



Rossington Toredale Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106698
Local Authority Doncaster
Inspection number 287590
Inspection dates 11–12 December 2006
Reporting inspector Joe Peacock

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gattison Lane
School category	Community		Rossington, Doncaster
Age range of pupils	3–7		South Yorkshire DN11 0NQ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01302 868387
Number on roll (school)	168	Fax number	01302 863161
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Tracy Fiddler
		Headteacher	Mrs Tracy Wild
Date of previous school inspection	24 September 2001		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This smaller than average school is situated in an ex-mining area, south of Doncaster. All the pupils are from White British families. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average and the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. The school has had many staff changes over the past two years including a new headteacher and deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school and gives good value for money. Good relationships exist between pupils and their teachers and most of the time pupils have a good attitude to their work. Pupils behave well and this helps their learning. They understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep safe. Parents' views about the school are very positive. They appreciate the good level of care and the fact that their children enjoy coming to school.

Pupils make good progress from the Nursery to Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics because of the good quality of teaching. The quality of provision in the Foundation Stage is good and the experience and knowledge of the new deputy headteacher is being used effectively to raise standards further. The outdoor area is underdeveloped and consequently, it is not being used often enough by children in the Nursery or Reception classes to broaden their learning.

It is remarkable to see how much has been achieved in the past year when all the staff changes are taken into account. New staff have settled in quickly and the expertise of the new headteacher is shining through. Some of the recent improvements include; establishing the roles and responsibilities of subject leaders, better data collection and analysis to identify pupils' attainment and progress, and a considerable improvement in the resources for information and communication technology (ICT). Staff training has enabled everyone to make the best use computers and the interactive whiteboards in each class to enhance pupils' learning.

Recent initiatives to enable higher attaining pupils to achieve their potential in mathematics have been successful, with the school's performance in the 2006 national tests matching the above average standards in reading and writing. The gap between girls and boys has been narrowed but girls still outperform the boys. In some lessons, the activities planned do not succeed in motivating boys well enough and some do not provide sufficient challenge for more able pupils. As a result, boys in particular quickly lose interest and their progress, as well as their behaviour, suffers.

The quality of teaching is generally good throughout the school with teachers and teaching assistants usually working effectively as a team. The curriculum is satisfactory. Improved curriculum planning ensures that the more able pupils are sufficiently challenged in mathematics but not in most other subjects and there are not enough tasks to interest boys.

Leadership and management are good. The school has good capacity to improve further. Inspectors mostly agree with the school's self-evaluation. However, some aspects are better than the school gives itself credit for. For example, the school's judgement on standards and achievement does not fully appreciate the good progress pupils are making. The deputy headteacher's expertise has measurably strengthened the management and provision in the Foundation Stage. All staff carefully monitor pupils' progress and the quality and effectiveness of their teaching by observing one another's lessons. Governors are very supportive and the new chair of governors, who has a very good knowledge of the school, is leading them well. However, governors

are not sufficiently involved in rigorously monitoring the effectiveness of all aspects of the school with a view to bringing about further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the outdoor learning area for children in the Nursery and Reception classes so that it can be used more effectively to support their learning throughout the year.
- Improve the quality of curricular planning to ensure that the needs of boys are met and higher attaining pupils are provided with tasks that are sufficiently challenging for them.
- Ensure that governors are more involved in monitoring school effectiveness.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

When they enter the Nursery there is a wide range of attainment but, for most children, it is below the level expected for this age group. Many experience difficulty with language skills. The effective teaching that they receive ensures that all make good progress in all areas of learning and most achieve the goals expected of them by the end of Reception.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils' good progress is maintained and by Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is beginning to close the gap between boy's and girl's attainment after identifying that boy's performance in the school's 2005 national tests for seven year olds was significantly below that of the girls. On occasions, however, the activities planned do not sufficiently engage the boys or provide enough challenge for higher attaining pupils and their progress suffers. All use computers with confidence and demonstrate skills usually expected from older pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the opportunities for learning that they have at school. Behaviour is good; although pupils commonly point out that 'boys can sometimes be naughty', especially, 'if they get a bit bored'. Attendance is usually good but the unavoidable long-term absence of a small number of pupils meant that it is in line with the national average.

