

Robinswood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115730
Local Authority	Gloucestershire
Inspection number	290320
Inspection dates	6–7 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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	427
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Barnard
Headteacher	Martin Latham
Date of previous school inspection	3 December 2001
School address	Underhill Road Matson Gloucester GL4 6HE
Telephone number	01452 530430
Fax number	01452 530431

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than most primary schools. Pupils come from mainly White United Kingdom backgrounds and none of the small number of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is in the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average and larger than at the time of the last inspection. On entry attainment is well below average and many pupils have poor literacy, numeracy and social skills. A higher than average proportion of pupils has learning difficulties and disabilities.

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 and improving school that has some outstanding features. The headteacher provides exceptionally strong leadership and is driving forward improvements with considerable support and commitment from all staff. Leadership and management are good and there is an excellent programme of support and training to ensure all staff become effective in their roles. The school has accurately identified the areas it needs to improve and introduced changes that are leading to rising standards. The school is well supported by governors and is well placed to continue improving.

Standards are broadly average by the time pupils leave school but taking into account their very low starting points, pupils' achievement is good. In most cases this is down to good teaching with particular strengths in how well lessons are planned to match the learning needs of pupils and to engage their attention and concentration with interesting activities. In the Foundation Stage progress is satisfactory overall but in the Reception class it is good. The skilful support for individual pupils by both teachers and teaching assistants has a positive impact on the learning of all pupils, from highest to lowest ability.

The curriculum is good overall, and excellent in the main school and Reception where it is exceptionally well matched to pupils' learning needs and also to developing their social skills. It is very well organised to keep pupils interested and involved, making good use of computers and linking subjects together effectively where that helps learning. The nursery curriculum is not as closely matched to learning needs as elsewhere, and the school is aware of this and is implementing plans to resolve this issue. The range of visits, visitors and other activities to make the curriculum interesting is extremely good, as is the programme of out-of-school clubs, sports, music and other activities.

Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school, behave well and readily take part in the wide range of activities that the school provides. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and an excellent understanding of cultural diversity. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, despite the persistent poor attendance of a small number of pupils. The school provides good care, guidance and support and makes sure the school is a safe and secure place. Academic guidance for pupils is satisfactory, although with the exception of Year 6, pupils are not always aware of what they need to do to improve their work.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement by making sure pupils know consistently how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- Improve children's achievement in the Foundation Stage by ensuring the nursery curriculum is fully matched to children's learning needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are below average by Year 2 and broadly average by Year 6 but pupils achieve well, given their very low starting points. A large minority of pupils reach above average standards by the time they leave the school, and their achievement is very good. In the Foundation Stage children make satisfactory progress overall, although it is good in the Reception class. Standards have fluctuated in recent years, particularly in literacy, but they are broadly average now, and

rising. The school is working effectively to improve achievement. The great majority of pupils make good progress in improving their speaking and writing skills through the many planned opportunities in most lessons for discussion, presentation and writing for different purposes. The sustained focus on ensuring pupils have good basic number skills is contributing effectively to rising standards in mathematics and to pupils' skills of applying mathematical techniques to problem solving. Just occasionally learning is not quite as good as it could be because pupils are not always aware of how to improve their work.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve well because of the effective programme of support and personal help they receive.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and the great majority take full advantage of the rich opportunities on offer. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and are proud of their achievements. Relationships with adults and each other are good and the few incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively.

Pupils readily take on responsibilities. For example, some older pupils act as 'peer mediators' helping resolve issues of unkind behaviour at playtimes. Others involve themselves in the 'dig for victory' garden as part of the project on the Second World War, and this also gives them experience in understanding budgeting. The school council has played a positive role in suggesting where improvements can be made in resources and in particular to improve equipment in the playground. Pupils are keen to contribute to improving the local environment; there is a pupil 'Minister for the Environment' helping to coordinate developments. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives.

Pupils' spiritual, moral and social and development is good and their cultural development is outstanding. They have an excellent understanding of their own and other cultures and religions.

