

# Ryton Junior School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108355
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	288074
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 April 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Arthur Allison

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Junior
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	224
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Julia McMillan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Sue Haswell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 February 2002
<b>School address</b>	Main Road Ryton Tyne and Wear NE40 3AF
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4133573
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4130130

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<b>Age group</b>	7–11
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is an average sized school serving an urban area. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. Very few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is slightly lower than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is similar to most schools. Attainment on entry to Year 3 fluctuates but is usually broadly average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Ryton is a good school. It provides good value for money. The majority of parents have every confidence in the school. Reflecting the view of many, one wrote: 'My daughter has become more enthusiastic and wants to do well. The system of house points, stickers, comments and feedback from her teacher encourages her to work and enjoy learning.'

Pupils achieve well. They make good progress throughout the school. Standards in the national assessments for eleven year olds have been significantly above average for the past four years. Although standards in writing have been lower than those in reading and in other subjects, this has been identified by the school as a weakness and it is being tackled. The good progress and high standards reflect the impact of the school's leadership in identifying and tackling weaknesses and ensuring teaching is good. A strong feature of teaching is the emphasis on pupils talking in pairs to foster their thinking, speaking and listening skills. Although this ensures pupils are alert and engaged in their learning, in some lessons the pace of learning is not always brisk. This occasionally slows down the progress that some pupils make. The enrichment of the satisfactory curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' achievement and enjoyment. The focus of curriculum planning is more on content than skills and this balance is being redressed. Opportunities to consolidate and extend learning by linking work in different subjects are insufficiently planned. The good pastoral and academic care and support is marked by the way it encourages all pupils to give of their best.

Good personal development and strong basic skills prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education and beyond. Pupils are well behaved, polite and know how to stay safe. They enjoy coming to school because they know that all staff want to help them to do their very best and make learning enjoyable. They have a good understanding of the need for a balanced diet and a healthy lifestyle. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities, notably as playground buddies, through the school council and by opportunities to perform at venues other than in school. Pupils are keen and proud to take on responsibilities.

Leadership and management, including governance, are good. The school's self-evaluation, based on thorough monitoring of its work, is very clear about what needs to be done in the drive to raise standards further, particularly in writing. Given the determined leadership, the sharp focus on priorities in the school's development plan and the effective progress made in tackling issues from the last inspection, it is clear that the school has good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in writing.
- Review the curriculum in order to provide more emphasis on essential skills and link work in different subjects to foster these skills.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well. Inspection evidence and the school's very thorough assessment show that attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupils make good progress throughout the school to reach standards that, over the past four years, have been significantly above average at the end of Key Stage 2. In 2006, results showed particular

strengths in science, but weaknesses in writing. The school exceeded its very challenging targets for mathematics in 2006. The targets set for English were met in part but narrowly missed for more able pupils, particularly in writing. The school has identified writing as an issue across the school and action is being taken to raise standards in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the very few for whom English is not the language of the home, make similar progress to other pupils. This is because their learning and pastoral needs are identified quickly and accurately and supported effectively as soon as they arrive at school.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and behaviour are good, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils say that there is no bullying. Their enjoyment of coming to school is reflected in their good attendance. Pupils are very well aware of how to stay safe. If they have any worries or concerns they know there is always an adult to turn to when needed. Their understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles is good. Those who have school lunches choose widely from a good range of healthy foods. Pupils value the opportunities for physical exercise. They have good attitudes to work and know that teachers want them to do their best. One pupil said, 'Work is usually quite challenging'. Literacy, numeracy and technical skills are developing well and provide a good basis for pupils' future well-being. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider communities. Choir members were keen to talk about singing in a prestigious concert hall venue as well as at a local supermarket. Pupils are proud to be chosen as buddies and to serve on the school council. They show concern for their peers and the wider community. The school council were instrumental in having some toilets in the school refurbished.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good, but not consistently so, across the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge; they ensure that pupils understand what they should know or be able to do by the end of the lesson. Where teaching is satisfactory, the pace is steady rather than brisk. Even in some good lessons the pace is variable and occasionally higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged. However, they make good progress over time and achieve as well as other pupils at the school. Clearly identified targets help pupils to assess their own learning. Teachers' planning that takes account of previous learning, the management of pupils' behaviour and the choice and use of resources, particularly the interactive whiteboards, are good. Careful questioning by teachers and the 'Talking Partners' strategy are strong features in all classes and foster pupils' thinking, speaking and listening skills. This was seen in a good mathematics lesson in a Year 6 class when pupils were challenged to explain how they arrived at an estimated answer to a calculation. Teaching assistants are deployed well to provide guidance and support for those who need it. Throughout the school, marking, particularly in literacy, informs pupils of what they have achieved and what they should do to improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The satisfactory curriculum has a stronger focus on content rather than on skills. The school is revising the curriculum in light of this to enhance pupils' progress. There is effective enrichment through a wide range of visits, including residential education opportunities for older pupils, visitors and after school clubs. The range of sports, some in conjunction with secondary schools, musical opportunities and French lessons add considerably to the variety of learning experiences and contribute well to pupils' enjoyment of school. The emphasis on personal and social education provides all pupils with the skills and attributes that help them to become good learners. Topic weeks, such as a European week and the forthcoming 'Wonderful World' week, when all learning is planned around a theme is a strong feature of the curriculum. Linking work in different subjects to consolidate and extend learning is not consistently incorporated into the planning of the curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Provision for care, guidance and support is good. Guidance and support for those who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who are in the early stages of learning English are good, so they make similar progress to other pupils. The school knows which pupils may be gifted or talented and is working to provide more planned opportunities for these pupils to extend their skills in sport and the arts as well as in the academic subjects. There are good procedures for monitoring the progress of individual pupils against challenging targets and providing additional support as soon as a need is identified. Pupils are familiar with their targets and talk knowledgeably about what they have to do to improve further.

