



# Riseley CofE Lower School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 109624  
**Local Authority** BEDFORDSHIRE  
**Inspection number** 288455  
**Inspection dates** 29–30 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Speakman

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>	First	<b>School address</b>	Church Lane
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Riseley, Riseley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–9		Bedford, Bedfordshire MK44 1EL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01234 708218
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	132	<b>Fax number</b>	01234 708218
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mrs L Simister
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs L Fraser
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2001		

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<b>Age group</b> 3–9	<b>Inspection dates</b> 29–30 November 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 288455
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This school is smaller than average. It draws its pupils from the local and surrounding villages, with about a third of pupils coming from out of the district. The area the school serves has a mixed social character. Children initially attend the Foundation Stage part-time and transition to full-time is phased. The percentage of pupils claiming a free school meal is below average. The proportion with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average but the number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is above. Fewer pupils than average come from minority ethnic groups and none of these are at the early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry is below that typical for children of this age. The school has achieved a number of awards, including the Investors in People Award and the Artsmark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school in which not only pupils' academic achievement is excellent, but pupils also make outstanding progress in personal development. The school provides excellent value for money. The school was judged to be a good school at the time of the previous inspection and there has been a good level of improvement since then; the school has more than met all key issues identified. With the current quality of education and leadership and management, and recent improvements, particularly in the Foundation Stage, the school has an excellent capacity to make further improvement. The school judges its effectiveness to be good, but in making this judgement, it has focused on standards rather than pupils' overall achievements.

Pupils make rapid progress from the time they enter the Foundation Stage and, by the time they leave Year 4, standards are exceptionally high. Both quality and standards in the Foundation Stage are excellent. The education provided by the school is outstanding. Teaching is highly effective. Nothing less than good teaching was seen during the inspection, with examples of outstanding teaching seen in the Foundation Stage and in Year 4. The curriculum and other learning opportunities are of an outstanding quality and this makes sure pupils of all ages enjoy coming to school. Not only does the school meticulously track each individual's academic progress, but they also very carefully monitor their personal development from the time they start school to the time they leave. Pupils' personal development is a priority in this school and the wide range of learning experiences provides pupils with a good knowledge of how to stay fit and healthy. The preparation for their future education is excellent. Support for pupils at all levels of attainment, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities, is excellent. The school provides an exceptionally high level of care, support and guidance for its pupils and they say that they feel very safe. The school is free from aggressive behaviour.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and the senior leadership team provide strong and purposeful leadership that is highly effective in focusing on both pupils' academic and personal development. They work very closely with the governors, who are very involved in school life and know it extremely well. They provide an excellent level of support for the school, but also are rigorous in the level of challenge and in holding the school to account for its performance. The school's self evaluation process is robust, rigorous and takes in the views of all staff, governors, pupils and parents. It is used very well to focus the priorities for school improvement. This process gives all pupils the opportunity to have a say in how the school develops. The school improvement plan is a high quality document, which very effectively guides school improvement for the current year. However, there is no indication of school improvement priorities beyond this year.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the time covered by the school improvement plan so that it outlines the school development priorities in the long term.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Children enter the Foundation Stage with standards that are below those typical for children of this age, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and their communication, language and literacy skills. By the time they enter Year 1 they have met the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception and a significant number are working at Key Stage 1 National Curriculum levels. Latest teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed above average standards overall. They were well above average in reading, above average in writing and broadly average in mathematics. By Year 4, detailed and accurate school assessment data shows attainment to be exceptionally high when compared to the nationally expected levels for pupils of their age, particularly in reading and mathematics. It is also well above average in writing. This is confirmed by standards seen in pupils' books and in lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make excellent progress towards both the targets in their individual education plans and their National Curriculum targets in other subjects.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils have outstanding moral and social development and readily moderate their own behaviour. Their spiritual awareness is well developed and they appreciate their own and others' achievement. Their cultural development is good; through the curriculum and involvement in the community out of school they gain a good awareness of their own and other cultures. Behaviour is excellent in class. Pupils say there has been a big improvement in playground behaviour recently and that they feel the school is a safe place to be. Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning. The middle school head teacher is full of praise for pupils from this school. In lessons they concentrate extremely well and for long periods, even the youngest children in the Nursery and Reception. Pupils really enjoy being in school and this is shown in their good attendance. They say they find school interesting and enjoy the variety of lessons and other learning opportunities. They develop a good awareness of healthy living through lessons such as science and making healthy choices at lunchtime. They develop exceptionally good core skills and, through projects such as producing and marketing the Year 4 novel or fund raising for charity, they gain an excellent preparation for the next stage of their education.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

