



Rawtenstall Waterfoot Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119199
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280488
Inspection dates 25 May 2006 to 26 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Delia Hiscock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Thornfield Avenue
School category	Community		Waterfoot
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Rossendale, Lancashire BB4 9AP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01706 215539
Number on roll	305	Fax number	01706 215539
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ian Mills
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr Simon Jones

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 25 May 2006 - 26 May 2006	Inspection number 280488
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This popular, large school situated in Rawtenstall, Lancashire, serves an urban population. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is low. The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is below average. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average for their age. Consultation is currently being undertaken on whether the school is to be expanded through amalgamation with a nearby school.

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 provides a good quality of education and good value for money. The exciting vision and dedication to the school community of the headteacher has placed it in a strong position for the future. The leadership team is effective and communication flourishes. Everyone knows their role, staff work closely together and the school's robust systems forge a common approach and way forward. The school has proved that it knows itself well. The work of the last three years, in several major areas, has raised standards to above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and ensured that the vast majority of pupils achieve consistently well. The quality of the Foundation Stage has been transformed by new leadership and is now good, even though a lack of an outdoor area specifically designated for Reception children is a weakness that limits the curriculum for these children. That said, the strengths seen in Reception continue into Key Stage 1 where the quality of teaching and learning has also improved. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem grows through good personal development.

Monitoring and evaluation of lessons and pupils' work has raised the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in English. Good quality teaching now features some refreshing ways for pupils to see what they have learned. A small number of lessons for Key Stage 2 pupils are less stimulating and in some instances, marking is overly critical. This means that progress is slowed for some pupils before picking up momentum quickly again in Year 6. The curriculum is successful and features some exciting themed days; just one of the good ideas from pupils. The school website is an outstanding source of information for all and features much of interest to parents and carers; the vast majority of whom have plenty of good things to say about their school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is consistently good.
- Through high quality marking, ensure that all pupils receive the credit for their work and the guidance to support them to improve.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Inspectors confirm the school's view that the majority of pupils achieve well, including those with LDD and the small number of pupils of minority ethnic heritage. At the end of their year in Reception, children meet the goals set for this age, having made good progress from generally average levels of skills when they start. Attainment at the end of Year 2 has been broadly average for several years in reading, writing and in mathematics. Current work shows that progress has improved to good and attainment is rising in writing and in mathematics; a result of some stimulating teaching.

By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are above average, and pupils have good skills in information and communication technology (ICT). In English, progress in reading

and writing has accelerated as a result of much focused development. Attainment is now on a par with that of mathematics and science. This reflects the good progress made by most pupils compared to their earlier attainment and means that pupils meet and sometimes exceed challenging targets. However, as a result of the satisfactory teaching they receive, a group of lower attaining pupils in Year 5 make steady rather than good progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good, as are their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is because of the confidence and self-esteem the school gives them and the way it encourages in all boys and girls to show concern for others and sensitivity to each other's views and feelings. Pupils say that they feel safe in the school, and that bullying is not tolerated. Healthy lifestyles are promoted well. Behaviour is good in lessons and in the playground. Pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and they enjoy school. The extra-curricular clubs and out-of-school visits do much to boost their self-confidence. The above average attendance level reflects pupils' commitment to their work and is one of the reasons why achievement is good. There is a welcoming and friendly approach in Reception and children settle quickly and develop well. The older pupils take their extra responsibilities seriously and carry them out with pride. The school council has played its part in developing the curriculum by suggesting themed days. By the time they leave school, pupils have the skills they need for the next stage in their education. The school recognises that at present there are limited opportunities for pupils to work beyond the school community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Most lessons are well planned and have a sharp focus for what teachers want pupils to learn. This gives pupils a clear understanding of what they have to achieve and encourages their full attention and concentration. Relationships between teachers and pupils are relaxed but businesslike, helping to create a pleasant working atmosphere. Pupils know that if they need help they only have to ask and this gives them confidence and a willingness to try new ideas. Activities are generally selected well and provide pupils with interesting opportunities to learn. In a highly effective mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher used amusing rhymes and interesting games to stimulate pupils' enjoyment of numbers. Pupils involve themselves readily in such lessons and, as a result, make good progress. In a minority of lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils' progress slows because the tasks do not generate the same level of enthusiasm for learning. Throughout the school, pupils with LDD are given work that is well matched to their needs. They receive well judged support from the competent teaching assistants and learn well as a result.

