



Rowde Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 126409
LEA Wiltshire
Inspection number 282108
Inspection dates 22 September 2005 to 23 September 2005
Reporting inspector Laurie Lewin RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Marsh Lane
School category	Voluntary aided		Rowde
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		Devizes, Wiltshire SN10 2NP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01380 723991
Number on roll	220	Fax number	01380 723991
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	11 December 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Ball

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 22 September 2005 - 23 September 2005	Inspection number 282108
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Rowde Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is a school of average size just outside the town of Devizes. The school is popular with parents and the number of pupils at the school has increased significantly over recent years. To accommodate this increase in size and to boost the quality of its facilities the school is moving into new premises in September 2006. Pupils' home backgrounds are extremely variable and although some come from socially advantaged homes, about a third of families live in local authority housing. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds, with a small minority from other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is slightly above that found in most other schools nationally and this proportion has been increasing over the last few years. Children have below average attainment on entry to school. The school has held Investors in People status for the last 10 years and received the 'Basic Skills Award' in 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The continual drive for excellence by the staff and governors is what makes this school outstanding. High quality teaching across the school helps pupils reach high standards both academically and personally. Pupils receive a thorough education and enjoy a rich range of activities. Outstanding leadership and management ensure that the school moves forward rapidly. The school has a happy atmosphere and visitors are greeted by smiling faces in all classes. Overall, the school provides excellent value for money. The school is very clear about its own strengths and quick to identify any areas it thinks should be improved.

Children get a great start in the Foundation Stage. The first-rate teaching moves them rapidly from below average standards on entry to above average standards by the time they move on to Year 1. This very good progress continues throughout the school so that standards are significantly higher than are found in most other schools nationally by the time they leave Year 6. Overall, the school is successful in consistently improving the standards that pupils reach each year. However, results in writing for Year 6 pupils in 2005 were not as good as expected and this is linked to the fact that older pupils do not always write their ideas down quickly and efficiently.

As a result of an exciting and stimulating curriculum, high quality teaching and excellent support and care, pupils' personal development is outstanding. They become increasingly mature and sensible individuals as they progress through the school and show exemplary behaviour.

Under the excellent leadership of the headteacher, the school has moved a long way forward since its last inspection. The staff and governors show a high level of commitment and an outstanding capacity to maintain the momentum of school improvement in the future.

What the school should do to improve further

- help older pupils in particular learn to complete written tasks more quickly and efficiently to make the most of their very good literacy skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Most of the children start school with below average attainment. Lesson observations showed that many of them struggle to speak clearly and listen carefully. They receive an excellent start in the Foundation Stage where high quality teaching helps them to progress very well and exceed the expected levels by the time they start Year 1. This rapid progress continues as they move through the school, so that by Year 2 and Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are significantly higher than in most other schools. Results in the national tests generally improve each year due to the continual push by staff to improve the quality of teaching and the range and depth of what pupils learn.

Early indications from the 2005 national test results are that standards have been strengthened further, with the school reaching the challenging targets it sets itself. Year 6 mathematics and science results showed particular improvement. However, some pupils did not reach the high levels predicted for them in writing. Samples of their work seen from last year show well above average standards. Following this up, inspectors noticed in lessons that older pupils are often slower than they should be in getting ideas written down. This is due to a perception that they need to get spelling and handwriting perfect with the first draft. Discussion with teachers shows that there is a need to explore a wider range of strategies to build pupils' confidence in this area, to make the most of the very good basic skills they have been taught.

All groups of pupils throughout the school progress very well and those with special educational needs make excellent progress due to the outstanding support they receive.

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Children's personal development is outstanding. The excellent relationships apparent throughout the school help pupils to become increasingly confident and well motivated. As indicated by the school's high attendance levels, pupils are keen to get to school each day. Older pupils say they really appreciate the big efforts that teachers exert to make lessons as much fun as possible. One pupil commented '...we get an outstanding education'.

Pupils become mature and sensible. They regard the school council as an important way for them to express their views and they say their ideas are always listened to and often result in actions to bring about school improvement.

Pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They show lots of common sense in the way they act and are always polite, friendly and kind to each other. In particular, pupils show a good sense of humour.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Through their extensive involvement in charity fund raising work pupils develop a sensitive awareness to events in the world around them. They have a very clear understanding of right and wrong. They see the staff as caring and supportive and respond by following these good examples.

Through lessons, assemblies and the school's wide ranging provision of extra activities pupils develop a very good understanding of how to stay fit and safe and develop a healthy lifestyle. Economic well-being is promoted effectively through the school's good work in developing pupils' basic skills.

