



Rothwell Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121855
LEA Northamptonshire
Inspection number 281116
Inspection dates 7 November 2005 to 8 November 2005
Reporting inspector Paul Edwards RISP

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Gladstone Street
School category	Community		Rothwell
Age range of pupils	7 to 11		Kettering, Northamptonshire NN14 6ER
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01536 710349
Number on roll	346	Fax number	01536 713299
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Brian Doughty
Date of previous inspection	12 June 2000	Headteacher	Mr Mike Cuthbert

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Rothwell is a larger than average junior school, although numbers have declined in recent years. A small proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups but none are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is above average. The socio-economic circumstances of most parents are broadly average, although the recent closure of the town's largest employer has further reduced local employment possibilities. There is no school meal service and all pupils have packed lunches.

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, although there are some significant strengths. The school judges its effectiveness to be good but there are issues to address before that can be the case. Pupils mainly reach average standards by the end of Year 6. In all year groups, most pupils achieve as well as they should but they do better in mathematics than in English and science. The main reason for this is that some of the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in English and science. This issue has been addressed effectively in mathematics and the senior staff are now also taking action to ensure there is similar improvement in other subjects. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Currently there is not enough use of information from assessment to check whether more able pupils are making sufficient progress. The personal and social development of pupils is outstanding and is a significant strength. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties do well because of the effective teaching and good additional support they receive. There is good care and guidance for the pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money and is well placed to improve further with the action being taken by senior management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure the more able pupils are consistently provided with work that is sufficiently challenging in science and English, enabling them to achieve their potential.
- Make more effective use of assessment information to track and improve the progress of the more able pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils enter the school with average standards. They thoroughly enjoy their learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school and by the end of Year 6, standards are usually broadly average in English, mathematics and science. Standards by the end of school have been consistent over the past five years apart from a dip in 2004. As a result of strategies put in place, the standards improved in 2005. The biggest improvement was in mathematics where the number of pupils attaining the higher level was above the national average. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve their potential, more able pupils do not do as well as they should in English and science and do not reach the realistic targets set by the school. The school has already acknowledged this and has adopted different strategies for teaching literacy. Pupils with learning difficulties achieve well and make good progress because of the good level of support and intensive teaching. There is no significant difference in the attainment between boys and girls, and the small number of pupils from minority ethnic groups achieve as well as their classmates.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school is a happy and harmonious community where pupils' personal development and well-being are fostered very strongly. The quality of relationships between pupils and staff is outstanding. As a result, pupils feel valued and secure, and know that the staff have their best interests at heart. They are very keen to learn and concentrate on their tasks. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. The pupils are rightly proud of their beautiful building and look after it well. Attendance is average.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils appreciate the richness and variety of the world, work together amicably, create class rules, and have a well-developed sense of fair play. They enjoy raising funds for national and international charities. Cultural awareness and development is raised by the school's good emphasis on evening musical performances performed by pupils. Bullying is rare, and the very powerful video produced by Year 4 pupils vividly demonstrates their sensitive understanding of the effects of harassment. Pupils willingly undertake responsibilities as 'Buddies' at lunchtimes and say 'it feels good to help other children'. They also participate readily as members of the active school council which has, amongst other things, designed a poster on 'Sun Safety Rules' used throughout the school.

The school very successfully ensures that pupils understand the importance of healthy eating and exercise and there is a good time allocation for physical education. In a survey of Years 3, 4 and 5, pupils all said they 'loved PE' or 'liked it a lot'. The pupils are developing a good range of skills in subjects such as information and communication technology which will help them in their future careers.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and, as a result, pupils make mainly sound progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported effectively in most lessons and when withdrawn for extra tuition. Consequently, they do well. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain tasks clearly. As a result, pupils are nearly always confident about tackling their work. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well and this is evident in the positive working atmosphere which is created. In the most effective lessons, the teaching provides exactly the right level of challenge for all pupils and they make rapid progress. In the weaker lessons, the pace is slower, questions are not always used effectively to check pupils' understanding and, most significantly, the most capable pupils tend to coast because their work is too easy.

