



Roecroft Lower School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 109484
LEA BEDFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 278203
Inspection dates 17 October 2005 to 18 October 2005
Reporting inspector Mr. George Falconer LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Church Road
School category	Community		SG5 4NE
Age range of pupils	5 to 10		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01462730336
Number on roll	140	Fax number	01462 735 488
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Jonathon Ellis
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs. Mary Pledger

Age group 5 to 10	Inspection dates 17 October 2005 - 18 October 2005	Inspection number 278203
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Roecroft Lower School has 140 pupils on roll and is a very popular community school situated on a large attractive site. It draws pupils from a variety of backgrounds in the locality and surrounding area and takes pupils between the ages of four and nine. There is also an out of school club housed on the site. The majority of pupils transfer to the local middle school. Pupils are mostly of white European heritage with a small number of pupils coming from minority ethnic families. A lower number than the national average has special educational needs and a lower number than the national average is eligible for free school meals. Attendance is good and is above the national average. The atmosphere in the school is welcoming and friendly.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This school evaluates itself as good with some very good features. It is very well thought of in the community and regards itself as providing a good education. The inspection team agrees with this analysis. Children enjoy school and parents think it is doing a good job of educating their children. Improvement since its last inspection has been good with the school continually working to improve its already high levels of attainment. Pupils' attainment in 2004 tests was exceptionally good with results well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. There is every indication in 2005 of this trend continuing. Behaviour is very good and pupils show they can get on very well with each other and with the adults in school. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and pupils have a very firm basis from which to develop both personally and academically. Teaching is judged to be good overall by the school and the inspection team agrees with this judgement. The quality of care for pupils is good with some very good features and pupils report that they feel very secure and safe from harm. Child protection procedures are very good. The school works very hard to maintain a purposeful environment for learning and it supports pupils well in their spiritual, social, and moral and cultural development. The school encourages diversity and is actively broadening the good cultural development for pupils. Staff, under the very good and purposeful leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, work very well together and the school has very positive relationships with the parents. There is a good level of communication with parents, who are actively encouraged to become involved in the education of their children. The leadership and management are good with some very good features. The headteacher demonstrates an excellent understanding and a very strong grasp of the areas of strength. Equally there is a very perceptive vision of how the school is to develop. Governors are actively involved at all levels and contribute fully in the leadership and management of the school under the focused and knowledgeable guidance of the chair of governors. This strong and developing partnership lends great insight into the priorities for the school, including variation in attainment of some groups, and makes a very positive contribution to raising achievement and standards in both key stages. The school provides good value for money and demonstrates a good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use thorough data analysis in the Foundation Stage to identify where additional support or more challenging targets could be placed to improve achievement.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of learning and teaching and develop effective data analysis, target setting and tracking systems across transition points and particularly from Year 2 to Year 3.
- Improve the system for tracking the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented.
- Develop strategies to raise the attainment of boys.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and attainment at the end of Year 2 is outstanding. Standards in 2004 were well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment trend depicted in test results since 2000 has been generally very positive and upward with only very minor fluctuations. There is every indication from the 2005 data of this trend continuing. Progress is maintained to the end of Year 4, where evidence indicates that pupils meet challenging targets and demonstrate very good progress in relation to their capabilities. However, there is evidence of variation, with girls attaining higher levels than boys. Pupils with special educational needs generally achieve well through targeted individual education plans. The school development plan rightly recognises these aspects as requiring further development along with raising the attainment of gifted and talented pupils. The inspection team agrees with this self-evaluation.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school has a calm and very positive atmosphere and adults share a wholehearted commitment to pupils' safety and well-being. Within this warm and nurturing environment, pupils grow in self-confidence and develop into confident and articulate young people. The 'Values Education' programme provides regular opportunities for reflection and pupils respond sensibly. For example, during the inspection they considered issues such as the importance of helping others and what it takes to be a good friend. Teachers provide very good examples of how to behave and working relationships are very good. Pupils develop a strong social awareness and address each other with respect and consideration. They develop a clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils learn about major world faiths and their cultural development is further enriched by their ready participation in artistic and musical activities. Pupils feel safe and they thoroughly enjoy the time they spend at school. They make rapid progress in their work because they work hard and attendance is very good. Extra-curricular sporting clubs are popular and pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of keeping themselves safe and healthy. Pupils use the strong development of their basic skills to further their responsibilities in the local and wider community through a variety of activities where they feel they make a positive contribution. Some sit on the school council and undertake specific roles and functions, and all pupils are encouraged to voice their views. This helps pupils to prepare for their life as adults. They work on issues related to economic well-being such as the importance of re-cycling waste, raising money for charity and support for communities in The Gambia and Kenya.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good quality learning is directly linked to good quality teaching. Pupils demonstrably enjoy their lessons and this supports their good progress. Overall expectations are high and the work is generally well matched to the ability of the pupils. They are encouraged to work independently but they also enjoy working with each other and enjoy supporting each other. Attitudes to learning are very positive. Very good use is made of extra adult support and the teaching assistants feel that they are highly valued and play a very central role in supporting learning. The inspection evidence agrees with these views. Pupils are encouraged to think carefully about their work and to take a pride in what they do. This was evident in the lessons visited. Teachers actively encourage pupils to become more involved in their own target setting so they may fully understand how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Curriculum provision is good with some very good features. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties is generally well matched to their needs. The curriculum is expanded to include a good range of after-school and enrichment activities. For example, recent themed days have focused on African and Asian art and Chinese lifestyles and customs. Pupils have also improved their knowledge of famous people well through meaningful cross-curricular links between, for example, history, ICT and art. The school provides French in Years 1 to 4. Year 3 and Year 4 children go swimming. There are good links with local industry to help with the curricular provision and there is also dance and music enrichment. The provision for personal and social education is very good and the well-being of children is encouraged effectively. The building is warm and welcoming and the school works well to make the best use of available resources to provide a good education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The welfare of pupils is a top priority and members of staff work hard to meet pupils' physical and emotional needs. The school has fully embraced the 'Every Child Matters' agenda and pupils feel safe and very well looked after. Procedures for health and safety, child protection and first aid are comprehensive. Links with external agencies are good. This high standard of care helps pupils to work hard and make good progress overall in their work. Induction procedures for children entering the reception class are very good. Staff visit each child at home and liaise closely with the three contributing pre-school groups. This ensures that children are happy and settle quickly. Pupils help to set their own learning targets and they have a clear idea of how to improve their work. Teachers provide good feedback and make good use of assessment