In the Foundation Stage, children quickly learn how to be independent and develop good learning habits. In the Nursery Nativity play, for example, they took the responsibility of their roles very seriously. As they get older, they take this enthusiasm with them, consolidated by their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Good relationships with the local church help pupils to develop a good understanding about how life and faith can differ in Britain today.

School councillors are proud of the fact that they can see the improvements to playground equipment following their suggestions and all pupils are pleased that their recycling activities have a positive impact on their environment. This confidence, their ability to work together, and their good progress in learning, prepare them well for the future. Pupils know the importance of a healthy diet and exercise, and are excited about the introduction of cheerleading to supplement football clubs.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The strengths in teaching and learning far outweigh any weaknesses and as a result, most pupils make good progress. Teaching assistants make a major contribution to pupils' learning when they are used effectively in the classroom, but on occasions, their skills are not fully deployed. Good relationships between pupils and their teachers, detailed planning for the different ability levels and the effective use of modern technology such as the new interactive whiteboards to enhance learning are other key strengths. Where teaching is satisfactory, teachers do not always provide sufficiently challenging work for pupils and rely too heavily on worksheets for pupils to complete. Some pupils complained about having 'millions to do!' Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics, science and ICT is good. The information is mostly used well to ensure that work is planned which successfully builds upon previous knowledge and results in most pupils making good progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupil's transition through the Foundation Stage is well planned. It helps them adapt to new challenges by starting with familiar activities and gradually increasing to more academic ones as they develop maturity and confidence. However, the underdeveloped outdoor learning area limits learning opportunities for these children. Teachers compensate for this well by taking equipment out from the classroom. Provision for ICT has greatly improved since the last inspection. This has had a beneficial impact on learning in all subjects. Curricular planning does not always provide sufficiently engaging activities for boys and this has an adverse impact both on their behaviour and progress in some lessons. The programme of personal and social development is well focused on helping pupils develop emotional security and confidence. Themed weeks often provide good opportunities for pupils to pull together what they learn in different subjects. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities such as the ICT club, and these effectively support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a close knit community, and so pupils are very well known and cared for. Procedures for ensuring pupils' safety are diligently carried out, including safeguarding children, child protection, vetting staff, and health and safety. The school provides good personal and academic guidance for pupils as they move to the next stage of their education. The close links with pre-school groups when children first enter the Foundation Stage ensure that their needs are met well and that they settle quickly. Support for pupils as they make the transition between key stages in school is good. The school analyses assessment data carefully in order to ensure good progression in pupils' learning as they move into the next year group. All have their own individual targets but some of these are not challenging enough for more able pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher correctly reports that 'heaps has been achieved in one year' but acknowledges that 'there is still much to do'. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Staff with management responsibilities work well together to bring about improvement. They carefully monitor standards and each has evaluated the quality of teaching and learning, trying to find ways of improving it. The management of provision for the few pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good with support staff being trained and deployed effectively. The school improvement plan very accurately identifies the priorities for improvement. Governors are very supportive and keen to help the school move forward. Their roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and they regularly visit during school hours. However, they are over reliant on the headteacher for evaluating school effectiveness.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

We really enjoyed listening to you singing your Christmas carols and seeing the Nursery nativity play. Mary must have been surprised when the angel appeared when she was in the bath!

Thank you for making us so welcome. We were amazed how well you all behaved during the wet playtimes when you could not use the play equipment because of all the puddles. Your headteacher and staff seem to enjoy coming to school as much as you do and it is easy to see why. You have such a good school. We thought that most of you tried really hard in your lessons and can see why you do so well in your reading, writing and mathematics. It would be great if the boys had a few more things to do that they liked in some lessons and some of you had work that made you think harder. The school has yet to make the outside play area for Nursery and Reception children more exciting, interesting and fun.

We are sure that governors will be pleased with the inspection findings and will try even harder to find ways to help your headteacher and staff to make the school even better.

Thank you, again, for a lovely two days in your school.