Teachers make frequent assessments of pupils' progress and use the information well to identify what they need to learn next. A very productive feature of assessment is the way in which pupils of all ages are taught to evaluate how well they have done for themselves. When marking work, the majority of teachers praise pupils' achievements and make useful suggestions as to how it can be improved further. However, there are instances where over critical marking does little to encourage pupils or to promote their further learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. For children in Reception, it is well planned and gives them a good start to school. Teachers are becoming increasingly more creative in the way they deliver the National Curriculum, although the curriculum for older pupils in Key Stage 2 is still a little too formal. Information and communication technology (ICT) features prominently in the curriculum. Through regular use and interesting applications, pupils have seen the advantages computers can provide for their learning, and pupils readily and enthusiastically employ computers in their work. Recent development has strengthened the curriculum for pupils' personal, social and health education and for citizenship and this provides a solid platform for pupils' personal development. The school makes very good use of its links with neighbouring secondary schools to extend and strengthen the curriculum, particularly in physical education. Lessons in modern foreign languages are gradually being introduced to extend the curriculum further. Regular visits and visitors and a good range of extra-curricular activities enrich the opportunities available to pupils. Activities such as the whole-school Victorian Day, a suggestion of the school council, provide additional colour and are much enjoyed by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school makes good provision in this area. Appropriate arrangements are in place for dealing with child protection issues which are understood and applied by all staff. There are close working relationships with a range of external agencies in order to safeguard the welfare of vulnerable or disadvantaged children. Pupils with LDD are cared for, supported in their learning and included in all activities. Their academic and personal progress is good. The school has an effective system for tracking pupils' progress over time and for giving additional help when weaknesses are identified. Good links with the local secondary schools ease pupils' transition to the next stage of their education. Pupils say that there are adults they can turn to in the school to help them with problems. However, not all pupils are well guided to improve their work through marking. The vast majority of parents support the school in its work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's vision and commitment to the care of all has built an impressive climate in which staff and pupils strive to achieve. Pupils' personal development is seen to be central to their success and aspirations, so pupils feel very much a part of their school. In the last three years, the focus on pupils' achievement through monitoring and staff development has lifted standards to above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Successful recruitment and strategic placement of teachers has brought about substantial improvements in Reception and Key Stage 1. These are paying dividends in pupils' achievement in writing and mathematics. The school knows the lack of an outdoor learning area specifically for children in Reception narrows the opportunities available.

The core of senior management work has been the establishment of robust systems of communication. These make impressive use of ICT to monitor and communicate how well the school is doing. Consequently, the school knows itself well. Evaluations of performance are linked closely to targets and in turn, clearly mapped out steps in the school's plans help leaders at all levels to reach them. Whilst the quality of teaching and learning is good, some pockets of more ordinary teaching remain in Key Stage 2. New initiatives are in place to help pupils to check how much they have learned. Senior managers are aware that marking is not always helpful to the pupils.

The exciting school website acts as a hub of riveting information for all to use. Parents and pupils think well of their school and know that what they have to say is heeded. Governance is good. Effective use of expertise and of new technologies has brought greater insights and accountability to the work.

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	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	3	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

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The School Council

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25 May 2006

Dear Pupils

We really enjoyed our visit to your school. Thank you for being polite and helpful during our visit. We would like to tell you what we think about your school.

We think your school is a good one. The buildings are old and a bit complicated to get around. Even so, there are lots of exciting things for you to do. We think that you do well in your work. We like the way you use computers to help you learn and the way that you all behave well and work so hard in lessons. We really liked the way that you are starting to work out how much you have learned in a lesson. That's super! It would help now if those of you who are good at that could show others how to do it too.

We know that teachers work hard to make lessons interesting for you and we think that lots of your lessons are good. We want them to try to make more of them as good as the best ones. That would make learning interesting all the time, for all Key Stage 2 pupils. This would help you to do even better. We also want your teachers to make marking really helpful to you so that you know exactly how to improve your work for yourself.

We could see also that you have learned about how to keep safe and healthy, and to care about others. Keep up your good work! Good luck for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Delia Hiscock, Mr Keith Bardon and Mr Brian Dower

School Inspectors