

Repton Primary School

Inspection report

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| Unique Reference Number | 112976 |
| Local Authority | DERBYSHIRE |
| Inspection number | 289479 |
| Inspection dates | 20–21 March 2007 |
| Reporting inspector | Marina Gough |

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

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| Type of school | Primary |
| School category | Community |
| Age range of pupils | 4–11 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number on roll | |
| School | 212 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Karl Ambler |
| Headteacher | Miss Leah Coster |
| Date of previous school inspection | 12 November 2001 |
| School address | Springfield Road Repton Derby Derbyshire DE65 6GN |
| Telephone number | 01283 703732 |
| Fax number | 01283 703732 |

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is situated in the village of Repton. The school draws pupils from a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. Although the school population tends to be reasonably stable, in Year 3 there is some mobility. This arises from an influx of pupils from local infant schools, and the transfer of some pupils who have been at school since Reception to local private preparatory schools. The percentage of pupils who have learning difficulties is much lower than the national average, as is the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The school has received several awards over recent years including the Active Mark, the Health Promoting Schools Award, the Silver Walk to School Award, the Anti-Bullying Campaign Award and the Silver ECO Award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that has many very significant strengths. Since its last inspection the school has made remarkable progress, especially in terms of raising standards and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The school's own evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses closely mirrors the inspection findings, showing that the school knows itself very well.

Over recent years standards have risen steadily because of improved teaching and the exceptionally rigorous way the school identifies and supports pupils who are not making the expected progress at key points during their school career. Standards in English, mathematics and science are exceptionally high by the time pupils leave school at the age of eleven. This represents outstanding achievement given that the children's attainment when they join the Reception class is broadly similar to national expectations, with some weaknesses in terms of their personal, social and emotional development.

Teaching is outstanding. Very high but realistic expectations ensure that pupils of all abilities progress extremely well. Activities are imaginatively presented so that pupils have a real thirst for learning. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is excellent, and these pupils make rapid progress as they move through the school. Pupils of all ages are highly motivated and enthusiastic learners who are very responsive and extremely well behaved. They have an excellent understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle, and numerous opportunities for contributing to the community of the school. Pupils speak very highly of the school and say that the only thing that could be improved would be if they could stay on at Repton until they were eighteen!

The curriculum for pupils of all ages is excellent. The statutory curriculum is significantly enhanced and extended by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The strong focus on music and physical education has had a very positive impact on standards in these areas. The use of play throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is a particularly notable feature, and this does much to help the pupils to put their learning in context. It also provides them with opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and to practise newly acquired skills. The school cares extremely well for the pupils, and is very vigilant of those who are vulnerable. The setting up of the new 'nurture group' reflects the way in which the school responds practically when it perceives a need or a gap in provision.

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. Much of the improvement that has taken place over recent years is the result of the inspirational leadership of the current headteacher. She has been single minded in her drive to raise standards and improve pupils' progress. Governors are extremely well informed and supportive. They are relentless in their pursuit of excellence, and constantly question and challenge the school, so that the highest standards can be achieved across all aspects of the school's life and work. Subject managers are beginning to fulfil their individual roles well, and the school has identified their leadership role as an area for further development. The school provides excellent value for money, and is very well placed for continued improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue with its plans to further develop the leadership role of the subject managers.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The attainment of the Reception children when they join the school is broadly similar to others of their age. However, although the children are articulate and keen to learn, their personal and social skills are often underdeveloped. The children make outstanding progress across each of the areas of learning so that they attain beyond the level expected for their age by the time they transfer to Year 1.

In Key Stage 1, pupils of all abilities achieve extremely well. At the end of Year 2, their attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is significantly higher than the national average. As they move through Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make excellent progress, and their attainment by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science is exceptionally high. The school places a very strong focus on music and physical education, and standards in these areas are well above those found in most primary schools.

Because of excellent support, pupils with learning difficulties progress at the same outstanding rate as their classmates, and often achieve their individual targets very rapidly. As a result, these pupils have high levels of self-esteem and confidence in themselves as learners.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

As they move through the school, pupils become increasingly mature and responsible, and by Year 6 pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They are very well behaved, polite and kind, and join in all activities with great gusto. Pupils are keen to take up the many additional activities that are provided for them, and appreciate the effort staff make to enrich and extend their learning. Attendance rates are significantly higher than the national average because pupils genuinely want to come to school.

