

Roe Farm Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131401
Local Authority	City of Derby LA
Inspection number	315800
Inspection dates	13–14 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Jones

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	329
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Brian Pilmore
Headteacher	Ms Kate Williams
Date of previous school inspection	17 May 2004
School address	Worcester Crescent Chaddesden Derby DE21 4HG
Telephone number	01332 346310
Fax number	01332 293616

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	13–14 February 2008
Inspection number	315800

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average size primary school with an attached Nursery class. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds. The school is situated in an area of considerable social and economic disadvantage, with almost half of the pupils receiving free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is about average overall. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is exceptionally low in relation to the national expectations.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Roe Farm Primary is a satisfactory school. It has emerged from a period of considerable staff changes in recent years and is now improving. Standards are rising because of the satisfactory direction provided by the headteacher and the newly appointed senior leadership team. This has resulted in a common understanding of the school's key priorities and closer teamwork to help drive them forward. The staff have paid close attention to promoting good standards of care and welfare and to creating a positive environment for learning. This has led to improvements, particularly to pupils' personal development and well-being, which are good. Parents say that they are pleased with the school, particularly its 'family friendly feeling' as noted by one and echoed by others.

Standards remain well below average throughout the school. The dip in attainment last year has been acknowledged and improvements made so that, from their very low starting points, pupils are now making satisfactory progress. Standards in reading and writing are particularly low however, and their improvement rightly remains a school priority. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. The recent improvements in recording pupils' progress, supported by the use of regular assessments and reviews by senior leaders, are key reasons for the recent rise in standards, particularly among lower and average attaining pupils. Learning is sometimes challenging for pupils, although teachers have further work to do to better inform pupils of their progress through more effective marking. Recent staffing changes have decreased, enabling the school to better share and build on the best practice. Relationships between teachers and their pupils are typically good and most lessons are interesting so that pupils enjoy learning.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They say that they enjoy school, especially when lessons are interesting and fun. However, despite the school's considerable efforts to address attendance, rates remain too low. Pupils readily take on responsibilities and there is an active school council. The focus on teaching pupils how to live healthily is evident, although this is not often reflected in their lunch boxes. The satisfactory curriculum provides pupils with sound skills for their future lives and has some good features, including popular additional activities and visits. Closer links across the curriculum are being planned to better promote literacy skills, but information and communication technology (ICT) is poorly developed because pupils have limited access to computers.

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall, and the leadership of the headteacher is good. She accurately assesses what needs to be improved and the new senior leadership team are rightly monitoring and driving forward these priorities. Senior staff are well supported by governors, who effectively hold them to account for their work. The process of self-evaluation has improved and is now effective, enabling the school to accurately identify aspects of the school that require development. The school has a good capacity to improve, and provides satisfactory value for money.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is improving with strong direction from the co-ordinator. A good start is made to children's education in the Nursery. However, at the end of the Foundation Stage, standards are still well below those expected for their age, particularly in communication, language and literacy. Children attain standards in physical