Although the vast majority of pupils attend regularly and punctually, a small minority do not, despite the efforts of the school and the agencies it works with to impress on families the importance of school. Nevertheless, attendance is slowly improving.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has some significant strengths that contribute to pupils' good progress. In particular, lessons are mostly closely matched to pupils' learning needs and this captures pupils' attention and encourages their learning. Teachers provide activities that encourage pupils to work together and independently and to develop good learning skills. Consequently, pupils speak and write with increasing competence and confidence. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together, ensuring that all pupils, whatever their learning needs, are well supported. The pace of lessons is good and this sustains pupils' concentration. However, occasionally teachers spend too long explaining what needs to be done, and give too little time for pupils to do the work themselves, and this slows pupils' progress.

Computers are used effectively and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. For example, in Year 5, pupils' speaking and self-confidence improved when they produced an audio-visual presentation on Captain Cook.

Pupils respond well to teachers' praise and encouragement. Pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately, although guidance is not always clear enough for pupils to know what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

In Years 1 to 6 the curriculum is outstanding. It rightly includes many opportunities for pupils to improve their literacy skills. The topic-based approach carefully ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum along with matching work closely to pupils' interests and abilities.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is fully incorporated into planning and this helps maintain pupils' concentration.

There is an excellent range of activities, visits and visitors that makes the curriculum interesting and relevant to pupils' lives. In addition, the range of out of school activities is very wide and provides many physical, cultural and recreational activities. For example, there are opportunities to take part in circus skills, samba dancing, tea dancing, singing and a wide range of sports. These contribute significantly to pupils' personal development, especially their self-confidence.

In the Foundation Stage the curriculum is satisfactory overall, although in the Reception class it is excellent. The school rightly recognises the need to improve the curriculum in the Nursery so that it more closely meets children's learning needs throughout the Foundation Stage, especially in developing literacy and numeracy skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school provides exceptional care and welfare for pupils although academic guidance is satisfactory. Adults know the pupils well and are aware and understand their needs. Learning mentors play a particularly valuable role, providing a sympathetic ear when needed and in encouraging pupils' learning and social skills.

Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and safety are rigorous and effective. Pupils quickly learn the importance of safe practices around the school. Healthy lifestyles are strongly promoted through the wide range of popular sports and exercise activities.

Teachers have well established procedures for assessing pupils' progress. However, with the exception of pupils in Year 6, guidance to pupils is not consistently given in a way that pupils understand. For example, a pupil in Year 6 could explain what he needed to do to his writing to produce complex sentences, and how this meant his achievement would improve. This was not consistently the case with younger pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides excellent direction for the school's work and is supported by a very strong team of senior staff. All staff are committed to the school's improvements and there is an extensive programme of training and development to help improve their effectiveness.

The school's self-evaluation is accurate and its effectiveness is very good. It provides an accurate focus on the priorities for improvement and is leading to the improvements in standards and the good achievement seen.

Governors are effective. They support the headteacher and staff well. They are well informed, though recognise that there are ways they could be even better informed and therefore more helpful to the school in its development planning. They fully meet their statutory obligations.

The school's links with support agencies, other schools and the local community are good and contribute effectively to the curriculum and pupils' personal development. The school responds well to parents' and pupils' views, although only a minority of parents respond to the efforts to seek their opinions.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

9 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Robinswood Primary School, Matson, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL4 6HE

We really enjoyed the two days we spent in your school. You made us feel very welcome and we spoke with many of you in meetings, in lessons and around the school. You were very friendly and helpful and you gave us a clear view of your school and what you think of it.

These are the main things we found out about your school:

- Your school gives you a good education and it is improving all the time.
- You make good progress in nearly all classes.
- The headteacher and all of the other staff are determined to make sure the school becomes even better.
- Teaching is good. Teachers make sure the work you do is just what you need to do well.
- Your behaviour and attitudes in lessons and around school are good.
- The school has an excellent range of clubs, sports and other activities that you really enjoy.
- You take on responsibilities willingly, play an excellent part in the life of the school and have an extremely good understanding of the beliefs and cultures of people from different backgrounds to yours.
- The school takes exceptionally good care of you. It is very safe, and nearly all of you eat healthily and take part in physical activities.

To improve things further, I have asked the school to:

- make sure you always know what to do to make your work even better
- make sure that the work children do in the Nursery is exactly what they need for them learn better.

With best wishes

T Wheatley Lead inspector