

Thornton Cleveleys Royles Brook Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119149
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	291337
Inspection dates	12–13 July 2007
Reporting inspector	Michael Onyon

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Miss Doreen Shepherd
Headteacher	Mrs Beverley Hull
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
School address	Marsh Road Thornton Cleveleys Lancashire FY5 2TY
Telephone number	01253 821396
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Age group	4-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average primary school. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well below the national average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. There are few pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. A very small number speak English as an additional language. The school holds the Healthy Schools award. At the time of the last inspection, the school was judged to have serious weaknesses.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Royles Brook Primary School is a satisfactory and improving school providing well for the personal development and well-being of pupils. Overall, the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The school's previous designation as having serious weaknesses no longer applies.

Children's skills on entry to the Foundation Stage are higher than those expected for their age. Provision has improved and children make satisfactory progress entering Year 1 with standards that are above those expected. Data from recent years shows that the rate of progress is maintained in Key Stage 1 and standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above national averages. Results in Key Stage 2 improved from 2004 to 2006. Pupils made satisfactory progress taking into account their starting point. Throughout Key Stage 2, current progress is at least satisfactory and pupils mainly attain standards above the national average. Standards are significantly higher in English than in mathematics and science. This is because more able pupils do not attain as highly as they should in mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being have improved since the last inspection and are good. Pupils are courteous and considerate to each other and to adults. Their behaviour is consistently good. Pupils have taken the initiative in devising an effective code of behaviour and a good system of rewards and sanctions helps to motivate pupils to achieve, individually and as a part of a team. Attendance figures are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and how to stay safe.

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with improvements since the last inspection. A notable strength is the quality of relationships within the classroom; pupils and adults work well together and the pupils are particularly keen to support each other. Although there are examples of good and very good teaching, some lessons do not provide adequate challenge for the most able pupils, particularly in mathematics and science. Also, there is an inconsistency in the quality of the way teachers mark pupils' work. In some instances, pupils are not given a clear idea of how they can improve their work. This slows down progress.

Curriculum provision is satisfactory. The school has started to develop a curriculum that links subjects through themed work and most teachers and pupils have welcomed the chance to link subjects together. However, the development of basic skills across the curriculum is not implemented consistently across the school.

The school cares well for its pupils; good care is provided for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Academic guidance is satisfactory and improving. The use of new systems for tracking pupils' progress is helping staff to set challenging and realistic targets.

Overall, leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents recognise the good, strong and determined leadership of the headteacher; parents say he is 'steering the school onwards and upwards in terms of standards, behaviour and facilities'. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Governors offer good direction and contribute well to a good capacity to make further improvements.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards and achievement for the more able pupils in mathematics and science.
- Ensure that basic skills are developed consistently across the curriculum throughout the school.

- Ensure that marking and guidance consistently tells pupils what they have to do to improve their work.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are above average overall. Since the last inspection, standards have improved and pupils mainly make satisfactory progress.

When they enter the Foundation Stage, the skills of the majority of children are above those typical for their age. As a result of improved provision, they make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are above expectations when they enter Year 1. Data from the past few years shows that this rate of progress is maintained during Key Stage 1; standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above the national average.

The 2006 national test results for Key Stage 2 pupils showed improvement on previous years largely due to a significant improvement in the standards attained in English. In Key Stage 2, pupils generally make at least satisfactory progress and mainly attain above average standards. However, in Year 6, this rate of progress has not been fast enough to completely eradicate a legacy of underachievement. As a result, some more able pupils do not attain as highly as they should, particularly in mathematics and science. Teachers are committed to continuing the good work carried out as part of a local authority support programme, which proved successful in raising standards in English. Throughout the school, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are consistently good. Their enjoyment of school is seen in their response in lessons and their positive attitudes to learning. The school's Healthy School status illustrates pupils' good understanding of healthy lifestyles. Older pupils respond eagerly to opportunities to take on additional responsibilities; for example, as playground pals, who encourage positive play amongst younger pupils. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and contribute to decisions in the running of the school; for instance, they have been fully involved in drawing up guidelines for behaviour management. Pupils' knowledge of how to stay safe shows as they move sensibly around all areas of the school. The pupils are confident that rare incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively and they know that they are able to talk to an adult about any problems that may occur. The school is rightly proud of its neighbourhood involvement; for example, pupils play crown green bowls with the local community. A range of activities, including assemblies and circle time, effectively support pupils' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They learn about economic issues through fundraising and learn about life beyond school through involvement in programmes like the Lancashire well-being programme.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Improvement since the last inspection means that teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, providing an environment that encourages independent learning for children. In classes where teachers plan effectively and use cross-curricular links well, there are clear learning outcomes and good pupil progress. The best teaching provides good challenge, is well matched to pupils' prior attainment, and engages and motivates pupils in their learning. The practice is not yet replicated across the whole school.