Teachers use sensible strategies to check pupils' standards. These assessments are soundly used to inform planning for most pupils, and are used well to match tasks to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. However, the progress made by the most

capable pupils is not analysed with sufficient rigour, especially in English and science. Consequently, the school is in a relatively weak position to identify and rectify any weaknesses in their achievements.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum meets pupils' needs and national requirements well. It takes good account of pupils' interests and experiences and this encourages pupils to enjoy their education and for most to achieve as well as they can. For example, teachers make very good use of the historic town of Rothwell in project work, in developing research skills and in encouraging pupils to appreciate and contribute to their community. Pupils have also recently researched the footwear industry and they are very well informed about the origin of many of the nearby street names. Good improvements in the information and communication and technology provision is enhancing the pupils' research skills. An extensive range of musical and art activities add significantly to the pupils' enjoyment of school life and a residential visit for older pupils develops their social skills.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of enrichment activities. These include visits from professional storytellers as well as trips to nearby places of worship such as the local church, Leicester Central Mosque and the Hindu Temple in Wellingborough. These are excellent opportunities for developing their awareness and understanding of the diversity of society. The Expressive Arts Days involving visiting artists add significantly to the pupils' cultural development.

The school is successful in developing pupils' awareness of safe and healthy living. All in Years 5 and 6 attend St John's Ambulance Training. Until the closure of Montsaye Pool in March, the school had planned swimming provision for its pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 and popular extra-curricular activities, including tag-rugby, cricket and netball, are attended by a good number of pupils. Pupils can also attend a computer club and a writers' workshop. Pupils are successful when they take part in local competitions. There are good opportunities for both boys and girls and the school has, for example, enjoyed much success in local and county 'Mixed Kwik Cricket'.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The welfare of pupils is central to the school's work. The school has been very successful in ensuring the health and well-being of the pupils and their safety. The governing body, for example, is closely involved with child protection and ensuring safety checks are in place. Adults know their pupils very well and that information is used very well to organise the support necessary and remove any barriers to learning. Teachers provide good quality personal and academic guidance and support. Teachers generally monitor pupils' progress carefully. Pupils mostly have a clear idea of how well they are doing in their work and what they should do to improve, but that is not always the case with higher attainers.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory and there is an accurate assessment of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed effectively. Very strong links have been established with neighbouring schools and outside organisations which are having an effect on the school's development and pupils' motivation. The headteacher, with the support of the governing body, has been very successful in managing the effects of the school's shrinking budget caused by a significant reduction in pupil numbers. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly and make a significant contribution to changes made by the school. The contribution provided by the Friends of the School Association is much valued by the school.

The school has made a good start in making better use of the wealth of data to raise standards, and the improved national test results in 2005 are due to that, particularly in mathematics. It recognises in its improvement plan that it can do even better in setting targets and tracking pupils' progress to ensure all pupils are challenged and stretched. There is therefore not only a good awareness of how the school can move on but also how that should be done. The governors fulfil their duties effectively and ensure that the school meets its legal requirements. They have a good understanding of what is happening in school and recognise the importance of challenging the school to raise standards further. The school has good plans to make even greater use of the expertise of governors.

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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	NA	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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?	3	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?	3	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	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	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

Rothwell Junior School Gladstone Street Rothwell Kettering Northamptonshire NN14 6ER

9 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you all for your very warm welcome when we visited the school and for talking to us and telling us everything we needed to know. We really enjoyed our time in your school.

We particularly liked:

- your wonderful building with super displays of your work and the careful way that you look after it
- your excellent behaviour and the way you work very hard in lessons
- the excellent relationships you have with one another and the staff
- the way the school helps you to become mature and how you look after one another
- the very interesting and wide range of activities that you all undertake.

To make it even better, we have asked the school to:

- make better use of information from tests and marking of your work to ensure the teachers give some of the more able pupils tasks that are more challenging, particularly in English and science.

I hope you continue to work hard and enjoy your time at school.

Paul Edwards Lead Inspector