



The Round Oak School and Support Service

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 125806
LEA Warwickshire
Inspection number 282002
Inspection dates 1 December 2005 to 1 December 2005
Reporting inspector Patricia Potheary RISP

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

Type of school	Special	School address	Pound Lane
School category	Maintained		Lillington
Age range of pupils	5 to 16		Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 7RT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01926 335 566
Number on roll	85	Fax number	01926 886 163
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Fred Farrell
Date of previous inspection	8 May 2000	Headteacher	Miss Puffin Pocock

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Round Oak is a community special school. Most pupils have moderate learning difficulties, about 15 % have autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and a few have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. Pupils usually enter the school between the ages of 10 and 13 years. All but two pupils are of White British origin. The school is being reorganised and, by January 2007, will become a secondary school with sixth form for pupils with all types of learning difficulty and disability. The school is working towards specialist sports college status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Round Oak is a good school. The school is valued highly by parents who think that 'the teachers are so positive and friendly that it instils confidence', and enjoyed very much by pupils. It provides good value for money. Pupils make good progress and achieve well because the quality of teaching is consistently good. This view is shared by the school. Outstanding care, support and guidance means that pupils make exceptional progress in their personal and social skills. They are helped to reach their targets very well and this, in turn, leads to very good opportunities for their future choices and well-being. The curriculum is good with several strengths, including excellent art and sporting opportunities and high quality enrichment activities which bring learning alive. Leadership and management are good, with a culture of careful monitoring and regular improvements since the last inspection. However, whole school targets are too broad to ensure that actions to improve pupils' achievements are well targeted. This is because assessment information does not show how well different groups of pupils do over time. It also means that governors lack the information they need to ensure all pupils are doing as well as they can. The school is already beginning to improve how information is collected and the capacity to continue improving is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to develop a clearer picture of achievement and progress over time, for different groups of pupils, in order that whole school targets can be more precise and effective in raising achievement.
- Ensure governors have the information they need to check and challenge the rate of progress for different groups of pupils.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The school sets precise and challenging targets with each pupil in every subject and in their individual education plans. These are based upon thorough assessment of their individual skills and are regularly achieved. Pupils' achievement and progress are good. Pupils are quite clear about how well they are doing and their parents are very confident that their children make good progress. However the school has limited information about progress within particular age groups or how well pupils do in relation to their attainment on entry. Achievement in science was unsatisfactory last year, but, with a new specialist teacher, this is improving and progress is now good. Sporting achievements are outstanding and several pupils have won national and international status in their chosen sports. The quality of achievement in art is also exceptionally high, and will lead to GCSE qualifications for the first time next year. Each year, the number of qualifications awarded at the end of Year 11 is increasing. Despite very low attainment on entry to the school, several pupils gain GCSEs in mathematics and ICT and almost all gain Entry Level Certificates in English, mathematics, geography and PE, often with distinction. They also have good results in vocational and work-related

qualifications, which meet their individual interests and needs. This means that pupils are usually able to go on to further education, with a few finding work right away. Progress for pupils with ASD is equally good. For a very small minority of disaffected pupils, who arrive aged 13 or older, progress is slow, despite the well-informed strategies used to try and motivate them to learn.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development and well-being of pupils is outstanding. Parents are very positive about the way their children have grown in confidence. Pupils really enjoy school, most of all, their lessons and the kind way teachers help them to learn. Pupils usually behave well, are extremely sociable, and hold mature conversations. A few pupils experience bullying, but know how to use the 'Bully Buster' and other systems and help each other to keep safe. Pupils build up an excellent understanding of how to live in a healthy way. They take very good advantage of the sport and exercise on offer, and choose good healthy food to eat at lunch time. Attendance is now satisfactory and, despite some long-term non-attendees, is the most improved for a central area special school in the county.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. Their cultural development, for example, is excellent, including very good knowledge of the way other cultures live. They also have an excellent appreciation of art and music and attend literacy groups.

