



# Rodbourne Cheney Primary School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 126275  
**Local Authority** Swindon  
**Inspection number** 293505  
**Inspection dates** 23–24 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Margaret Dickinson HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Broadway
<b>School category</b>	Community		Swindon
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11		SN25 3BN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01793 534710
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	185	<b>Fax number</b>	01793 534710
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Ian Cook
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Lauren Connor
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 October 2002		

<b>Age group</b> 4–11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 23–24 January 2007	<b>Inspection number</b> 293505
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and an Additional Inspector.

## **Description of the school**

Rodbourne Cheney Primary School federated with a local school on 1 November 2006. The federated schools have one headteacher and governing body. In the year prior to the federation, the school went through an unsettled period. The governing body was unable to recruit a permanent headteacher and had difficulty finding governors to fill vacancies. The local authority placed the school in a category of concern and instigated a programme of intensive support.

The school is in north-west Swindon. Over half the pupils come from beyond the immediate area of the school. The school has a broadly average intake.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

Rodbourne Cheney Primary School does not provide an adequate standard of education.

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and the school has the capacity to make the necessary improvements. The federated governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has the expertise and experience to support further improvement. The new headteacher is providing very clear and determined leadership. She has achieved a lot in a relatively short time because she has homed in on the right things. For example, pupils' assessment records in reading, writing and mathematics have been scrutinised. Any pupils who are not doing well enough are being very closely monitored.

The federation is bringing expertise at other leadership levels to the school. Meetings between English and mathematics subject leaders at both schools have enabled them to share ideas and good practice. They are now beginning to have a greater impact on standards. All teachers now use unit plans in mathematics, for example. This has contributed to pupils' improved achievement in mathematics, which was inadequate but is now satisfactory.

The headteacher's monitoring of the teaching and the curriculum is accurate and is validated by inspection evidence. However, the quality and impact of the school's self-evaluation are not effective at all levels. It is not always sufficiently incisive or clearly focused on the pupils themselves, to find out if they are enjoying their education and getting the most out of school that they can.

Support from the local authority last summer helped to put the necessary systems in place to improve pupils' progress. There were some signs of improvement before the federation but pupils' rate of progress has picked up noticeably since. The most recent data show pupils are now doing better in most classes. Throughout the school, standards are broadly average but improving, as pupils who have underachieved in the past start to catch up. Provision in Reception has improved and children's achievement is satisfactory. However, pupils' progress is too dependent upon which class they are in and the quality of teaching and learning. Achievement varies from good to inadequate and some pupils, from all attainment groups, are not doing well enough. The school is not giving pupils a secure enough foundation for their next school and future lives. For this reason, overall achievement is inadequate. There are pockets of good teaching, where pupils enjoy learning because they find lessons interesting and fun. However, too little teaching is good, too much is satisfactory and some is inadequate. The main weaknesses lie in the quality and depth of teachers' planning, which does not focus enough on what pupils with learning difficulties will learn and how this will differ from pupils who are particularly able. Marking is helpful

in some classes but not in others. Because of these inconsistencies, teaching and learning are inadequate overall.

A stronger aspect of the school is the way staff care for and support pupils, particularly those who are in vulnerable situations. Parents' questionnaires show that most of their children enjoy coming to school. Behaviour and attendance are good. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory but tend to be dependent upon the quality of the teaching and the curriculum.

Whilst there are signs of improvement, there is still a lot to do. However, there is a clear commitment to raising standards and improving the school amongst the staff, and a sense of everyone pulling together for the benefit of the pupils.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Improve achievement and standards, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Raise the quality of teaching and learning. Ensure there is a clear focus on what pupils will learn and plan work at an appropriate level to challenge and motivate all groups of pupils.
- Use assessment and marking more effectively to establish what individual pupils know and plan what they need to learn next. Help pupils understand what they have achieved and how they can improve.
- Improve the effectiveness and impact of leadership across the school and ensure more accurate and consistent self-evaluation.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Children start Reception with broadly average standards but some have no pre-school experience and others are already working within the goals set for the end of Reception. This means each class has a wide range of attainment. In the 2006 national tests, Year 2 results improved to slightly above average with marked improvement in mathematics. At Year 6, performance was significantly below average, despite an improvement in reading and writing from the previous year. Pupils did not do well enough in science and especially mathematics. This is because pupils in Years 3 to 6 have underachieved over recent years, significantly so in mathematics. Inspection findings show standards are now broadly average but achievement is inconsistent. However, with the sharper attention to tracking and monitoring pupils' progress, the school is in a better position to ensure more pupils reach their potential.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and this is demonstrated by their above average attendance. Pupils are courteous and polite and they behave well. They know what to do to keep themselves safe. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils

co-operate well when given the opportunity to work together. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility. Pupils are happy to express their opinions about their school. They like the new peer mediation process, for example, which has helped the more vulnerable pupils at break times. They think the school council is ineffective and does not play a large part in making school decisions. The school encourages a healthy lifestyle and the pupils report that healthy eating weeks are popular. However, snacks eaten during playtimes indicate that they have had limited impact.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 4**

In Reception, teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well organised with a satisfactory range of activities across all areas of learning. Staff keep detailed observation notes to help them assess children and plan future learning. Between Years 1 and 6, teaching is too variable. A common weakness is that teachers plan what pupils will do without considering what different groups of pupils need to learn. Too often, all pupils do the same work and this does not take into account what pupils of differing abilities already know. In a science lesson, some pupils already had a good understanding of what was being covered but teaching was not adapted to cater for these pupils. This is not the case, however, in all lessons. In the better lessons, teachers use the information from their marking and assessment to plan work at the right level. Some teaching is particularly lively and interesting. A good example occurred in a geography lesson when pupils worked in pairs on a well planned range of activities to spot features on a large map. All pupils were enjoying the lesson and were clear about what they were learning.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

Curriculum provision is satisfactory. Pupils enjoy special activities, such as artists coming into school or the healthy week. Discussions with pupils show they experience a richer and more stimulating curriculum in some classes than others. Some recall various topics they have covered, trips they have been on or different visitors coming into their class. These opportunities add to their wider understanding of the world and develop their personal and social skills. Others clearly do not have as many opportunities. Support from the local authority has improved the quality of planning in literacy and this is helping to bring about greater consistency and improve standards. There is a satisfactory range of after-school clubs and activities. Pupils enjoy attending the ones that take place but would like more.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The quality of care, guidance and support is satisfactory with some good features. The school protects and promotes the health and welfare of the pupils well. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are satisfactory. Support for vulnerable pupils is good. The school's link with the local behaviour support team is having a positive impact on a significant number of pupils and supporting their parents. Academic guidance is improving. Prior to federation, the local authority supported the school in setting clearer targets for pupils' learning. These are used consistently in literacy; most pupils know their targets and what they have to do to improve. However, targets are not yet used consistently in mathematics and science.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. Improvements since the federation have been significant. The local authority identified that pupils were not doing as well as they should last summer and put a robust and intensive programme into place to support the school's senior management team. By September, better procedures were in place to track individual pupils' progress and establish targets. However, they had not impacted sufficiently on pupils' achievement by the time the school federated.

Since the federation, the pace of improvement has picked up considerably. There is more rigour and purpose to the leadership and recent improvements are clearly having a beneficial impact on pupils' progress and standards. Many staff spoke about how pleased they were to have a clear sense of direction, particularly after the uncertainties of the previous year.

Despite these recent developments, pupils' achievement and the quality of provision have fallen since the last inspection. Over this longer period, therefore, improvement as a whole has been inadequate.

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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>	4
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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<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>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We visited your school this week and I would like to thank you for talking to us about your school and the work you do. We enjoyed being in your school. The brand new computer suite looks lovely. We think the school will be a really bright and cheerful place to learn when all the decorating work is finished.

I thought you would like to know what we found out about your school. We are pleased you enjoy coming to school. It is good that you attend regularly and try hard not to miss school. You behave well and you are friendly and polite to visitors. The school works hard to care for you and make sure everyone feels safe and happy. Your headteacher and teachers are making the school better. However, the school is not yet effective enough and there are some important things that must improve quite quickly, so that you all get a good education and do well.

- We have asked the school to improve teaching so that you all learn more in lessons.
- We want your teachers to keep checking what you already know to decide what you need to learn next. We also want them to help you more when they mark your work.
- When the leaders at the school are judging how well they think the school is doing, they must always consider you, and whether you are making good progress and getting the most out of your school.

We hope that you will help in this by letting your teachers know if you feel work is too easy for you.

We have given the school what is called a 'Notice to Improve'. This means that we will come back next year and see how you are all getting on.