

Rossington Pheasant Bank Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	106688
Local Authority	Doncaster
Inspection number	317687
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	John Young HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	335
School	
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Jill Parsons
Headteacher	Mr J Deans
Date of previous school inspection	21 November 2006
School address	West End Lane Rossington Doncaster South Yorkshire DN11 0LP
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. When the school was inspected in November 2006, it was judged to require special measures. Since then one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and Additional Inspectors have visited the school twice and monitored its progress.

Description of the school

This larger than average school attracts pupils predominantly from the local area, which contains pockets of social and economic deprivation. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for a free school meal is double the national average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above the national average. The vast majority of pupils are White British, with the remainder from Black minority and mixed ethnic backgrounds. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly average. The school provides some extended services, including pre-school and after school care, holiday clubs and allows the community to use its sport, arts and conference facilities. In 2005 the school attracted government funding through the 'Space for Sport and the Arts' initiative, which has significantly enhanced its facilities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that Rossington Pheasant Bank Junior School no longer requires special measures. It now provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils and offers satisfactory value for money. Indeed some aspects of its work are good.

Over the past 12 months, the school has orchestrated a remarkable transformation, from a failing school into one that now meets the needs of the great majority of its pupils. The school is a 'work in progress' and the rapid gains secured are a tribute to the headteacher and all his staff, who responded very positively to the challenge that previous weaknesses presented. A number of partners have worked effectively on behalf of the school to help it to improve its fortunes, including the local authority, a partner primary school and a consultant project manager. An important feature has been the efficient way in which senior managers have systematically tackled the school's key areas for improvement. The collective desire to improve the school, a strategic review of operating procedures and the introduction of robust monitoring and evaluation have underpinned much of the success achieved.

Although there remain areas for development, such as broadening pupils' cultural awareness and ensuring more pupils reach higher levels of attainment, the school has come a very long way in a relatively short period and has good capacity to continue this improvement. It has secured improvements in virtually every aspect of its work. Critically, pupils are reaching higher standards, including in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science. The standards reached are now satisfactory overall, as is pupils' achievement. Pupils are making better progress because of better teaching and a more appropriate curriculum. These, together with an increased focus on the use of data to plan, assess and intervene in pupils' learning have been an extremely successful recipe for success. The overall quality of teaching and learning, although satisfactory, has an increasing proportion of good and outstanding elements. The curriculum has been reorganised and has some good features, which give it a better balance and coherence. The introduction of a more thematic approach is beginning to bear fruit and provides opportunities for pupils to recognise the connections between subjects and build on their previous experiences. The effective promotion of pupils' personal development and well-being continues to be a strength of the school's provision and enhancements to the quality of pupils' academic guidance mean that the quality of care, guidance and support pupils receive is now good.

The school's management team is proving highly effective as a group. Some shrewd appointments and the rationalising of roles have complimented the strengths that already existed. The headteacher, his deputy headteacher and other senior managers lead by example and are excellent role models. Governors are supportive of the school and execute their duties well.

The school now needs to tackle some of the deeper rooted and on-going challenges it faces in relation to further raising achievement and improving attendance.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement: particularly in boys' writing and amongst the most able pupils.
- Raise levels of attendance.
- Develop opportunities within the curriculum to broaden pupils' cultural awareness.

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

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, when set against their attainment at entry, which is broadly satisfactory. Current data and scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that standards are rising. In 2007, results in national tests were the highest for many years and pupils' standards are now in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Nevertheless, too few pupils reach the higher standards, particularly in reading and writing. In addition, boys' writing is not yet of a high enough standard either in their work in class or in the tests. The school now collates and uses accurate and detailed data very effectively to help teachers plan pupils' work. As a result, pupils' achievement continues to improve and is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress at a similar rate to others. This is because the school carefully tracks each pupil, so that it can provide suitable levels of support and intervention where necessary.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are enthusiastic about every aspect of school life. Many arrive early for school to participate in the daily 'Early Bird' sessions that reinforce the basic skills they will need to do well in the future. Pupils are clear about the importance of healthy and active lifestyles. For example, they know that eating fruit, vegetables and protein will help them to maintain a healthy heart. Pupils' good spiritual, moral and social development reflects in all they do, while cultural development is satisfactory. They show care and respect for one another as they go about their daily lives. Music is an uplifting element of school life and often provides an inspiring backdrop to pupils' learning, whether in the echoing calls of the rainforest during an art lesson, or as pupils lustily practised songs for the Arena concert later in the term. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary and they are first class ambassadors for the school. There is an active school council and pupils perform regularly in local concerts and events. They enjoy collaborating in lessons and fulfil their role of 'response partners' particularly well. Pupils like looking over their work with their 'response partners' in order to check exactly what they need to incorporate next to improve their work further.

