



Royston St John The Baptist Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106636
LEA Barnsley
Inspection number 277599
Inspection dates 7 December 2005 to 8 December 2005
Reporting inspector Mrs Brenda McIntosh CfBT Lead Inspector

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Vicarage Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Royston
Age range of pupils	5 to 11		Barnsley, South Yorkshire S71 4QY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01226 722011
Number on roll	216	Fax number	01226 700839
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Fr Hudson
Date of previous inspection	2 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr R Holmes

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Royston C of E is an average sized primary school. Pupils come from a broad range of social and economic backgrounds. All pupils are of white British background. Children's skills and knowledge on entry to the Reception class are typical for their age. The school has moved from entry at the beginning of each term to entry in the autumn and spring terms. This will give the youngest children more time to reach the targets expected of them before moving into Year 1. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is below average. An average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school judges its effectiveness to be good but the inspectors found it to be satisfactory with some good features. This is mainly because pupils do not always progress at a fast enough rate particularly in writing and therefore their achievement is satisfactory. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are undoubted strengths in the headteacher's leadership in creating a caring, Christian environment in which pupils are looked after very well. Vulnerable children are helped to overcome their difficulties sensitively so they can cope with their learning. The provision for health and safety is excellent. Pupils' personal development is good. They like coming to school and behave well. Pupils attend school regularly and on time and adopt increasingly healthy lifestyles. The curriculum is satisfactory with strengths in the provision for art, music and science. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The checking of pupils' learning is not rigorous enough to identify where progress is less than pupils are capable of and then take swift action. Generally there is quite a bit of catching up to do by the time the pupils get to Years 5 and 6. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children achieve satisfactorily despite some of them not having spent the full year in the Reception class. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and make good progress. The school is aware of what needs improving and the inspectors agree. As a result, the school has the capacity to improve further. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Make better use of assessment information to set challenging targets for all pupils and check regularly to see how well they are progressing towards meeting them.
- Monitor more rigorously the impact of teaching on pupil's learning, progress and achievement.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory. Children's progress by the end of Year 6 in 2005 was good, but since the last inspection progress has been satisfactory at best and sometimes very low. The achievement of the current Year 6 pupils is satisfactory overall. Throughout the school, the targets set for pupils are not always challenging enough to ensure consistently good progress. There is a difference between subjects: pupils are more successful in mathematics and science than they are in English, where achievement is satisfactory. Children progress at a steady rate in the Reception class. The staggered termly entry means that some children do not have time to make enough progress to attain the nationally expected learning goals. Children in Year 2 achieve above average standards because their progress in Key Stage 1 is good. However, achievement is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4; pupils sometimes lose momentum and then accelerate in Years 5 and 6. Progress in mathematics and science is better and standards are good. In English standards are broadly average because writing is only

satisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average: a good advance since the last inspection. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress towards their targets because of the good help they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils like coming to school, have good attitudes and apply themselves well to their learning. They are friendly and welcoming to visitors. Attendance levels are above average. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They develop a clear sense of right and wrong and rewards encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions. As a result their behaviour is good: they get on well with each other and their teachers. Older pupils are quick to say that it is their job to set good examples to the younger pupils. The recently formed school council is giving pupils a voice in improving the school. Their agenda is firmly focused on pupils' well-being. For example, they have initiated strategies to raise awareness of issues relating to bullying and health and safety. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of the benefits of having a healthy diet and exercising regularly. When given responsibilities pupils carry out their duties eagerly and sensibly. Pupils have key roles in church services such as reading the gospel of the day. However, there are not enough opportunities for older pupils to take on more challenging roles to help them develop a higher level of maturity and independence. Pupils feel the school is preparing them well for the challenges of future learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teaching is often well prepared, imaginative and creates a positive climate for learning, but its effect on progress is not consistently good. Good teaching is having a positive effect on achievement in Years 1 and 2 and there are plenty of good opportunities for those who find learning more difficult. Some advances in reading are dramatic; teaching assistants are often instrumental in this respect. There is a good variety of learning in many lessons. In a Year 6 English lesson, children enjoyed their learning about Shakespeare's plays because they made booklets and interpreted the story of Romeo and Juliet from cartoon strips. The school's effort to improve writing is beginning to work effectively. For example, a child in Year 6 wrote evocatively that, 'night time is like a creepy highwayman..looking up at a velvety sky.' Children's work is assessed well enough, but the information gained is not used effectively and consistently enough to guarantee good achievement. Children are not always given a clear enough idea of how to improve and more able children are not always sufficiently well challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. Good attention is given to all subjects and includes German for pupils in Years 5 and 6. There is good emphasis on enjoyment and creativity through art and design, music and science. Pupils do well in these subjects and become animated when they talk about them. There are some good links developed through different subjects that help pupils see the relevance in their learning. The school has recently introduced strategies to raise attainment and achievement in writing throughout the school. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities are open to the pupils with emphasis mostly on sport and music. Visits out of school and visitors into school contribute well to the curriculum. For example, aspects of personal development and health education are well supported by support agencies and various safety initiatives. The much improved provision in ICT since the last inspection is helping to raise the standards attained by pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides good care, guidance and support. Children, when asked, voice in unison that they like school and what it does for them. The school's first-rate procedures ensure that they are safe and cared for very well. Arrangements for child protection are in place and followed well. Children are strongly encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles; they have many opportunities to undertake physical activity and eat sensibly. As a result they are fit and enjoy a balanced diet. The school works in good partnership with parents and they appreciate the information about children's personal and academic progress.

The majority of children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are supported well. There is room for improvement however, in setting more precise or challenging targets that are shared with all children so that they have the fullest picture of what they are expected to achieve and the quality of work required.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory and not quite as good as the school's assessment. This is mainly because the school does not have a clear enough picture of pupils' progress. The system for checking how well pupils are doing and setting challenging targets so they consistently make good progress is not rigorous enough. This leads to dips in pupils' progress as they move through the school. A strength in the leadership of the headteacher is the vision and direction he provides in creating a caring learning environment with a strong focus on pupils' personal well-being. He is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher, governors and staff in this aspect of the school's work. Self evaluation is satisfactory and leads to the school being able to identify appropriate priorities for development. For example, the school is tackling

well the weaknesses it has highlighted in pupils' writing. However, the systems to check on the quality of teaching and learning are not sharp enough. As a result, senior management are not sufficiently well informed to take effective action so that teaching and learning is always good or better. Governors are supportive of the school's aims and values and fulfil their statutory duties satisfactorily. The school manages its finances well. Funds have been used wisely to employ additional staff to implement the support strategies to help raise pupils' achievement. The school works effectively with other schools and agencies to enhance pupils' learning experiences. Good improvements have been made to the accommodation to provide a pleasant learning environment. Satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for welcoming us to your school. We really enjoyed talking to you and we appreciated the opportunity to observe your council meeting.

What we liked about your school:

- your good behaviour and friendliness
- the achievements in mathematics and science
- the way Mr Holmes and the other staff look after you really well and make sure you have a safe, pleasant place in which to learn
- the school council is well run and the worthwhile contribution it makes in helping pupils to keep safe and healthy
- the headteacher and governors use the funds wisely to improve your building and provide extra staff to help you with your learning.

To make things even better we have asked your headteacher and teachers to:

- watch more closely to see that you are all learning as much as you can in your lessons
- check regularly to make sure you are progressing at a fast enough pace towards reaching your targets.

We wish you all well for the future and hope you continue to enjoy your time at Royston Primary School.