



# Ryhope Infant School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 108788  
**Local Authority** Sunderland  
**Inspection number** 288189  
**Inspection dates** 8–9 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Keith Oglesby

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>	Infant	<b>School address</b>	Shaftesbury Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Ryhope, Sunderland
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–7		Tyne and Wear, SR2 0RT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5536238
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	174	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5536239
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Cllr Ronald Bainbridge
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Christine Ray
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 March 2001		

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is an average size school, sharing a site with a junior school and a new Children's Centre. Pupils come from a wide range of social circumstances and almost all are of White British origin. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. No pupils learn English as a second language. The proportion identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average. The building and grounds are modern, spacious and attractive.

## **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 giving good value for money, confirming the school's own judgement. Pupils love their time in this calm, caring school and achieve well. Parents are extremely happy about their children's education. Many wrote very positive comments; for example, 'The staff are very helpful and understanding'. 'My child enjoys every day.'

The school has recently added a Children's Centre to meet a range of day care needs for families in the area. It is currently registered to accept children aged between birth and 8 years. It offers high quality facilities and is already popular with parents. School leaders and governors have created an outstanding resource for young children to learn and grow. There are excellent links with the school Nursery; for example, in the curriculum and assessment systems.

Pupils make good progress in all year groups. This is because teaching is good, pupils work hard and teachers keep a very close eye on how well each pupil is doing. Children make a good start in the Foundation Stage and almost all reach the expected levels before they move to Year 1. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Boys do not achieve as well as girls, especially in writing. The school is beginning to make changes to the curriculum and reading materials to appeal more to boys' interests. More-able pupils make good progress because teachers provide demanding work. Occasionally, teachers miss chances to give this group an extra challenge. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of good teaching, well matched to their needs, and high quality support.

Pupils' personal development is good. Their behaviour is always good and sometimes excellent. They thoroughly enjoy lessons and take pride in their achievements. They form good relationships with each other, adults and visitors. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of what will help them to live safe and healthy lives. Pupils leave Ryhope secure, confident and well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are carefully planned, based on a clear understanding of what pupils need in order to move on. 'We learn something new every day', said one boy. Lessons are lively and little time is wasted, although in a few lessons learning occasionally slows. The good quality of care, guidance and support also helps pupils to achieve.

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher, governors and senior leaders have provided a firm educational direction for the school through a period of change. They have inspired and supported staff skilfully. The school has an accurate, though sometimes modest view of its own success. It constantly seeks ways to improve, and has made valuable links with individuals and organisations to help it do this. All the concerns from the last inspection have been put right. The school has a good capacity to improve further.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards for boys, particularly in writing.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning even further, so that all lessons have the pace and challenge of the best.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Pupils' achievement is good. They join the school with a very wide range of ability, but attainment on entry is broadly typical for their age, except for communication skills. These are below those usually seen. A strong emphasis on speaking and listening skills, good teaching and interesting activities results in children making good progress in the Foundation Stage. Most reach the learning goals expected by the end of the Reception year.

This good progress is maintained in Years 1 and 2. Pupils achieve well, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Boys do not do as well as girls, particularly in writing. Standards in the national tests have stayed above average in almost every year since the last inspection. Pupils in the current Year 2 reach above average standards in reading and mathematics and average standards in writing.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They talk warmly about their teachers and the things they do at school. One boy commented that, 'You make lots of friends here and even the teachers are friendly.' Pupils are encouraged to support each other, celebrate everyone's achievements and lend a helping hand when they see the need. As a result, they gain in confidence and are willing to have a try when they find something difficult. They make a fine start in the Nursery and Reception classes, where they learn to work together well and concentrate on their task. Pupils try hard in lessons and behave well. The few who sometimes find cooperation difficult are well supported to improve their personal skills. Attendance is broadly average.

Pupils gain a good understanding of the importance of a healthy, safe lifestyle and diet. The school cook and her staff support this learning well. Pupils make good use of the range of opportunities for physical exercise. They respond well when asked to contribute to school life or take responsibility. This is evident in the efficient way they perform jobs around the school. The new school council is already taking its duties seriously; for example, in preparing to interview candidates for the new school caretaker. Good community links, visits and visitors help pupils to explore and enjoy the wider world. Their growing confidence, together with good basic skills, prepares them well for the next stage of their education and their future life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

