

Rothwell Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107982
Local Authority	Leeds
Inspection number	287984
Inspection dates	19–20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	John Rutherford HMI

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	247
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Pauline Walker
Headteacher	Mrs Janet Booth
Date of previous school inspection	16 May 2005
School address	Carlton Lane Rothwell Leeds West Yorkshire LS26 0DJ
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This average sized school serves an area in which the social and economic circumstances are typical of most areas nationally. Fewer than average pupils are eligible for a free school meal. There are a small number of pupils from a minority ethnic background or whose first language is not English. The proportion of pupils with a learning difficulty and/or disability is average. The school has gone through a period of significant change in the last two years. It was removed from special measures in May 2005, then moved to a new building in September 2005. A new deputy headteacher was appointed in February 2006 and a new headteacher in September 2006. The school has recently gained the following awards: Investors in Pupils, Stephen Lawrence Award, DfES International Award and National Healthy Schools Award.

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 that has continued to improve since being removed from special measures. This improvement has been helped by moving to a new building and by strong leadership, first from a temporary headteacher, and then from the recently appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher. The school now provides good value for money and it has the full support of the overwhelming majority of parents.

Pupils make good progress during their time in the school. They start in the Foundation Stage with skills typical for their age and when they leave school at the end of Year 6, their standards are above average. Pupils achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, pupils have not achieved enough in recent years, but standards are rising and they are now in line with the national average. Inspection evidence shows that this rising trend is continuing.

Pupils' progress is good because the quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching has improved recently with the increasingly effective use of assessment to help pupils understand what they need to do to make good progress in their learning. Assessment is used particularly well in planning to meet the individual needs of lower attaining pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language. As a result, these pupils make good progress. In some classes, work is not well matched to the needs of higher attaining pupils and they do not achieve as much as they could. This was a weakness identified in the previous inspection. Improvements have been made, but they are not yet completely in place throughout the school. Some marking provides very useful guidance for pupils to help them improve, but again this is not consistent in all classes. Well trained teaching assistants make an outstanding contribution to the progress of the pupils with whom they work. Many teachers make effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) to extend pupils' learning, which represents good improvement since the previous inspection when this was judged as a weakness.

Teaching and learning are good because of the strong leadership of the headteacher and deputy. They have a very robust approach to identifying where teaching needs to improve and taking appropriate action. They are consolidating the improvements that were introduced rapidly to remove the school from special measures. At the same time they are enabling middle leaders to develop their leadership skills, giving the school a good capacity to go on improving. Governors make a good contribution to the leadership of the school by monitoring its work and negotiating targets that set a good pace for raising pupils' achievement. The governors, headteacher and deputy have a very clear vision for how the school will develop now that the urgently required improvements have been introduced, but they do not yet have a clear plan for putting these ideas into practice in a manageable way.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the emphasis given to them in the curriculum and other activities. The pupils learn a considerable amount about how to make healthy choices and they know how to keep safe from bullying and accidents. They have excellent opportunities for contributing to their community through making decisions, organising events and leading physical exercise sessions. Pupils' good achievement in literacy, numeracy and ICT, together with their experience in taking responsibility, prepares them well for their future lives. Pupils' attendance is good and their behaviour and attitudes to work are excellent.

Pupils enjoy a curriculum that is enriched by a wide range of after-school activities and specially planned weeks during which they learn in depth about such topics as children's literature and staying healthy. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well organised and exciting. Teachers provide good guidance to help pupils meet targets for improving their work. The care, guidance and support for pupils' personal development are outstanding, especially the help given to vulnerable pupils so they can gain maximum benefit from school and achieve well.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the achievement of the more able pupils.
- Improve marking so that there is a greater consistency in providing information that helps pupils to improve.
- Prepare a plan that sets out clearly how the school will continue to improve now that urgent needs are being met.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good and standards are above average. Pupils start school with skills typical for their age group and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and mathematics, and significantly above average in science. The pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage because of the good curriculum and teaching. In recent years, progress has slowed in Key Stage 1, but there has been considerable improvement in this. Achievement in writing is now particularly good because of the extra time and support given to pupils. Progress is good throughout Key Stage 2, with science being a particular strength because the teaching of how to carry out practical investigations is very good. In all age ranges, pupils' achievement in ICT is good.

The less able pupils, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language make good progress because they are identified quickly and support is provided that meets their needs. The more able pupils do not achieve as much as they could in some classes because work does not provide them with sufficient challenge.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding because of the priority given to them in the curriculum and other activities. The pupils' attendance is good and their attitudes to work and behaviour are excellent. Pupils develop a very good understanding of how to make healthy choices in relation to exercise and food. They feel safe because staff encourage them to express their concerns so that appropriate action can be taken. Pupils learn to make a positive contribution to their community from the many responsibilities they are given; for example, leading exercise sessions with pupils and parents, organising sponsored events and contributing to decisions about tackling bullying. Pupils' outstanding personal skills and their good achievement in literacy, numeracy and ICT prepare them well for their future lives.