Grade: 1

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The school's high standards are the result of the high quality teaching and learning evident throughout the school. Teachers work extremely hard to make their lessons interesting. For example, Year 6 pupils showed great excitement using the new electronic voting pads. Some said they felt it was like voting on 'Pop Idol'. In all classes teachers show great skill in pitching the level of work to challenge individuals. Very clear questioning to check pupils' understanding and very clear explanations for activities are the trademarks of teaching across the school. As a result, pupils always have a confident understanding of what to do.

Through the strong relationships created, pupils become fully encouraged and confident learners from day one in the Foundation Stage onwards.

Teachers check pupils' progress regularly and make very good use of all assessment information to sharpen the precision of their planning. For example, through this kind of analysis, teachers have realised recently that they need to improve older pupils' skills in getting ideas onto paper more quickly during written tasks. Through their high quality marking, teachers give pupils a clear idea of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, teachers recognise rightly that more could be done to involve pupils in evaluating their own progress and creating targets.

Teachers ensure that all groups of pupils benefit fully from their lessons. Together with the teaching assistants, they do an excellent job of helping pupils with special educational needs overcome difficulties.

Grade: 1

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The school provides an outstanding curriculum. Very effective planning for all age ranges ensures that pupils learn about all subjects in depth. Very good links made between subjects such as history, art, drama and literacy help learning to become meaningful for pupils. For example, older pupils said that they really enjoyed writing an account from the viewpoint of a soldier in the Battle of Marathon. Staff make the curriculum as lively and interesting as possible by organising lots of visits, inviting many visitors in to the school, and by providing an excellent programme of extra-curricular activities.

The school places a high priority on personal, social and health education, making sure that aspects of this work are fully ingrained in all subjects. This approach is the reason why pupils' personal development is so good.

The school is very conscientious about ensuring that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, participate fully in all activities.

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides outstanding care for its pupils. Procedures for ensuring children's welfare, health and safety are fully established. Vulnerable children are carefully monitored and receive confidential and sensitive support. The school gives outstanding support to pupils with learning difficulties and keeps parents well informed about their progress. Pupils say that the school is 'very caring' because adults will always listen to them and help them when they are worried. They feel safe from bullying because the school deals very seriously with it, but are clear that 'naughty children are always given a chance to improve'. The confidence that this gives them results in a school full of happy, secure children. Links with parents are very strong and they are very pleased that the school listens to their views and concerns. They are confident that their children settle in well at school and say that the staff do all they can to support and help their children.

Grade: 1

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

As a result of its outstanding leadership and management the school has sustained an impressive track record of high standards over the last 10 years. The headteacher shows excellent leadership and very successfully keeps the school moving forward at a rapid pace. He persistently holds the expectations of what should be achieved at a high level. He creates an atmosphere in which all staff work together as a highly effective and enthusiastic team. The staff are fully committed to providing the best possible quality of education for the pupils.

The governors give the headteacher and staff strong support. They are fully involved and through their regular monitoring activities they have a clear understanding of what works best and what needs to improve in the school. The chair of governors, in particular, makes an immense contribution. In its self-evaluation the school rightly pays tribute to her energy that has helped sustain the momentum of the project to build a new school. It is also an accolade, particularly to the headteacher, but also to the whole staff, that with the major involvement of planning a new building, they have remained fully focused on developing the curriculum and maintaining high standards.

The quality of the school's own self-evaluation is good. The school has a clear insight into how well it is doing. However, systems to ensure that all staff are fully involved in the evaluation process have yet to be clearly established.

The school creates very effective action plans to help with further improvement. In doing so it takes full account of the views of all staff, governors and parents.

Grade: 1

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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	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?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	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	1	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	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	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?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	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	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	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

24th September 2005

Dear Children,

I am writing to let you know how much we enjoyed coming to visit your school. Thank you for making us so welcome and helping us during the school inspection. We especially enjoyed hearing about the activities you said you enjoyed and some of the humorous stories about your teachers! We were impressed by the things we saw and here are some of them:

you work very hard in lessons and show a lot of interest in the work

you reach very good standards in English, mathematics and science when you are in Year 6

your school is a very friendly and happy place and your behaviour is really excellent. Everybody is polite and helpful

you like your teachers and you told us that they work really hard to make lessons as much fun as possible. We also think the teachers work really well to help you learn

you really appreciate all of the extra, interesting and exciting activities that the school provides for you

we think the school does an excellent job of taking care of you

we were very impressed to see how much you know about the need to eat healthy foods and stay fit

we think that your headteacher does an excellent job of organising the school and helping you all to become so successful

Although you reach high standards in your work by Year 6, we think there is still room for you older children to improve your writing skills further by learning to get ideas onto paper more quickly when you are doing written tasks.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours sincerely,

Laurie Lewin Lead Inspector