Teaching is good and occasionally outstanding. Consequently, pupils of all abilities enjoy learning and achieve well. Teachers motivate their classes through well-planned and purposeful activities. They are quick to celebrate successes or spot where some help and encouragement is needed. Pupils like and respect their teachers, working hard to please them. Nearly all lessons are lively and stimulating, so pupils find them fun and make good progress. Teachers introduce new ideas clearly, often using technology well to help pupils to understand. Teaching assistants are fully involved and make a significant contribution to learning. Activities are usually well graded, so that pupils of all abilities are challenged but are able to succeed. In a small number of lessons, the rate of progress for some pupils is not as fast as it could be when the pace or level of challenge drops.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The curriculum is good, based on a clear understanding of how young children learn. The school prepares pupils well for the future by encouraging them, from the beginning, to become independent and confident learners. The close curriculum link between the Children's Centre and the school's Nursery class helps to achieve this.

The school is quick to make changes when progress is not as good as it could be. For example, it has recently introduced topics and resources designed to encourage boys to improve their reading and writing. There is a relevant and stimulating programme for personal and social education. This underpins pupils' growing understanding of the need to adopt healthy lifestyles and stay safe. The curriculum for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities meets their needs well. In particular, those who visit the 'nurture room' have a very special place to learn. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of popular clubs, events and visitors. Special weeks, such as the 'creative week', provide new ways to explore and learn. There are productive links with several local organisations; for example, with a garden centre and the local library.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents appreciate the quality of care and attention to detail. One wrote, 'The school does everything in its power to help.' Arrangements to keep pupils safe follow government guidelines. Pupils feel secure and valued; this helps them to make the most of all that the school offers. They know that any problems are dealt with quickly and that there is always someone to turn to for help. The school also has good relationships with parents and other professionals, ensuring a prompt response to individual needs.

The school has new and effective systems to monitor each pupil's academic and personal development progress. Teachers generally use this information well to sharpen their planning and identify who needs additional help or challenge. They also encourage pupils to think about their own progress; for example, asking questions like, 'How well have you learned in this lesson?' Despite their recent introduction, these progress monitoring systems are beginning to contribute significantly to pupils' confidence and good achievement.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide clear direction and are well supported by staff and governors. There have been many changes in staffing and leadership in the last two years, but already there is a good team spirit and high morale. Consequently, the school is well placed to continue to improve.

The school is successful in meeting its aims to be an inclusive school where all pupils are welcomed and encouraged to do well. Leaders have successfully introduced changes in teaching methods and the curriculum in order to give all pupils more chances to succeed. In all parts of the school, everyone knows what is expected and daily routines run smoothly. This is largely because of the highly visible and cheerful presence of the senior team. Everyone is valued and any barriers to learning, however minor, are quickly removed. There are effective links with parents and other schools. Anyone who can add value to pupils' learning, for example sports coaches or visiting artists, are welcomed and used effectively.

Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are outstanding. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, ably assisted by Nursery and Children's Centre leaders, have created a wonderful place to learn. Spaces for the youngest children are inviting, colourful and well equipped. The grounds and play areas have been designed most imaginatively. Strong links and good planning between the new Children's Centre and the school are already bringing benefits for children, parents and staff.

The school knows its strengths and weaknesses well. Procedures to keep an eye on pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are good. Self-evaluation is accurate, though sometimes modest, and leads to improvement.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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 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

<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	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

<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>	2
<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.

## 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	1
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

Ryhope Infant School

Shaftesbury Avenue

Ryhope

Sunderland

SR2 0RT

12 March 2007

Dear Pupils

As you know, we visited your school recently. I am writing to thank you for being so helpful and willing to talk to us. We had an enjoyable two days and enjoyed seeing you and your teachers in action.

We think some of the best things about your school are.

- You have a wonderful building and grounds to learn in. Your teachers have made lots of improvements, and the new Children's Centre is one of the best we have seen.
- We liked the way you show respect to your teachers and each other.
- You work hard, behave well and enjoy your lessons.
- The way all the adults work so hard to make sure you are safe, happy and learning.
- We enjoyed lots of the lessons; your teachers work so hard to make them interesting and keep you thinking.

There were lots of other things of course, but there is not enough space for everything.

We think your school could be even better in two ways.

- Just now and then, in lessons, we thought some of you could try something a little bit harder or do a bit more. Usually, as some of you told us, your work is not too easy and not too hard but just right. Still, we think you would enjoy an extra challenge sometimes.
- Another thing to improve is some of the work that boys do, especially their writing. We know your teachers are working on this; come on boys, they need some help from you.

Yours sincerely

Keith Oglesby and Geoff Cooper

The Inspectors