The quality of teaching and learning ensures that pupils' academic achievement and personal development are excellent. Teachers make lessons stimulating, and this is

highly effective in engaging pupils' interest and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers know their subjects very well and, through the excellent use of thorough assessment data on each pupil's attainment, plan challenging targets for the next steps in learning. They provide pupils with good opportunities to assess their own progress and pupils confirm they know how well they are doing at school. Teachers have exceptionally high expectations of pupils' work, as seen in the pace of lessons and levels of challenge for pupils at all levels of attainment. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the progress pupils make in lessons. They are well primed, know what they are to do in lessons and work very effectively with focus groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 1**

The curriculum is broad, balanced and rich. There are excellent links made between a wide range of subjects, which add interest and meaning to pupils' learning experiences. Pupils say the themed days, visits and visitors 'help to make learning interesting.' The curriculum meets fully the learning needs of pupils at all levels of attainment and curriculum planning to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is highly effective. There is excellent provision for pupils to learn literacy and numeracy skills. This is carefully planned, for example, in terms of the development of literacy skills, where initiatives used in the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 complement each other very well and provide for continuous improvement. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is excellent and a priority for the school. There is a very good range of extra curricular activities that effectively promote fitness and healthy living and in which pupils enjoy taking part.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

This is excellent because of the high quality personal and academic support and guidance pupils receive. Thorough and rigorous assessment procedures are used extremely well to provide for a wide range of all pupils' learning needs. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is excellent. There are rigorous systems in place through which pupils' personal and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is assessed and recorded from the Foundation Stage and throughout the school. All health, safety and child protection procedures are fully in place.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher, working very closely with the senior leadership team, provides excellent leadership. All three are skilled practitioners and lead by example. Leadership is not only focused on academic success, but also on the personal development of each individual pupil. There is an extremely clear vision for further development. Although this is not currently documented in the school improvement plan, the school

has a very clear idea about what it needs to do next to sustain and improve further upon recent developments. Monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards is excellent. It involves governors and staff at all levels of responsibility. Outcomes are used highly effectively to set the priorities for development. The work of the governors is outstanding. They are fully involved in school, in school self-evaluation and in monitoring. They are very supportive yet challenge and hold the school to account for its performance.

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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>	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	1

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	1
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

1 December 2006

Dear Pupils

Riseley CE Lower School, Church Lane, Riseley, Bedfordshire, MK44 1EL

Thank you so much for making me welcome when I visited your school. I really enjoyed the two days I spent with you.

You have an excellent school and you have helped to make it as good as it is. Older pupils say that behaviour in school has improved a lot recently and this helps your teachers to give excellent lessons so that you can learn rapidly. It is clear that you enjoy being in school and that you all get on well with each other and with the adults who show very high levels of care for you all. It was pleasing to hear that you find school interesting and also good to see that you work hard to meet the very high levels that your teachers expect of you. This helps to make your learning excellent.

I saw very little that needs attention and I am recommending only one area of improvement. This is for the headteacher, staff and governors to include details of long-term improvement in the school plans. Even so, I am sure that your headteacher will still look for other areas to develop, and you can help her to improve your school even further by continuing to behave extremely well, working hard and enjoying school as much as you do.

I wish you all well in the future.

David Speakman - Lead inspector