



Ruishton Church of England Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 123822
LEA Somerset
Inspection number 281568
Inspection dates 31 January 2006 to 1 February 2006
Reporting inspector Susan Wheeler HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Newlands Road
School category	Voluntary controlled		Taunton
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Somerset TA3 5JZ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01823 442832
Number on roll	163	Fax number	01823 443664
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Alison Fletcher
Date of previous inspection	13 October 2003	Headteacher	Mr Neil Dalton

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 31 January 2006 - 1 February 2006	Inspection number 281568
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is smaller than average, with 163 pupils aged from four to eleven and almost all from White British backgrounds. The school is popular and pupils attend from a wide geographical area. There is a resource base for twelve pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, although specialist support is provided for many more than this number. A significant proportion of pupils move into school after the age of seven and many come for the specialist provision. The extensive redevelopment of the accommodation is nearly finished and provides for three new classrooms, a library and interactive whiteboards in each class.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory but with many strengths. The school judges itself similarly, recognising what it needs to do to improve standards and achievement. The vast majority of parents feel very positively about the school and describe it as 'one large family'. As a consequence, pupils enjoy school and are confident that adults listen to them. The majority make satisfactory progress and reach the standards expected, but some of the higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are highly respectful and build very strong relationships. Teaching is satisfactory, with some good features, including high expectations of pupils' behaviour. However, staff do not always make full use of the school's robust assessment systems when planning the next steps for pupils. The quality of care for all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and disabilities, is outstanding. Good links with other organisations provide effective support for staff and pupils attached to the resource base.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, with particular strengths in leadership of English and mathematics. This school values everyone highly and promotes equal opportunities very well. Pupils from the resource base are integrated very effectively. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. They have a good induction to school and build strong relationships. They start learning at levels slightly below those expected nationally, but by the time they move into Year 1, most have made satisfactory progress. They do well in personal, social and emotional development but make slower progress in aspects of their reading. The school manages its finances efficiently and provides satisfactory value for money. Since the last inspection, when the school was judged to be underachieving, there have been considerable improvements, particularly in leadership and management and in the quality of teaching. The school has good capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers make full use of assessment information when planning for the next steps in pupils' learning.
- Provide learning opportunities which are sufficiently challenging for all the higher-attaining pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Many children begin school at levels slightly below those expected nationally, especially in communication, language and literacy. Most make satisfactory progress through the school and some do very well. Early identification of pupils' learning difficulties and disabilities and the effective use of good individual and small group support help to raise their achievement. At the end of Year 2, test results in 2005 showed a good proportion of children reaching the expected levels in reading and mathematics, but standards in writing were lower. Consequently, the school has made this a priority in planning and pupils throughout

the school have challenging targets for improving their writing. By the age of eleven, most pupils achieve satisfactory standards, with significant numbers reaching the higher level for their age in mathematics. The progress made from Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, although it varies between subjects. Good progress is made in mathematics. The school uses data very effectively to monitor pupils' progress and accurately identify areas where individuals need to improve. However, this information is not used consistently in planning the next steps for pupils' learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils like school, enjoy their lessons and work conscientiously. They are very polite. Their relationships with each other and with staff are extremely considerate, reflecting the strong emphasis that the school places on respect for everyone. Behaviour is good throughout the school. Pupils play happily together and say incidents of bullying are very rare. Older pupils willingly share their values with younger ones and say that they help these pupils to 'play nicely'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is well supported by lessons and assemblies.

Pupils say that the teachers always have time for them and they are confident that their views, thoughts and feelings will be listened to and acted upon. They spoke about wanting more playground markings and this is being considered. Pupils participate fully in local events, including the village fair and visits to the elderly.

Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, enjoy exercise and participate successfully in a range of sporting activities. From their learning in physical education and personal, social and health education, pupils know how to be safe and healthy. The opportunities provided for pupils to use their skills in practical ways help prepare them for the future. Some older pupils run their own businesses, such as the Oak Tree Crafts.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory and almost half were good. The satisfactory sessions had many strong features. In good lessons, planning is well organised: it emphasises what pupils are expected to learn and is carefully adapted to match the range of ability. Support staff provide very good help and guidance for pupils with learning difficulties and help them participate fully. Pupils have a clear understanding of what they should be learning and what they need to do to meet their targets. They participate fully in discussions led by the teacher and readily talk through their ideas with a partner. Although questions are often used effectively to assess learning and extend pupils' understanding, they are not always

targeted to challenge pupils' thinking. Marking often helps pupils to know what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. There are robust systems to analyse pupils' achievements, to identify areas for development and to enable staff to set challenging targets for improvement, but their use is inconsistent. The higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently to achieve their best. Lessons are well resourced, with very effective use made of interactive whiteboards to motivate pupils and encourage their full participation. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well and classrooms are calm and productive places where they feel valued.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school offers pupils a good curriculum. It is greatly enhanced by interesting and popular out-of-class activities, including sports and music with specialist teachers. A rich and well-planned programme of visitors and visits adds extra enjoyment to learning. The annual residential visit makes a significant contribution to pupils' social development. Cultural awareness is broadened through the teaching of French in Years 5 and 6 as well as by religious education lessons throughout the school.

The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good, with some outstanding features. Very detailed individual education plans are used carefully to make sure that the pupils make good progress. The school's planning for the youngest children is good and ensures that they start with a secure platform for future learning.

The curriculum for personal, social and health education prepares pupils well for their future and helps them stay healthy and safe.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good and are significant strengths of the school. All adults contribute towards the outstanding level of care provided for every pupil. Everyone is valued and all adults are committed to promoting the pupils' best interests. Pupils' personal development is well provided for and they are taught how to keep safe and healthy. They feel confident to discuss worries or concerns and trust the adults to help them. Older children say that they know how to help each other because they learnt it when they were very young. There are good examples of effective academic guidance but this is inconsistent across the school. Health and safety procedures are reviewed regularly. Vulnerable pupils are given good support by the school and by outside agencies. Arrangements for child protection are strong. The inspectors agree with the positive views of parents who wrote to express their appreciation of the way the school supports their children.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and identifies provision for the higher-attaining pupils as one of its priorities. The school has introduced initiatives to support the most able mathematicians that have made a significant impact on the results in Key Stage 2. The school promotes equal opportunities very well. The vast majority of parents believe the school is doing a good job and most feel that their views are taken into account. Many speak highly of the senior team, describing them as 'welcoming' and running the school with 'great efficiency'. Inspectors agree with the view that staff and governors work well together and have a shared commitment to improving pupils' education.

The school has benefited from being part of a primary leadership programme. The leadership team works closely with networks of schools and other agencies to share ideas and improve what they provide for pupils. The school's action plan is comprehensive and has led to improvements in pupils' learning, for example, through an improved system for monitoring teaching. This is particularly effective in the teaching of English. Teachers are given detailed written feedback on their strengths and clear guidance on how to improve. Support for newly qualified staff is very thorough and effective. Leadership of the resource base is good and specialist support staff are highly trained and deployed very effectively.

The governing body is well led. Governors are developing a sound understanding of the progress the school is making and where it needs to improve. Financial management is satisfactory, with a clear focus on spending to improve provision and raise standards. The leadership and management team has made considerable progress in moving the school from an underachieving school to one with 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?	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	3	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	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	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?	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	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	2	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

Dear Children,

Thank you very much for helping us to feel welcome in your school, for answering our questions and sharing your work with us. As you know, we visited every class and talked to your teachers, Mr Dalton and the chair of governors. We would like to tell you what we thought about your school.

Here are some of the good things we found:

You behave very well and are extremely caring towards each other.

You enjoy school and know how to keep yourselves healthy and safe.

We were pleased to hear that your ideas are listened to and that you are working hard on exciting projects, including Oak Tree Crafts, and developing your environment.

Your teachers and support staff care for you brilliantly.

If you have any problems with your learning you get lots of help.

This is the main area where your school can improve:

To make sure that everyone keeps making really good progress and that all of you do your very best.

Thank you again for all you did to make our job easier. It was good to talk with you. We hope you enjoy the rest of your time at Ruishton Church of England Primary School.

Yours sincerely,

Susan Wheeler

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools