

Rossett Acre Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121437
Local Authority	North Yorkshire
Inspection number	313988
Inspection date	27 September 2007
Reporting inspector	Ralph Higgs

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	5-11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	414
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr J Clark
Headteacher	Mrs Corrine Penhale
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2003
School address	Pannal Ash Road Harrogate North Yorkshire HG2 9PH
Telephone number	01423 561579
Fax number	01423 502860

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

The inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; personal development and well-being; teaching and learning; care guidance and support; and leadership and management, gathering evidence from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and key staff, assessment data and other documents. 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.

Description of the school

This popular large school serves an advantaged area. Almost all of its pupils are of White British heritage. The number on roll has risen substantially since the last inspection. There is a higher than average degree of mobility with more pupils joining than leaving the school each year. A small number of pupils enter from international or overseas schools. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well below average. A new headteacher took up post in January 2007. The school holds the Healthy Schools Award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the Active Mark.

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 with significant strengths. Strong leadership, good teaching and a vibrant curriculum promote well above average standards and good achievement. Pupils enjoy school a great deal and have positive attitudes to learning. They are keen to participate in all that the school offers. These characteristics are fully recognised by parents who are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. They typically praise its good learning ethos and the resulting eagerness of their children to attend.

All groups of pupils make good progress in each stage of their learning. Standards are well above average by the end of Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6). These high standards are reflected in the school's record of successful performance in the teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 and in the national tests at the end of Year 6. However, there is no complacency. The school is making increasingly sophisticated use of its analysis of teachers' assessments and of internal and national tests, to identify what needs improving and to identify pupils who may require extra help or challenge. Such good practice helps the school to set challenging targets for the end of Key Stage 2. These targets were exceeded in 2007 and so the school's sights have been set higher still for 2008. However, the proportion of Year 6 pupils attaining above expected standards in writing is consistently below that in reading.

Good overall progress is brought about by the effective quality of teaching and learning. Teachers create bright, welcoming classrooms and engage pupils by planning interesting lessons that take account of the needs and abilities of all pupils. Resources such as computers are used well to stimulate learning. Teachers have high expectations of learning and behaviour to which pupils respond by sustaining their efforts and completing activities carefully. Pupils collaborate well and eagerly participate in discussions in the whole class, in pairs and in small groups. Teaching assistants are well-integrated into classroom activities and provide effective support, particularly for the least able.

Over the past year the school has worked hard to improve the teaching of writing and to implement new assessment systems. In both cases these innovations have been beneficial, but have not yet been fully effective. Pupils are now organising their writing using a common format throughout the school. This has helped raise standards, but the most able pupils are not yet consistently producing above average quality writing. Teachers' greater awareness of pupils' prior attainment has helped them to identify precise objectives for lessons in order to build systematically on pupils' learning. These objectives are shared effectively with pupils and followed up at the end of lessons to check what gains have been made. Pupils say that this process is helpful and gives them a clearer picture of what they should be doing. However, there are some inconsistencies between classes in the involvement of pupils in this process. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but do not always comment sufficiently on what they need to do next to improve. Also, some pupils do not fully understand the improvement targets set for them.

The high quality of care and support that pupils receive helps bring about their good personal development. Pupils know how to lead healthy lifestyles and how to stay fit because their curriculum provides good opportunities to develop these qualities. Pupils talk openly about their relationships and are able to resolve minor disputes when they occur. A high priority is placed on pupils' welfare and safety and all the required procedures to safeguard them are in place. Consequently, pupils feel safe and secure and understand the potential hazards which

exist on the school site and in the local area. They report that there is very little bullying and that they are confident any incidents will be quickly dealt with. Their cultural development is outstanding. There is a thriving choir, a well-established school orchestra and regular productions and concerts. Pupils' cultural understanding is greatly enhanced by their involvement in initiatives such as the recent Egyptian project and by their fund-raising for Africa and Asia. Pupils acquire the confidence to try new challenges and large numbers take part in the excellent range of after-school activities offered to the older pupils. They make a valuable contribution to their community through the school council, the 'green team' and by becoming 'play-box' leaders and peer mentors. Pupils are keen to come to school and their attendance is consistently good.

The headteacher and senior management team, in partnership with the governing body, provide good leadership and a clear direction for the school. All staff are determined to continue to raise standards and to improve the quality of provision. The whole staff and governors are fully involved in school improvement planning and this has contributed well to the common sense of purpose. Staff say that well organised performance management arrangements and the school's involvement with teacher training enhance their skills and capabilities. The school checks its performance robustly. All staff with leadership responsibilities and the governors play an increasingly important part in this process. Self-evaluation is accurate and appropriate priorities for improvement are implemented vigorously and effectively. The good overall improvement since the last inspection shows the school has a good capacity to further improve.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good and enables children to make a secure start to school. Children enter the Reception class with a broad range of skills which, on average, are a little above that typical of the age group. Teaching and learning are good. This results in almost all children reaching, and some exceeding, the learning goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. Staff understand the needs of young children and plan well-tailored and lively activities for them which stimulate their curiosity and desire to learn. Children's development is assessed systematically and thoroughly. This enables staff to provide the challenge and support that children need to learn effectively and make good progress. Children quickly find their feet, work and play happily together and readily participate in activities. In response to the constant encouragement children receive they rapidly develop good communication and language skills. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well and there is smooth transition to Key Stage 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in writing, particularly of the most able pupils.
- Ensure that all pupils receive clear and precise guidance to enable them to understand what to do next to improve their work.

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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 ¹ 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?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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	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 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

Inspection of Rossett Acre Primary School, Harrogate HG2 9PH

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave to me when I recently inspected your school. I really enjoyed having discussions with you and visiting your classrooms.

These are the good things I found out about your school, which provides you with a good education:

- I agree with you that school is enjoyable, friendly and caring.
- The youngest children make a good start in Reception.
- Your teachers provide you with good, interesting lessons.
- You make good progress in your work.
- You are learning really well about the wider world and are keen to extend your talents in music, the arts and sports because the school encourages these things very well indeed.
- You behave well in lessons and around the school.
- You get on well with each other and try hard to be helpful.
- You clearly know how to lead healthy lives and how to keep safe.
- I agree with you that the staff are always on hand to help you if needed.
- The headteacher, staff and governors are working hard to improve your education.

These are the things I have asked your school to do.

- Help you even more to improve your writing. You have made a good start with using VCOP, but all of you, particularly those who find the work easier than most, will have to continue to work hard to reach higher levels.
- Make sure that all of you understand how to reach the next level in your work.

Once again, thank you for being so helpful on my visit. I know that you will do your best to help the school continue to improve.