate the effectiveness of its support.

Appendix – Information about the inspection

Rothwell Primary School was inspected under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 by a Registered Inspector and a team of inspectors in May 2004. 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 February 2005 to assess the progress it was making to implement its action plan and address the key issues in the inspection report May 2004.

In May 2005, 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.

Nineteen part lessons and one assembly were inspected. The pupils' conduct was observed around the school and on the playground at break and lunchtimes, and samples of their work were inspected. Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior staff, the chair of governors and representatives from Education Leeds. Informal discussions were held with other staff and pupils. A wide range of the school's documentation was scrutinised. Account was 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 areas for improvement in the inspection report of May 2004 and the action plan prepared by the governing body to address those key issues.

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