Procedures and practices for child protection and all aspects of health and safety are robust. Parents and pupils agree that the school is a safe place. Arrangements for starting in Year 3 are good because of the strong links forged with the neighbouring infant school and with parents. As a result, pupils settle quickly into school routines. Similarly, there are good arrangements for the transfer to the local secondary school so that pupils are not overawed by their new surroundings.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher make a good team with complementary strengths. They provide effective leadership through their drive and vision. The senior management team is strongly committed to raising standards because every child matters. They are perceptive about what needs to be done to achieve this. Other staff share this commitment. Teachers and teaching assistants are deployed well to the benefit of the pupils. Subject leaders have clearly defined responsibilities for assessing the quality of provision and progress of pupils in their subjects, but their roles do not yet include observing lessons. Through its self-evaluation, the school has an accurate view of how well it is doing. Strategies are in place to improve provision and so raise standards, particularly in writing. The strategies to improve teaching, so that it is consistently good, have already led to improvements in the quality of marking. This means pupils are more aware of what they have achieved. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. All issues

identified at the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, notably raising standards in mathematics. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress have improved but the school is aware that higher-attaining pupils need to be more consistently challenged. The resources for information and communication technology are better. Interactive whiteboards are used well to enhance learning.

The views of parents and pupils are valued and acted on when appropriate, such as pupils' requests for refurbishment of toilets and parents' requests for the recently established breakfast club. The governors fulfil their responsibilities well, particularly with regard to financial management, and have grown in confidence in the way they support, yet challenge, the school's management.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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	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**

25 April 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Ryton Junior School, Tyne and Wear, NE40 3AF

I enjoyed my visit to your school. I particularly enjoyed talking to you in class, in the playground and in the dining hall. I was impressed by your friendliness, politeness and your confidence, especially when the school council were explaining what they did, what they enjoyed and the improvements they had suggested. Your school is a good school.

I realise why you are proud of your school and enjoy coming because:

- you are keen to answer questions in lessons and behave well
- you are proud to take on responsibilities such as being members of your school council and being buddies
- you appreciate the help you get from your headteacher and other staff to help you to make good progress
- you enjoy the learning opportunities, particularly when teachers use interactive whiteboards to make learning interesting, and when you go on visits or have visiting teachers such as the French teacher to inspire you
- the school knows what needs to be done to help you to do better.

As a result of what I saw and what you said to me, I have asked the school to become better by:

- helping you to reach higher standards in your writing
- making sure that you are taught the skills needed in different subjects and planning more opportunities for you to use and extend these skills.

It was a pleasure to visit your school. Keep working hard so that you continue to do well.

Yours sincerely

Mr Allison

The inspector