

# Roman Road Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	108376
<b>Local Authority</b>	Gateshead
<b>Inspection number</b>	309669
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Moira Fitzpatrick

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3-11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	218
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Gary Carr
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Christine McKeown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 September 2004
<b>School address</b>	Leam Lane Estate Felling Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE10 8SA
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4334006
<b>Fax number</b>	0191 4334010

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- the progress that pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, made through the last school year, and are making this year
- the impact of teaching and care, guidance and support upon pupils' personal development
- the effectiveness of leadership and management.

Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Evidence was gathered from performance data, the school's self-evaluation and other school documentation, observations of teaching and learning, the work produced by pupils, parents' questionnaires and discussions with pupils, staff and governors.

## Description of the school

The school is about average size and nearly all pupils are of White British heritage. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are not at an early stage of fluency. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average, so too is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are more pupils than usual with a statement of special educational need. This is because the school hosts a resource base for pupils with moderate learning difficulties, many of whom have a statement.

## 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 school. The outstanding care, guidance and support given to pupils helps them to achieve well, often from very low starting points in the Nursery. Despite making good progress, standards by the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Good progress is sustained in Key Stage 2 so that in Year 6, standards are broadly average. Sometimes, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities do not make good progress when they are withdrawn from class because the work set does not capture their interest. This slows their learning in reading and writing over time. Results in national tests in 2007 for Year 6 pupils were disappointing for the school because standards in writing had declined. Prompt and effective action this year has seen standards in writing rise across the school. Year 6 pupils have already exceeded their writing targets set for the national tests at the end of the year and they are on course to meet challenging targets in mathematics and science.

Teaching is good, and sometimes, outstanding. This is one of the reasons pupils love school and make the most of the many exciting and interesting things on offer. Their enthusiasm for learning is a delight to see. They enjoy taking part in discussions, listen well to the ideas of others, think about their learning and consider how they can improve their work. They know that they can master new learning and be successful because of the exceptionally good guidance and encouragement they receive from teachers. Well structured lessons are enriched with interesting resources that motivate pupils to learn. Pupils learn at a good rate supported by constant praise and recognition of their achievement from teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils flourish in this atmosphere and rapidly develop confidence and the 'can do' attitude which is one of the school's aims. Pupils with learning difficulties who work in the resource base benefit from the same high quality planning and provision as others and they enjoy joining mainstream classes in the afternoons. Parents of these pupils comment, 'The improvement in basic skills has been very noticeable ... we have nothing but praise for staff'.

The personal development and well-being of pupils are excellent. So too is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils behave extremely well in and out of class. They show respect and care for each other and are quick to praise others' achievements, as when a Year 1 boy spontaneously commented, 'Well done!' to a friend who had worked hard in the mathematics lesson. Pupils develop admirable team skills because they are constantly given the opportunity to work with a partner or as part of a group. This allows them to learn from each other as well as to see their own and others' strengths. Consequently, the pupils are always happy either to help others or ask for advice. This contributes well to their feelings of safety and security. As one of the older pupils commented, 'This is a great place to make friends.' Pupils of all ages are eager to take responsibility for helping the school to run smoothly. No matter what the task, pupils take it seriously. They perform their 'jobs' conscientiously and are proud to please their teachers and make a contribution to the life of the school. A good quality curriculum includes opportunities to learn about staying safe and healthy. Exciting events, such as Bike-it Day, when almost half of the pupils cycled to school, reinforce the message of combining exercise with careful regard for safety. Pupils' involvement in this and other events, such as school concerts and the end of Year 6 theatre production, underlines the strong sense of community that they develop. Attendance is satisfactory. The vast majority of pupils are very good attenders who are reluctant to stay away even when they are unwell. However, despite the school's comprehensive procedures for improving attendance, a few pupils are poor attenders and this reduces the overall attendance figure for the school. The school's data shows

clearly how the learning of pupils who do not attend regularly enough falls behind that of their classmates.