Pupils make an excellent contribution to the school and wider community. The many examples include; using the school council to create change, acting as prefects and peer mentors, winning citizenship awards and helping older people in the community. Pupils strive to meet high expectations from the school and parents feel that their children's futures are more secure because they are so well motivated to reach their goals.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers in all subjects and for all age groups make detailed assessments of what each pupil has learned so that they can plan lessons to meet their different needs. It means that pupils understand what they have to learn and are clear about what they must do to improve. This is why they make such good progress. Teaching clearly meets the different needs of pupils with additional learning difficulties and disabilities. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and make lessons interesting so that they want to learn. In a few lessons, teachers do not ask the questions which will lead pupils to think for themselves. Teaching assistants have a wide range of skills and contribute significantly to the good learning taking place. Teaching is now strong in most subjects, with the exception of music and careers,

where it is satisfactory. Teaching in art and sport is exceptional, leading to some outstanding progress for pupils. Parents and carers are involved well in supporting their children's work at home, because of detailed home-school diaries and good information on what is being learned.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets requirements. It is flexible in helping pupils develop their individual interests and builds on their skills well from year to year. The increasing range of vocational courses, good work experience and strong development of personal, social and basic skills, provide good preparation for pupils' working lives. The number of GCSEs offered is more limited but improving, and includes art and design for the first time for the current Year 10 pupils.

Enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding. The school provides an exceptionally wide range of experiences, which make learning enjoyable. During school, after school, through numerous visits locally, around England and abroad, the school brings to life the learning begun in lessons. The quality of sport is exceptional and far-reaching and the school has already achieved the Sportsmark and Activemark gold awards. High quality provision in art is leading towards an Artsmark award. Pupils are helped to understand how to live safe and healthy lives very well in several subjects, especially physical education, science, and personal, social and health education.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care, guidance and support for pupils is outstanding. Thorough systems for safeguarding pupils meet all requirements and are kept up to date with regular training. For example, the school has been awarded Warwickshire's bronze and silver awards for their Health Promoting Scheme which includes strategies to prevent bullying. Excellent programmes to support pupils include counselling, mentoring and therapy as well as extensive personal and social education.

Pupils receive very good individual guidance and support to help them do as well as they can in their work. Staff, together with parents, help pupils to work towards realistic targets, which challenge them and help them reach their goals. Staff, working with agencies such as Connexions, make an outstanding effort to help pupils see what is open to them and to help them make the right choices for the future.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, well supported by her deputy, has overseen continuous improvements to the school. This is despite unavoidable staffing difficulties, ongoing reorganisation and running the expanding

Support Service. Very good links with other schools and agencies, especially the Support Service, has many benefits for the school and its pupils.

The progress of individual pupils is monitored very well, and anyone getting behind receives extra help, which is why they do well. Senior management understand the school well and, taking good account of parent and pupil views, have made an accurate self-evaluation of their strengths and areas for development. Detailed knowledge of the quality of teaching and learning has enabled them to keep the good standard consistent and improve areas of weakness. The information gathered about pupils' achievement, however, does not show how well different groups of pupils progress over time. This results in very general whole school targets which do not identify any particular groups which may well need to have their achievement raised more rapidly. Senior management have already identified and begun developing this area.

The school provides very good equal opportunities for pupils and provides every opportunity for pupils to learn alongside their mainstream peers. Staffing and resources are now good, but accommodation, although well presented, is inadequate for some subjects such as science. These issues should be resolved with the reorganisation. Governance is good with a strong role in overseeing provision and good knowledge of individual pupils. However, without more detailed information about how well groups of pupils achieve, they cannot ask the challenging questions which will help the school make even faster progress.

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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	NA	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	4	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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	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	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	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

The School Council Round Oak School and Support Service Pound Lane, Lillington Leamington Spa Warwickshire CV32 7RT

2 December 2005 Dear Pupils

Thank you for being so helpful to us when we visited your school; we enjoyed the time we spent with you very much. We can see why you are so happy at Round Oak. We also enjoyed meeting your teachers and seeing you do so many things.

What we liked most about your school

- How much you learn and the way you improve.
- How much you enjoy the school and help to look after it.
- The responsible way you behave, help each other, and work hard in lessons.
- The interesting things you are given to learn and the visits that you make.
- The kind way the staff look after you and keep you safe.

What we think could be even better

- Finding out where you make the most progress to show when you need more help. This will help governors to keep a better check on how well you are doing.

We wish you all the very best in the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Patricia Potheary

Lead Inspector