

# Ramsey Spinning Infant School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	110684
<b>Local Authority</b>	CAMBRIDGESHIRE LA
<b>Inspection number</b>	310388
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joanne Harvey

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>	Infant
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4-7
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	162
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Lesley James
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Patsy Barrett
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 February 2005
<b>School address</b>	High Street Ramsey Huntingdon Cambridgeshire PE26 1AD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01487813587
<b>Fax number</b>	01487711987

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

This is a smaller than average size school serving the villages of Ramsey, Forty Foot and surrounding areas. Fewer pupils than in most schools are entitled to claim free school meals. Very few pupils are from other than White British backgrounds or in the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils with identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities is fewer than in most schools though the number with a statement of special educational needs is higher. The school is currently engaged in the consultation process for amalgamation with its linked junior school. Its many awards include a Successful Schools' Award, a Basic Skills Award and a Healthy Schools Award.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether all pupils achieve as well as they can in all subjects, whether checks on pupils' learning in all subjects are rigorous, formal and effective, and the accuracy of school self-evaluation. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, senior staff and governor representatives. In addition, there was observation of parts of several lessons, scrutiny of school information and its self-evaluation, samples of pupils' work, parent questionnaires, and discussions with pupils. 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, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

This is an outstandingly effective school which provides extremely good value for money. Standards are high, often exceptionally so, and pupils make very good progress throughout the school.

The school's success arises from the clear vision and direction given by school leaders to a remarkably caring and committed staff team. They work extremely hard in partnership with governors and with the support of the community. This ensures that pupils achieve as well as they can academically and personally. All individuals are valued in a nurturing, lively and challenging environment in which children thrive and become very well rounded individuals. It is not surprising that parents are highly appreciative of the school. One parent wrote, 'This is a fantastic school, enthusiasm is high and children are happy'. This comment reflected the views of many parents and summed the school up well. The children, who say 'school is exciting and learning is fun', echo this view, which is shown in their consistently high level of attendance.

Consequently, pupils' personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is exemplary so that not a moment is lost maintaining discipline in lessons or around the school. Because children are encouraged to express their opinions and to accept increasing responsibilities, they grow in confidence. Their social, moral and spiritual development is outstanding and their cultural development is good. Pupils demonstrate a remarkable understanding of how to keep themselves and each other safe. Work to achieve the Healthy Schools Award has been successful in giving them an excellent theoretical understanding of how to make healthy lifestyle choices, though this is not always reflected in the contents of their lunch boxes. The combination of very good literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology (ICT) skills and highly developed personal skills equips children exceptionally well for the next stage of education and adult life.

Teaching is excellent because lessons are planned very carefully, based on rigorous assessment, to take pupils' learning forward from whatever level they have reached previously. Teachers promote high levels of confidence and positive attitudes through excellent and trusting relationships, ensuring pupils work hard. Those who find learning more difficult or who are in the early stages of learning English get excellent support from able teaching assistants so that they make very good progress. The outstanding curriculum ensures learning is active and inclusive with a range of practical activities, such as science experiments and drama, which appeal to everyone. Visits, visitors, themed days and weeks all add interest and create lasting memories. Pupils particularly enjoy exploring topic themes through the visual arts in which they achieve very high standards. They say they would like even more topic work in the future. A highly effective personal, social, health education and citizenship programme ensures pupils develop excellent personal skills. Pupils enjoy an impressive range of activities in lunchtime and after-school clubs that go beyond the required subjects.

A very high degree of staff commitment ensures the school is at the centre of community events and this adds considerable enrichment to the curriculum, either through competition entries, participating in fetes or pursuing successful partnerships such as 'Vital Communities'. It also helps to ensure that pupils not only make a strong contribution to school life, but also make an outstanding contribution to the community beyond.

The school benefits from exceptional leadership at all levels. The headteacher, staff and governors have a very clear picture of how well the school is doing because they have rigorous and systematic procedures for checking this. This shared understanding of the school's

performance, and the commitment to continuous improvement ensure that all staff and governors are involved in school development planning so that, good as the school is, there is no complacency. Expectations are high and challenging targets are set and achieved. Consequently, achievement is outstanding. Pupils make very good progress from broadly average starting points to achieve well above average standards and occasionally, for some groups, achievement is exceptionally high.

Leaders have also been highly successful in addressing issues from the previous inspection. For example, they have ensured that the academic guidance given to all pupils now matches the outstanding quality of pastoral care. There are effective systems for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of pupils and procedures for safeguarding pupils comply with requirements. Partnerships with stakeholders and others are very strong. The school is well placed to build on existing successful practice to ensure it becomes the centre of a learning community, offering learning opportunities more widely to its members.

Given the way the school has successfully addressed issues from the previous inspection, maintained high standards and made significant improvements, there is little doubt that it has an excellent capacity to continue to improve.

## **Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 1**

Children do extremely well in the Foundation Stage. Even though they had only been in school a few days when the inspection took place and for some it was their very first day, they settle quickly into this extremely happy and stimulating environment. This is because of the excellent support and knowledge of staff who immediately make children and their families feel highly valued, secure and confident. Excellent arrangements for home visits, visits to other pre-school settings and introductory visits to school ensure that children arrive happy and ready to learn. Children enter with skills broadly expected for their age. They thrive and make very good progress in all areas. This is because appropriate individualised learning programmes, based on careful assessment, are taught expertly by class teachers and teaching assistants. Consequently, by the time children enter Year 1 they achieve at least the standards expected of them and most have surpassed them.

Teaching and the curriculum are outstanding. There is an excellent range of activities with a good balance between adult led and child initiated opportunities. However, leaders are not complacent. They are working to ensure that the quality of the experience of the six areas of learning offered to the children outdoors, though high, matches the extremely high quality of that which they enjoy inside every day.

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

- Extend partnership work to develop the school as the centre of a successful learning community.

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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?	1
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?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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

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	1
The behaviour of learners	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

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

<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>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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**

18 September 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ramsey Spinning Infant School, Ramsey, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE26 1AD

Thank you for making me so welcome when I came to inspect your school recently. This letter is to tell you what I found out about your school.

I think you are lucky to go to such an outstanding school. You told me that teachers make learning fun and that you do exciting things in lessons. I saw some of this myself when looking around the school. You also told me that behaviour is excellent and that everyone gets on together very well. This was certainly the impression I got as I saw you working hard in classes, having lunch together quietly and sensibly and playing outside. Because the staff look after you so well you make extremely good progress in your learning. You also have adults to go to if you ever get worried and upset.

To make the school even better I have asked those who lead the school to offer others who live in Ramsey, perhaps members of your family, friends or neighbours, the chance to come into school to attend courses in all sorts of things that might interest them.

I am sure Ms Barrett and the other staff will continue to work hard making the school an exciting and interesting place for you. You can do your bit by continuing with your excellent behaviour and hard work.

With best wishes

Joanne Harvey

Lead Inspector