



The Ryde School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 117313
LEA HERTFORDSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280039
Inspection dates 6 February 2006 to 7 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Paul Cosway LI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pleasant Rise
School category	Community		AL9 5DR
Age range of pupils	3 to 12		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01707267333
Number on roll	233	Fax number	01707258262
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Barbara Holm
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs. Janet Goddard

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

The Ryde School is a primary School of average size. Most pupils enter the school from the attached nursery. There is also pre-school provision on site, but this is not run by the school. The local population served by the school represents a wide mix of social backgrounds. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Pupils are mostly of White British heritage, with some from minority ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with statements, is below average. The school achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2003 and Activemark in 2004. At the time of the inspection, there were two temporary teachers, covering maternity leave, and an acting deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that its overall effectiveness is good, with some outstanding features, and that it gives good value for money. Some pupils are below average on entry, most are average. Good teaching in the Foundation Stage leads to pupils achieving well, and this continues through the rest of the school. Standards in Year 6 are significantly above average and rising. However, the school is aware that more able pupils could achieve even higher standards in writing if the work in lessons challenged them more. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Relationships between the pupils and adults are good, as is pupils' personal development. The care, support and guidance that pupils receive is outstanding. They enjoy school. They told us that it is a friendly, cosy school, and they feel well cared for and secure. Overall, pupils have good attitudes towards learning and most behave well. By Year 6, the behaviour of almost all pupils is outstanding: they are responsible and eager to learn. Almost all parents praise the school and say that their children are happy there. The school has good procedures in place for tracking the progress pupils make. The school is led well and the management is outstanding. It runs very smoothly and efficiently. Staff and governors work well together to support the headteacher in providing a good quality education. The headteacher has identified what needs to be done to ensure that the school continues to improve, including continuing with the development of a thematic curriculum to make education even more exciting for the pupils. Effective improvement since the last inspection has happened. Issues identified in the previous inspection have been addressed successfully. Given the improved standards, and the good quality of teaching and leadership the school demonstrates it is well placed to become even more effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing even higher for all pupils, especially the more able, by giving them more challenging tasks and opportunities to develop and improve their written work.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils start school with standards that are close to national expectations. They achieve well in the Foundation Stage and attain standards that are slightly above expectations. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in English and mathematics. They are significantly above average overall in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science. However, standards of writing are more average. Some more able pupils do not achieve as much as they could in writing because they are not given sufficient opportunities to develop and improve their work. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language, make good progress. Standards are above average in physical education. They are average in

information and communication technology (ICT) and rising as the pupils respond well to the new, high quality resources. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have risen steadily over the last four years, more than they have nationally. Inspectors found that this improvement has been sustained. The school is on track to meet the challenging targets set for the end of Year 6 in 2006, having exceeded its targets in 2005. All pupils meet or exceed their individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development is good overall. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school and they find it hard to keep them away. The high attendance rate is a tribute to the work of the staff in motivating the pupils. Behaviour overall is good. Some younger pupils, especially boys, can be disruptive but the behaviour of many pupils, especially in Year 6, is excellent. Social and moral development is very good. By the time they enter Year 6, many pupils show outstanding maturity. Almost all show respect for one another and for adults, including visitors. Spiritual and cultural development is good. There are many examples of pupils being fascinated by the teaching, for example when watching a demonstration of an experiment in science. Pupils are aware of how to live healthy lives. They thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to take part in the health and fitness week that took place during the inspection. They are taught how to stay safe. Pupils contribute well to the community. For example, they give to many local charities. School councillors have made a difference to their community by using their influence to have a frog litter bin in the playground and by raising money for both it and the friendship bench. Such initiatives, along with their good progress in literacy and numeracy, contribute effectively to their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching is good and as a result pupils learn well and make good progress. Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects, plan their lessons well and provide a good variety of tasks to keep pupils involved and interested. They use ICT well to present information in interesting ways and to motivate their pupils. An exception was a lesson which had a particularly fast pace and the teacher's high expectations ensured that all pupils made excellent progress. Learning support assistants are used effectively and teachers match the work to the needs of pupils with differing levels of ability. However, more able pupils are not always challenged enough in some writing lessons. In almost all classes, teachers have very good relationships with their pupils and manage them well. In the best lessons, the work is exciting and subjects support each other in a thematic way. For example, a literacy lesson taught pupils how to write an information leaflet: a skill they needed for their science project on health. Marking is done

conscientiously and the best examples give pupils advice on how they can improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and provides a well balanced programme of activities including the opportunity for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument. Music is taught by a specialist teacher and this helps the pupils to achieve well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is not their first language are provided for well. There is good provision for literacy and numeracy. The pupils are well prepared to benefit from a future in which they will have to make increased use of ICT in their working lives. The school has good resources, including a computer suite, classroom computers and inter-active whiteboards. Staff are suitably trained in their use. Physical education has a high priority and there is good provision for school sports, swimming and athletics, all of which helps pupils to attain good standards. The curriculum is enriched by local and residential visits. There is a good range of clubs to extend pupils' involvement and enjoyment of sports and the arts, including lacrosse coaching, drama productions and a computer club.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides excellent care, guidance and support. All staff have been trained in child protection and risk assessments take place regularly to ensure that pupils learn in a safe environment. The personal, social, health and citizenship education programme teaches pupils how to live safely and healthily. There are many opportunities to take responsibility. The School Council gives pupils from all years the chance to show initiative, for example by suggesting and helping to buy playground equipment. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because of the effective provision and their parents are closely involved in their learning. Systems for assessing the progress of all pupils in English, mathematics and science and setting targets for their work are good. Pupils are increasingly being told the steps they need to take to reach their targets. Staff are developing more robust systems to ensure that pupils who have special talents achieve as they should.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The process of self evaluation is excellent although its full effect has not been seen on pupils' progress. Parents think highly of the school. Leadership is strongly focused on raising standards in all areas of pupils' development. The school did better than the challenging targets in 2005. The headteacher monitors the work of the school rigorously so is very clear about what is going well and what needs to improve. The school development plan is effective and based on the outcomes of monitoring as well as the views of staff, governors and

parents. Senior managers and subject leaders support the headteacher most ably. Following her lead, they approach their work thoughtfully and analytically. Resources are used very well to support the drive for high standards. It is a tribute to the excellent management systems that the school has run so smoothly during the past year of staff changes. All groups of pupils are treated equally and steps are being taken to ensure that the most able achieve the highest standards in writing. Governors are effective and know the school well through their frequent visits. The budget is managed efficiently. The accommodation is attractive and contributes to the good learning environment. Progress since the last inspection has been effective and the school has good capacity to improve even more.

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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	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	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	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	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?	1	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	1	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	Yes
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

Dear Pupils Thank you very much for all the help you gave to us when we visited your school. We were impressed by how polite you were to us. These are the things we thought were good:

- we think you work hard and make good progress - by the time you reach Year 6 your work in literacy, numeracy and science is better than in many schools - your behaviour is good, often very good, in class, although some young children can get too excited - we think the 'friendship bench' that the School Council asked for is good and helps you all to get on well with each other at playtime - the School Council has many good ideas to help to make the school even better - you enjoy school and we think you do some interesting work - we were very impressed with the effort and enjoyment you showed in the health and fitness week - your headteacher, governors and all the staff are doing a good job in improving the school and making it an even better place for you. We have suggested something that will help make the school even better:
- we think some of you could learn even more in writing and we have asked your teachers to give you more opportunities to improve your written work.

Thank you again and make the most of your time in this happy, friendly school! Yours sincerely Paul Cosway Lead Inspector