Teaching assistants provide appropriate support and those who work with pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities provide skilled support, which has a positive impact upon the progress of the pupils. Effective assessment systems are in place to closely track pupils' progress. Whilst considerable progress has been made, teachers do not always make clear to all pupils how they can respond to the marking of their work to help them improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curriculum provision is satisfactory. The curriculum is generally broad and balanced, but in some subjects like science pupils are not developing their investigative skills sufficiently or evaluating the outcomes of their tasks effectively. Also, the development of basic skills is not consistently developed across the curriculum. The extra-curricular activities are strengths of the school. A wide range of activities are on offer to pupils. The popularity of clubs is reflected in high attendance. The clubs enrich the curriculum for pupils and encourage healthy lifestyles. The introduction of modern foreign languages throughout Key Stage 2 has added to the enjoyment of pupils' learning. The school provides an exciting range of visits, which make a positive contribution to pupils' social and academic development. These visits encourage links between subjects. They inform learning well in some classes and the practice is being extended across the school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The quality of care and pastoral support are good; academic guidance is satisfactory. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are good, including child protection procedures. Health and safety procedures are well-established and the pupils work in a safe, secure and stimulating environment. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good care and pastoral support. Throughout the school, pupils' pastoral care, guidance and support are stronger than support for their academic progress. There are examples of good marking – the 'next steps' guidance. Where this happens, teachers celebrate pupils' achievements and involve them in setting the next steps forward. The practice is not consistent across the school. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and the school has good programmes of support to advance pupils' learning. In some individual education programmes for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, learning targets are not specific; pupils are not sufficiently involved in reviewing their own successes and helping to set the next steps to advance their learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher's good leadership has ensured that the school has moved forward well in addressing key issues identified at the last inspection and subsequent monitoring. There is a clear vision and shared sense of purpose, including a determination to raise standards and achievement. The headteacher and assistant headteacher are working well in building a positive team ethos amongst all staff. Effective work with a number of outside agencies, including involvement in a network learning community of local schools, has helped to raise standards, particularly in English. Despite interventions, the school was not able to reach the Year 6 targets they set themselves because of the underachievement of more able pupils. The school's self-evaluation shows a clear understanding of strengths and areas for development, recognising the need to engage pupils in the assessment process. Effective improvement planning outlines actions that need to be taken. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored effectively on a regular basis by school managers. A collaborative team are leading developments in presenting the curriculum more effectively to improve classroom practice. Governance is good; governors understand their roles and responsibilities. They have been actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the school's progress on a regular basis and in making key decisions about future developments.

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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>	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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
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?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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

14 July 2007

Dear Children

Inspection of Thornton Cleveleys Royles Brook Primary School, Lancashire, FY5 2TY.

Thank you very much for making us so welcome in your school. We really enjoyed talking to you, hearing your views and watching you learn. We think that Royles Brook has improved in many ways over the past year, and that it is a satisfactory school that provides good support for your personal development and well-being.

Standards are higher than last year and improving. We were impressed by the way that you support and care for each other. You behave well, and you were all very polite and courteous to us. It was great to see you helping each other out in the classrooms and out in the playground where the 'pals' help younger children. We have suggested that the school looks carefully at the topic work you are now doing, so that the tasks you are asked to do really help to improve your skills across all the subjects.

This is your school so you have an important part to play in helping it to become even better! We would like some of you to make as much progress in mathematics and science as you do in English. The school can help by helping you to understand what you need to do to improve. All the staff are keen to help you achieve your full potential. The school has improved already and we hope that you can build on all of the good things to make Royles Brook an even better place to be. We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours faithfully

Michael Onyon

Lead Inspector