development that are close to those expected nationally. The curriculum is well planned and teaching is satisfactory overall. There is a good balance between children making purposeful choices about their activities and adults teaching them new and specific skills. The outdoor area is used well for the six areas of learning for Nursery children as it can be accessed easily from the two classrooms. However, access is limited for Reception children because the outdoor area is not near their classrooms.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement so that more pupils are able to reach the nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave school.
- Build on the effective practice that already exists to improve teaching and marking so that they are consistently challenging and good across the school.
- Improve pupils' ICT skills by increasing their access to computers.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall although standards are well below average. Pupils enter the school with standards that are exceptionally low. Pupils' literacy skills are particularly weak. However, although progress was inconsistent last year, by the time they leave the school pupils make satisfactory progress from their very low starting points. The school has halted last year's decline in standards and introduced a tracking system which is helping to regularly identify the progress of its pupils. Staff use the data to monitor the effectiveness of the system and to target support for pupils not making the expected progress. This recent change is beginning to bring about improvement, although it is too early to fully see its impact. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. Pupils enjoy their lessons, and frequently demonstrate mature attitudes to their work. Pupils say that they enjoy school and although attendance is below average, the school is doing all it can to improve attendance and punctuality, especially of a few pupils. Many pupils eat the good, healthy school meals but packed lunches often include less nutritious food. They know that exercise is good for them and most are enthusiastic about physical education activities. Pupils behave well in lessons and at break-times. They enjoy discussing issues of relationships and behaviour at regular team meetings, and say that these help them to know what to do if anyone is unkind or calls them names. A minority of pupils have complex behaviour, emotional and social difficulties and the school takes advice from a variety of agencies to help these pupils and to prevent disturbance to the learning of others. Members of the school council take their roles seriously. They discuss ideas with their peers such as the wide range of issues relating to communal living, including the planning of adventure play facilities. Although a majority of last year's Year 6 pupils reached the standards expected in mathematics less than half the year group did in English. As a result, not all of last year's Year 6 pupils were prepared adequately for the next stage of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is improving and there is some good teaching, but this is not yet consistent across the school. In the best lessons, teaching is lively and stimulating, with a good balance between whole-class discussions and individual or group work that challenges and involves all pupils. In less effective lessons, insufficient attention is given to meeting the full range of needs and abilities in the class. Teachers know the pupils well and are skilful in forging positive relationships with them. Although they rightly place great emphasis on caring for pupils, standards of marking vary. Often marking is affirming and encouraging, but does not sufficiently inform pupils of how well they are achieving against their learning targets. The recent improvement to tracking pupils' progress is helping teachers to understand how to challenge learners and consequently, the rate of progress has improved. Teaching assistants are used satisfactorily to enhance learning, especially for lower ability pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and meets the needs and interests of most pupils. It focuses satisfactorily on pupils' personal development. Learning for many pupils is supported by the effective organisation of classes into 'sets' for English and mathematics lessons. There is often appropriate emphasis on the development of numeracy skills, but opportunities to challenge and extend pupils' reading and writing skills are not always taken. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practice and improve their ICT skills. Opportunities to link subjects together in lessons are often taken, and this helps to support learning. The curriculum is enriched by foreign language lessons throughout the school and provision is further enhanced by a range of sporting and other out-of-school activities. Regular visitors to the school also aid pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school has robust procedures for health and safety, risk assessments and for safeguarding pupils. The school works very closely with support agencies to ensure that pupils stay safe. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported appropriately by teaching assistants and class teachers, both individually and in groups, so that they make satisfactory progress. The school consults a wide variety of agencies to meet pupils' individual needs, including those for whom English is not their home language, so that they achieve at least as well as their peers. The school assesses pupils' basic skills regularly and tracks their attainment and achievement. There have been recent improvements in the 'catch up' programmes for those who have not made as much progress as they could. Pupils have suitable targets to help them to improve their written and mathematical work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The satisfactory management of the school is enhanced by the good leadership of the committed headteacher. She has built effective teams and maintained high staff morale during a period of significant changes to staffing. She is supported by the deputy headteacher and a newly-formed senior leadership team who, together, are beginning to achieve the much needed improvements in pupils' progress and helping to drive up standards. The governing body is supportive of the leadership and effectively holds it to account. Senior leaders are actively involved in monitoring and are developing a growing understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Under the careful guidance of the headteacher, they work enthusiastically and are committed to bringing about improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
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	4

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?	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?	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
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	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

15 February 2008

Dear Pupils,

Inspection of Roe Farm Primary School, Worcester Crescent, Chaddesden, Derby, DE21 4HG

Thank you for making Mrs Bosworth, Mr Sydney and myself so very welcome when we visited your school recently. We certainly enjoyed talking with you. We think yours is a satisfactory school and we know that you and many of your parents and carers think so too. We were impressed by your politeness and the way you get on with your teachers and each other.

Ms Williams and the staff are good at making sure that you are safe and are able to make satisfactory progress. They are also good at making sure that those of you who sometimes find learning difficult receive the help you need. We were very pleased to see how hard you work during lessons. We were also pleased to see how you take responsibility and are willing to do jobs and help around the school. We are impressed by the ways in which all the staff are helping you to improve your behaviour.

We have asked Ms Williams, the staff and governors to try to make your school even better by doing the following things.

- Help you to make better progress in English, mathematics and science before you leave in Year 6.
- Get your teachers to make your lessons even more challenging.
- Improve your ICT skills by giving you more opportunities to use computers in a range of lessons.

Keep on working hard, doing your very best and enjoying your time at school.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Jones

Lead inspector