when planning lessons. This is reflected in the exceptionally high standards of work seen at the end of Year 2.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good with some very good elements. The headteacher has a very good understanding of the needs of the school and combines this with a very clear vision of how to move the school forward with the strong support of a very experienced and committed deputy headteacher. As an example, developing more effective data analysis, target setting and tracking systems across transition points has been pinpointed as a priority. All staff in the school are highly motivated and work very well as a team. The chair of governors is strategic to the development of the school and demonstrates a high level of motivation and involvement. Governors are well focused on the priorities to move the school forward and view monitoring pupils' performance, particularly of different groups, as central to their work. The school's self-evaluation includes parents' and pupils' views and its rigour and accuracy have had a positive impact on pupils' achievement and attainment. This has been demonstrated in the continued upward trend of the test results over the last four years. The results, combined with the robust development plans of the leadership and management, demonstrate a good capacity to improve.

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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?	2	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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	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?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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 for making us feel welcome. We really enjoyed meeting and talking with you about your school and your work. We were very pleased that you shared your ideas with us. What we liked about your school: - Your school is a good school. - You work hard, you are well mannered, and you are openly friendly. These features help you to make good progress. - Your behaviour is very good and you listen very carefully to your teachers and are very keen to do all that is asked of you. - You are helpful towards each other and understand the importance of this to your friends and teachers. - You can have a say in things and you have a school council that lets teachers know how you feel about things. - The adults in school are very caring and look after you very well. What we have asked the school to do now: - To carry on doing all the good things that it already does well. - Make sure that children who need extra help continue to be supported and those who need harder work are stretched. - To look carefully at the work that you are given when moving from one year to another so that you are always learning new things. - Make sure that all children, girls and boys, are learning as much as they can. We hope you continue to learn lots in your school and to enjoy what you are doing. We hope that our visit will help all of you to do even better in the future. Best wishes, Mr G Falconer Lead inspector