



Ratby Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119946
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280693
Inspection dates 22 November 2005 to 23 November 2005
Reporting inspector Paul Edwards RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Main Street
School category	Community		Leicester
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Leicestershire LE6 0LN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0116 2393610
Number on roll	276	Fax number	0116 2394196
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Maureen Harwood
Date of previous inspection	8 November 1999	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Husband

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 22 November 2005 - 23 November 2005	Inspection number 280693
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ratby is a larger than average primary school situated on the northern edge of Leicester. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. Nearly all pupils are White and of British heritage and very few speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is similar to that seen nationally. When children start school their attainment is similar to that of other children of their age. Since the previous inspection, and prior to the appointment of the current headteacher in September 2004, the school has had five temporary or permanent headteachers.

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 is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils and this matches the school's judgement of its effectiveness. The school has rightly identified that the pupils are not achieving as well as they should by the time they leave the school. The children are given a good start in the Reception class and most achieve the goals expected for their age when they enter Year 1. Good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality in some classes in Years 3 to 6. This results in pupils not always achieving their potential by the end of Year 6. Teachers maintain good discipline and most pupils enjoy school and behave well. The school places a good emphasis on a healthy lifestyle and pupils understand the importance of exercise and a good diet. There is a satisfactory curriculum with a good range of additional activities to make learning more exciting. There is good pastoral care and guidance for the pupils and the monitoring of the academic achievements is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The many changes in the leadership to the school have resulted in initiatives to improve teaching and learning not being followed through. The current leadership has begun to implement strategies that are beginning to impact on the quality of teaching and the progress made by the pupils. The school knows what needs to be done to improve. It has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection and there is a clear capacity to improve further. It provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Raise the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 to that of the best.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start school with broadly average standards, and have a good start to their education in the Reception class. All of the children make good progress and achieve well. Good achievement is maintained in Years 1 and 2 and, by the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics.

Progress in Years 3 to 6 is inconsistent and pupils do not always achieve as well as they should by the end of Year 6. Standards are below average and the school has not built upon the good start made earlier. The school has rightly focused on improvements in writing skills and strategies put in place are showing an impact with considerably more pupils attaining above average levels in the 2005 national tests. However, there has been insufficient time for these strategies to have an impact on standards in all year groups and pupils are not reaching the challenging targets set for them. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily because of the good level of support and clear identification of their needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They join in acts of worship respectfully and are confident in expressing their personal beliefs. They have a good understanding of their own culture and a sound understanding of others, as a result of improved provision. After a fall in standards in recent years, behaviour has now returned to the good level found at the previous inspection. Pupils understand what is expected of them and behave responsibly and safely. In lessons, they work well with others and independently. However, more able older pupils tend to underachieve in English because they write too slowly and do not take enough care in checking their work for accuracy. Pupils willingly take on duties around school, for example as monitors, buddies for younger pupils, playtime sports leaders and road safety officers. The benefits of physical exercise and healthy eating are well understood and pupils thoroughly enjoy taking part in the 'Huff and Puff' activities during break times. Their economic understanding is well developed through many fund-raising initiatives, such as selling plants grown by the gardening club. The pupils' social awareness is very well developed through their very active participation in the 'Green Club', helping to recycle items including paper, foreign coins and mobile telephones. Overall, pupils enjoy school and are keen to take part in the interesting range of activities offered. Attendance continues to be above average.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although in the Reception class the teaching and learning are consistently good and provide the children with good literacy and numeracy skills that are well developed in Years 1 and 2. Throughout the school, teachers are successful in building good relationships with pupils so that pupils behave well and thoroughly enjoy lessons. Teachers are particularly good at questioning pupils and in encouraging them to search out information to further their learning.

There is evidence from the progress made by some pupils in Years 3 to 6 that teaching has improved but it is still not consistently good enough to ensure all pupils make good progress. In the best lessons, teachers build effectively on what the pupils already know and understand to ensure they achieve as well as they can. Where teaching is not as strong, the level of challenge is sometimes too easy and does not push the pupils to do even better. Teachers use sound strategies for assessing how well the pupils are doing. In the best lessons, the teachers make effective use of the information to plan work for pupils of different abilities. However, in the less effective lessons, too little notice is paid to the assessments and pupils do not achieve as well as they should. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and this is evident in the good working atmosphere. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve satisfactorily because of the good support and guidance they receive.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, with strengths in provision for the Reception year and for pupils with learning difficulties. Learning for Reception children is very carefully planned, using stimulating resources and activities to hold their interest. Some pupils with learning difficulties are given extra help before school to boost their literacy skills and physical development, and these intensive programmes are an excellent feature. More able pupils are generally given harder work, but practice is not consistent in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in some of these year groups need more opportunities to write at length in English and other subjects. Learning is extended well through a range of special events, visits and visitors, making good use of contacts with the church and local community. There is a wide range of after class clubs, with particular strengths in music and sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The good relationships developed between staff and pupils are a strength. Child protection procedures are well understood as a result of recent training. Pupils feel safe and know who to turn to if they need help. They say that behaviour has improved because staff now have firm and consistent expectations. There are clear procedures for dealing with any incidents of bullying that occur. Academic guidance is less secure. Assessment is used effectively to identify and track the needs of pupils with learning difficulties or low attainment. The school has begun to set targets for other groups of pupils. However, this initiative has not yet had the desired effect because teachers' assessments are not consistently accurate. Grades and marking comments are occasionally too generous, so pupils do not realise what they must do to improve. This contributes to the pupils' underachievement not being identified early enough or tackled rigorously enough in some classes in Years 3 to 6.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall with some good features. The school's self-evaluation is an accurate reflection of where improvements need to be made and the school improvement plan reflects the headteacher's clear understanding of what needs to be addressed to bring about improvement. The frequent changes to the leadership of the school since the previous inspection have resulted in monitoring which has not been effective in improving the quality of teaching. The current headteacher and deputy have worked hard to create an atmosphere where all staff are keen to improve. Strategies aimed at improving the pupils' achievements, including the opportunity for staff to observe exemplar teaching, are beginning to have an impact, as seen in the improvements in writing. However, the legacy of ineffective monitoring means the improvements have yet to fully impact on the pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6.

Parents are consulted regularly. Most are pleased with the education provided for their children and are very supportive of the school. Although there is no school council, pupils' views are canvassed regularly. Many governors are new to the school. However, they are supportive and aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and are working closely with the senior staff to address the underachievement of pupils in Years 3 to 6.

Weaknesses identified in the previous report have been addressed successfully and, based on improvements made by the senior staff recently, there is a clear capacity to improve further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	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?	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	4	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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?	3	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

Ratby Primary School Main Street Ratby Leicester Leicestershire LE6 0LN

24 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you all for your welcome when we visited the school and for talking to us and telling us all we needed to know.

We particularly liked:

- the good start you make when you join the Reception class and the progress you make in Years 1 and 2
- the good relationships you have with one another and with the staff
- your good behaviour and your interest in school
- the interesting and wide range of activities in which you take part
- the way you are becoming aware of the importance of eating healthily and taking part in more exercise.

To make things better we have asked the school to:

- make the teaching in Years 3 to 6 consistently good to help you make better progress in English, mathematics and science.

Yours sincerely

Paul Edwards Lead inspector