The attendance of most pupils is satisfactory. Although the school promotes regular attendance, there is little support from outside school. In particular, a minority of parents fail to ensure that their children attend school regularly and the educational welfare officer visits the school just once a month. The fractured attendance patterns of these pupils prevent them from fulfilling their full potential. Pupils enjoy the many trips and residential visits they experience. These broaden their horizons in terms of what they see in areas outside their own community. Even so, pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity of British society is limited. Rising standards in basic skills, along with good relationships and the development of effective collaborative skills, satisfactorily prepare pupils for future success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The inspection confirms the school's judgement that the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good and some outstanding practice observed. Very warm relationships enable teachers to manage behaviour well so that pupils concentrate and gain confidence. Good use of 'response partners' is also building confidence and independence. The extensive use of data gives teachers a clear understanding of pupils' earlier achievement and the level of challenge that they need to provide. As a result, in most lessons, staff effectively match work to pupil's needs. Challenge for higher attaining pupils increasingly involves higher-level thinking rather than extra tasks, although this is not yet embedded across the school. Teachers and support staff collaborate effectively to support lower attaining pupils and those with additional needs. As a result, these pupils are confident and make the same rate of progress as their peers. Substantial recent training is helping teachers to evaluate pupils' learning throughout each lesson and to adjust the pace and focus of activities to maximise progress. Teachers mark work carefully and set realistic short-term targets to help pupils to progress. Modelling successful answers and using displays to create supportive learning environments are evident throughout the school. Where lessons are only satisfactory, the pace of learning is slower and some pupils lose their focus. On some occasions, the more able pupils complete their tasks quickly and do not always receive additional stimulus or challenging work to maintain their momentum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Curricular provision is satisfactory overall. Significant recent improvements have given pupils a more balanced experience. This maintains an appropriate emphasis on basic numeracy and literacy, but also includes an increased emphasis on enjoyment and highlighting the connections between subjects by studying them through a theme. A topic on mountains, for instance, provided excellent opportunities to develop music skills, as well as scientific concepts, and self-confidence, as well as reinforcing pupils' grasp of basic skills. Residential visits offer a wider outlook beyond the local community.

Clubs that accelerate pupils learning and individual support programmes enable all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to progress satisfactorily. There are some good opportunities for music and sport related enrichment, which are very popular. Pupils have some good opportunities to contribute to the school and local community and make good use of these. There is scope for more experience of enterprise. Similarly, there are too few opportunities to broaden pupils' awareness of different cultures and values.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Teachers and support staff know pupils very well. They work closely together to provide good levels of academic and pastoral care for pupils. Even so, procedures to persuade a few parents to bring their children to school regularly are not effective enough. There is just the right level of challenge, support and guidance to motivate all pupils so that they make good progress in their academic, personal and emotional development. There are appropriate procedures in place

to safeguard pupils and to ensure their safety and well-being. Pupils say that there are adults and classmates to turn to if they are worried about anything. Good links with other schools ensure that pupils settle in or move on with minimum anxiety. Academic guidance is good. Pupils know their academic targets well. They understand and can explain where they are up to in their learning and what they need to do next to improve. Parents are very appreciative of how well the school cares for their children. Comments such as, 'My child loves school.', 'He's come on in leaps and bounds since he's been here.' and 'I'm proud to say my child comes to this school.' are typical of the responses parents made when the inspectors engaged them in conversation.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. Careful strategic planning, underpinned by robust monitoring and evaluation procedures, and appropriate training have paid dividends in helping to bolster major aspects of the school's work. There is a clear focus on raising standards and improving pupil achievement.

Staff, under the astute leadership of the headteacher and his deputy headteacher, have pulled together and responded admirably to the challenge of turning the school around. There is a strong collective sense of purpose and an excellent team ethos. Staff show tremendous commitment to improving their own effectiveness and the achievement of pupils. This togetherness and the associated momentum it has created have been pivotal in securing rapid improvement.

The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and there is a very calm and welcoming atmosphere. Staff are held to account through robust performance management arrangements and the school effectively promotes equality of opportunity. The school has a realistic sense of its strengths and weaknesses and leaders have been decisive in introducing change. The new assessment tracker, for example, provides staff with an increasingly sophisticated awareness of the progress individual pupils are making, which has allowed them to identify and target a range of groups for specific intervention.

Governors work tirelessly on behalf of the school and discharge their duties effectively. The local authority has provided good support to the school, as have a partner primary school and a consultant project manager, who has successfully focused on building further capacity in senior and middle management.

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
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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?	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 capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
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	2
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	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	3

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?	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	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for being so friendly and polite to the inspectors when we visited your school recently. We particularly enjoyed receiving the welcome poster you made for us. It was interesting finding out about the work you do and a special thanks to those who talked with us.

You told us that you love coming to school and enjoy every minute of it. However, some of you miss too much school and need to improve your attendance. You said that lessons are more interesting than they were and that you are making better progress. You know this because staff regularly tell you how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve further. Many of you enjoy the opportunities you get to take part in exciting activities, like the week you spent at Kingswood. You feel staff are very caring and look after you well and that if you need help they provide it.

We agree with much of what you said. We believe that you and all the staff have worked extremely hard to make sure the school is better than it was. The school has improved in the areas we asked it to and we no longer feel it is causing concern – this is why we have removed it from special measures. During our visit, we found that most of you make the expected progress during your time in the school. We think your behaviour is excellent and that you receive teaching that is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good and even outstanding. The curriculum is more balanced than it was and the leadership and management of the school is good. There are good arrangements to support your personal development and well-being and the quality of care, guidance and support you receive is good.

Although the school has improved a lot in quite a short period, we have asked staff to improve the quality of boys' writing and the progress some of the more able of you make. We also asked staff to improve your levels of attendance and find ways to broaden your cultural awareness.

You should be proud of what you and the school have achieved so far and continue to support staff in their efforts to make further improvements.