The exceptional quality of care, guidance and support pupils receive contributes greatly to their many successes. All adults are meticulous in their assessment of pupils' academic and personal needs. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to the learning and well-being of all pupils through their excellent relationships with them. All staff are sensitive to pupils' concerns and are always ready to listen. While pupils say that bullying is rare, they are absolutely confident that adults will sort out any problems and they are clear about how to deal with any unkindness that may occur around the school. They say, 'Teachers make you safe and happy... that's what makes this school special.' Teachers' excellent use of assessment information ensures that pupils' learning needs are always at the forefront of planning. Care is taken to involve pupils in assessing their own learning. This has worked so well that pupils are now eager to identify for themselves what to do next before the teacher writes suggestions for improvement in their books. The school's good links with external agencies and with parents makes a powerful contribution to pupils' learning and sense of well-being. Productive links with other schools and local universities enhance learning for both pupils and teachers and add to the general feeling of high quality care that pervades the school.

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has sustained the drive for improvement very well since the last inspection. She has been ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Together they have ensured that, despite some unavoidable staff absence, standards have risen and that the quality of provision and care has continued to improve. Teamwork between all adults in the school is excellent. All are aware of the part they play in improving the school. Senior leaders are good role models for other staff and lead new developments efficiently and effectively. Governors are well informed and supportive. All governors are involved in monitoring some aspect of the school's work, so that they are able to both challenge and act as a critical friend to the school. The headteacher's commitment to the continual development of staff expertise ensures that they have the skills and confidence to successfully adopt new initiatives. Self-evaluation is good. The school accurately identifies areas that need improvement and is well placed to improve further. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. In the questionnaires that were returned many praise the staff for the care and support they show both them and their children.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The Foundation Stage provides a good start to children's learning. It is well led and managed and the quality of provision is good. Children begin in the Nursery with skills and abilities that are well below what is typical for three year olds, especially in social and emotional development and language development. They settle quickly into school and soon learn to be independent, because staff are caring and give them plenty of support. Well established routines help children to feel safe and secure, so their confidence grows and they happily make choices about what they will do. Children are taught to share and to respect each others' feelings by staff who take time to explain how to be kind and helpful. They develop a lively interest in learning and are keen to explore the many activities that are provided. Activities to develop their language and mathematical skills are well planned to meet the different needs of children. Despite making good progress, during their time in Nursery and Reception, a good proportion of children do not reach the level expected for their age by the end of Reception. Nevertheless, they are well prepared for Year 1 because of their increasing personal and social skills and their confidence

in their ability to learn. Parents are delighted with the way the Foundation Stage looks after their children, 'I have been very impressed ... the activities they do with the children are inventive. Staff should be commended for their constant dedication to the children.'

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

- Further impress on parents the importance of pupils attending school regularly.
- Improve the provision and progress of pupils who are withdrawn from class for additional literacy support.

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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	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?	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.



## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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

14 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roman Road Primary School, Gateshead, NE10 8SA

Thank you all for the lovely day I had when I visited your school recently. You made me feel very welcome and helped me to find out all the things that make yours a good school.

One of the reasons your school is good is that you all work hard and try your best to please your teachers. This makes your teachers and your parents very proud of you because you make good progress with your learning and are really keen to learn more. Teaching in your school is good and often better than that. Your teachers know you very well and have really good ways of helping you to learn new things quickly. I was interested to see how well you can tell yourselves what to do to improve and I think it's a good idea to aim for lots of tickled pink in your books. I think now and again a few of you don't make as much progress in reading and writing as you could. I have suggested that your school finds ways to make sure you learn as well as you can wherever you are taught.

Some things about your school are better than good - they are excellent! One of them is the way you all develop such terrific personal qualities. You behave really well, which shows you really care about yourself and your friends. You make your school a happy, safe place by making suggestions for improvements and taking on jobs to keep things going smoothly. You understand very well how to stay safe and look after each other, and the buddies do a really good job of being a helping hand in the playground. You are also very good team players and work very well together. I could see how much this speeds up your learning and also how much you enjoy working like this. These are very important skills for your future and you are fortunate that your school gives you plenty of opportunities to learn them. Sadly, some of you don't get the full benefit of these things because you aren't at school often enough. I've asked your school to work with your parents to help you to attend regularly so that you can benefit from all the lovely things that are organised for you.

The other thing about your school that is better than good is the exceptional care and support you get from all adults in the school. They know you really well and are able to see when you need help and support. They take a lot of trouble to arrange interesting activities and visitors and they get extra help for anyone who needs it. One of the lovely parts of the care that adults show you is the way you learn from your teachers and the way you show friendship and understanding to each other. As one the Year 6 boys put it, 'Everyone cares... it's the best school ever.' I know you will all keep on caring and working hard to make your good school even better.

All good wishes to everyone for the future.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Inspector