Pupils make very good progress in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Many can talk about what it means when a community acts with 'one heart and one mind' and they can relate this to their work in school. Through work for Stephen Lawrence awards they have a very

good awareness of anti-racism and of other cultures. Relationships within school are excellent and pupils make good progress in many lessons because they work well with others in groups.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The pace of learning is good because lessons are well planned and staff continuously give pupils guidance to help them meet their objectives. The pupils are keen learners because activities are interesting and relate to their everyday experience. They learn particularly well from good group discussions. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution; their high levels of skill and initiative help the pupils with whom they are working to make good progress.

In the most effective lessons, teachers adapt tasks to meet the needs of the less able and the more able pupils. In some classes, however, the more able pupils are not being sufficiently challenged. There is good marking in some English books that informs pupils clearly what they need to do next to improve their work. The same good quality is not seen in all pupils' books.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good because well organised activities in a very stimulating setting encourage the children to become independent learners and to develop their speaking skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum. Pupils have experience of a wide range of subjects that helps them to make good progress in their academic and personal development. This is enhanced by a very good programme of after-school activities including sports, arts, music and others. Partnership with a nearby specialist language college provides good support for the teaching of French. The school has a clear plan for how additional support is given to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language so that their individual needs are met efficiently. The school is at an early stage of developing approaches to meet the needs of pupils identified as gifted and talented.

The inspection took place in 'healthy focus' week, during which pupils made very good progress in understanding how to lead a healthy lifestyle. This was because they studied aspects of health and safety in depth, using skills from English, mathematics, science, ICT, technology and physical education. A good programme of visitors and educational trips increased their knowledge. Much of the work made a strong contribution to their progress in developing literacy and numeracy skills. The school is putting good arrangements in place to make such effective links between subjects a more regular and systematic part of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils' academic development are good and they are outstanding for personal development. The school has a very good system for recording pupils' progress. Staff use this information effectively to identify pupils working at average and below-average levels who are underachieving in order to give them a boost. They do not use it so well for improving the performance of those more able pupils who are underachieving. As part of work

towards the Investors in Pupils award, most teachers have a good system for agreeing targets with individual pupils to help them improve their work. Teachers give good feedback on progress towards these targets, which increases pupils' motivation to achieve them.

Care, guidance and support for pupils' personal development are outstanding because all staff regard these as a priority in their work. There are very rigorous procedures for safeguarding pupils and ensuring that all adults who come into contact with them are suitable. Pupils have very useful targets for their personal development, which help them to improve their relationships, physical fitness and attitudes to work. Arrangements for preparing older pupils for their move to secondary school are very good. The learning mentor provides outstanding support for vulnerable pupils, including looked-after children, and this helps them to achieve well in school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher and deputy are working together very well to consolidate the improvements that were rapidly introduced to remove the school from special measures. While doing this, they have enabled teachers who are middle leaders to develop their leadership skills and these teachers are now ready to take on significant responsibilities in improving the school further. This gives the school a good capacity to keep on improving in the future.

The headteacher and deputy have a strong focus on improving teaching and raising standards. This is seen especially in their systematic approach to the monitoring of teaching and pupils' performance, which leads to improvements where they are most needed. Governors, also, have a very detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses through their searching questions and detailed analysis of data. They negotiate targets and plans with the headteacher that set a good pace for raising standards further.

Recently, the governors, headteacher and deputy have been dealing effectively with urgently required improvements to ensure that past causes for concern are fully removed. They have a very clear vision for the future development of the school and a number of separate plans for realising aspects of this vision. They have not yet had time to bring their separate plans together into a single plan with a carefully considered timescale. This means that there is insufficient clear direction and drive for future work at a time when the need for urgent action is decreasing.

The governors, headteacher and deputy ensure that all staff receive training in line with the school's priorities for improving pupils' achievement. A particular strength is the training and deployment of teaching assistants, especially those with additional qualifications and responsibilities. This enables these members of staff to make a very strong contribution to the good quality of teaching and learning.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
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?	2
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.

Annex A

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	3
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	2
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

Thank you for being so helpful to me and my colleagues, Farha Ahmad and Andrew Morley, when we came to inspect your school. We found your work during 'healthy focus' week very interesting indeed. We are very grateful to you for talking to us about your school and showing us your work. This helped us to make our judgements about your school and I will tell you what these are.

Your school is a good one because the staff help you to do well in your work and achieve good results by the time you leave in Year 6. You also deserve a special pat on the back for this judgement because you have worked very hard since the school moved into the new building. Your lessons are very interesting and help you to be keen learners. You are very good at discussing ideas with other people in your groups and you try very hard to meet your personal targets. Many of you make a very good contribution to the life of the school by organising events and by leading exercise sessions, such as 'wake-up and shake-up'. We hope that you will always remember the very important things you have learnt this week about how to stay safe and healthy.

The governors, headteacher and staff are very keen that the school should keep on improving. To help them with this, we have given them some recommendations. They already have lots of really good ideas for what your school will be like in the future and we have asked them to make a plan for putting them into action. We would like to see all the pupils in the school doing work that really stretches them. Finally, we have asked your teachers to make sure that, when they mark your work, they give you a little more advice on how you can improve. This may mean that you need to try hard with much more difficult work, and you must always check your marking to see what you need to do next. We are very confident that you can rise to these challenges.

Our very best wishes for the future.