Pupils have an excellent grasp of what is needed to pursue a healthy life-style and know the value of exercise and a balanced diet. They are highly conscious of their own and other's safety, and know how to 'stay safe' when they are out of school. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is consistently excellent. Pupils relish responsibility and value the chance to contribute to the running of the school through the school council and the 'ECO committee'. The pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage of their education both in terms of their academic achievement and their personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching is outstanding. Throughout the school teachers do much to make learning exciting so that the pupils approach activities with high levels of enthusiasm. The teaching in the Reception class is highly organised and imaginative, and focuses extremely well on the development of key skills. Support staff are used very effectively so that there are timely interactions which significantly advance the children's learning. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 lessons are very well planned to take account of the different levels of ability and maturity within classes. Pupils know exactly what is expected of them and are skilled in evaluating how much progress they have made within a lesson. The marking of pupils' work is of a very high

standard, especially in the upper part of Key Stage 2 where pupils are encouraged to enter into dialogue with their teachers. Teachers make excellent use of assessment information to plan the next steps of pupils' learning and to provide additional support where it is most needed. Well-trained support staff are very effective in delivering the many intervention strategies the school provides to boost the learning of pupils who are experiencing difficulties.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is outstanding. In the Reception class, activities are so stimulating and exciting that the children can hardly wait for their turn to move on to the next task. Structured and free play activities are an integral part of the Reception and Key Stage 1 curriculum, and are highly imaginative, very purposeful, and an excellent way of giving learning a real meaning and context. The 'builders' yard' in the Reception class, and the 'castle' in the Year 1 and 2 class are popular choices. They very successfully promote and extend the pupils' personal, social and emotional development as well as their language, literacy and numeracy skills. In Key Stage 2, subjects such as French add an extra dimension to pupils' learning, and the strong focus on music and physical education fosters the pupils' physical and creative skills very effectively. The instrumental tuition for the whole of Year 4 provides an excellent experience for all pupils and lays firm foundations for those who wish to take this learning further. The school makes excellent use of extra-curricular activities and visits to further extend the pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Provision for care, guidance and support are outstanding. Procedures for child protection and for health and safety are fully in place, with staff in receipt of appropriate guidance and training. Regular health and safety checks and risk assessments are established very well, ensuring pupils' safety in school and on visits.

Pupils consistently describe the staff as kind, caring and trusting, and relationships at all levels are excellent. The school uses excellent systems to monitor pupils' progress so that temporary or more permanent problems can quickly be identified and addressed. All pupils are very much seen as individuals, and their achievements are constantly celebrated so that pupils of all ages have very high levels of self-esteem and confidence.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher's leadership is inspirational. Over the last few years, her tenacity, drive and very clear focus have been critical factors in helping the school to move forward to its current excellent position. The staff are totally committed to the notion of continued improvement, and happily embrace change and reflect upon their performance. Subject managers are beginning to take ownership of their areas, although there is still more to be done in developing the leadership and management roles of the newest staff.

Monitoring and evaluation are very firmly and precisely focused on the impact of change and the effectiveness of the improvements made. The school knows itself very well and tackles relative weaknesses and maximises strengths very effectively. The next steps for development are clearly articulated in the school improvement plan, and are very challenging and relevant.

The governing body has an excellent understanding of its role and takes a very strong lead in the strategic management of the school, including the deployment of resources.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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| <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

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| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 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

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| How well do learners achieve? | 1 |
| The standards ¹ 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

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|---|---|
| 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 | 1 |
| 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 | 1 |

The quality of provision

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

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

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| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 |
| 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 | 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

21st March 2007

Dear pupils,

Inspection of Repton Primary School, Springfield Road, Repton, DE65 6GN

I am writing to thank you for making my colleague and I feel so welcome when we visited your school a short time ago. We agree with you that Repton is an excellent school, and can quite understand why you would want to stay here until you are eighteen! We were very pleased to see how hard you work in lessons, and this is certainly one of the reasons why you all do so well.

Your results in the English, mathematics and science tests at the end of Year 6 have been very pleasing over the last few years, and have been much higher than in most other schools. We were also delighted to see how well you do in music and physical education, both of which are subjects that you enjoy very much. Your teachers work hard to make lessons exciting, and you have lots of fun whilst learning at the same time. As well as your lessons you also have many different after school clubs to choose from, and in Year 6, the opportunity to go on a residential trip which you really look forward to. You told us that the school is a happy place to be and that bullying is not a problem. Certainly the behaviour we saw during the inspection was excellent, and we were impressed by how kind and polite you are to one another. We were very pleased to hear that you feel comfortable about taking any problems you have to your teachers, and that you feel sure that they will sort things out for you. However, we know from having seen the school council in action that you often sort difficulties out for yourselves in a really sensible way, and that you understand the need to take everyone's views into account before making a decision.

Your headteacher, teachers and governors have worked very hard over the last few years and have done an excellent job. They planned carefully the improvements that had to be made, and kept at it until they got it just right. They know the next steps they need to take to make sure the school carries on improving, and we agree that it would be a good idea for some of the newer staff to take on a little more responsibility for managing aspects of the school's work.

I hope you all enjoy your Easter break.

Best Wishes,

Marina Gough

Lead Inspector