

Rose Hill Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123049
Local Authority	Oxfordshire
Inspection number	322796
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Cathie Munt 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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Marya Griffiths
Headteacher	Ms Sue Mortimer
Date of previous school inspection	17 January 2007
School address	The Oval Oxford OX4 4SF
Telephone number	01865 777937
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. Almost a half of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. More pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities than usual. The majority have moderate learning difficulties but substantial proportions have speech, language and communication difficulties and/or social emotional and behavioural issues. A small number are autistic or have visual or physical impairments. Over a third of pupils speak languages other than English at home and almost a half of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The largest group are of Pakistani heritage with smaller proportions of Bangladeshi and British Black African descent. The headteacher is also the head of the Rose Hill and Littlemore Children's Centre and governors are on its management committee. A deputy headteacher takes up her post in September.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

When the children at Rose Hill were asked about their school all agreed that things have improved out of all recognition in the last two years. They could not stop singing its praises. 'It's great here!' 'We really have fun and we learn a lot of lovely things', were typical comments. Everyone involved should be proud of the progress made by the pupils in their learning and in their personal development. Through the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, the hard work and diligence of the staff and governors and the well directed support of the Local Authority (LA), the school has been turned around in a comparatively short timescale from an unacceptable state of affairs to one where, overall, the provision for pupils is satisfactory and where several aspects are good. In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

The headteacher's high aspirations, noted in the last inspection report, are now being realised. She is moving the school forward rapidly and has established impressive gains in teaching, learning and management. While these have had a positive effect on the progress of all groups of pupils, the school is not resting on its laurels. Staff and governors are well aware that much remains to be done to secure these improvements. The school's evaluation documents are honest and rigorous. They indicate exactly what has been achieved, and what remains to be done. The current focus on literacy has paid fine dividends and much of the pupils' work is in line with expectations. Pupils of all ages have made significant gains in reading with a knock-on effect in comprehension and writing across many subjects. However, in most year groups standards in mathematics and science remain well below that expected. Suitable plans are in place to improve the teaching of mathematics, to sharpen assessment and to make the curriculum match the children's needs more effectively. Children in the Foundation Stage get a good start in their schooling. They are progressing well in all areas of their learning.

Staff, their families and volunteers have rejuvenated classrooms and corridors by painting them. This has breathed light, life and spirit into a building that was dark, dismal and depressing. However, the buildings are old and some areas require more than a facelift. For example, the toilets are to be refurbished this summer and the roof needs attention in several areas.

New staff have brought in fresh ideas and longer serving staff have honed their skills and have given wholehearted support to new methods. Lessons often include practical tasks that engage the pupils' interests and make them want to come to school. A number of exciting projects, such as Year 4's work on 'The Tempest' have enlivened learning this year and the curriculum is being revised next year to ensure that all learning becomes this relevant. Improvements in marking and assessment mean that the majority of work is being set at suitable levels; challenging the more able pupils' thinking while providing support for those who struggle to learn. The tracking of pupils to analyse their progress has become part of everyday life and, together with good teaching, is one of the main reasons why so many pupils, including those with learning difficulties, have shown such improvement this year. The school, rightly, has decided to refine its assessment practices to meet the changing demands as pupils' basic skills improve.

Staff and governors regularly monitor and revise the school's robust procedures to safeguard the pupils. A learning mentor provides vulnerable children with additional support and a quiet space to 'chill-out'. Most pupils attend regularly. However, attendance is below the national figure because of the persistent absences of a small number of pupils.

Relationships have blossomed. Children get along together well; they trust the teaching assistants and the teachers and feel safe in school. The children say that adults no longer shout at them. Behaviour has improved allowing lessons to proceed smoothly. Children who experience difficulty in controlling themselves are managed well and, generally, do not interrupt the education of others.

Management at all levels has improved immensely. Leadership and management are good overall. That of the headteacher is outstanding. Parents appreciate the school's efforts to include them in the school life of their children. However, while they attend individual meetings with staff in large numbers, fewer attend other meetings. The governors and staff are anxious to encourage parents to take a more active role in the school. The well-informed governing body has been most effective in supporting the school. Governors' dogged determination that the school would improve has been vindicated.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Many of the children start the Foundation Stage with a limited range of experiences. Their emotional development and communication skills are below those expected for their age. They settle quickly under the care and guidance of experienced and enthusiastic nursery nurses and teaching assistants. Well-planned adult-led and self-chosen activities develop good learning habits. Changes in the leadership and management of the department have led to the development of a curriculum that is meeting the children's needs more effectively than before. Staff have made good use of a limited range of resources to engage the children's interest and to develop a love of learning that will serve them well in the future. Consequently, children in the reception classes are making rapid progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Many of these children are working at a higher level than some of the pupils are in Year 1. For example, one girl, looking at a label, promptly identified the phrase 'funny flying fish' as an example of alliteration. Under the excellent guidance of the Foundation Stage leader, provision has gone from strength to strength and plans for re-organising the teaching groups next term have the potential to capitalise on the good progress made this year.

What the school should do to improve further

- Following the successes in developing pupils' basic literacy skills, raise standards in all subjects with an initial emphasis on mathematics.
- Refine assessment procedures to meet the developing demands of the pupils.
- Devise ways of matching the curriculum more effectively to the pupils' needs.
- Explore ways to engage parents more fully in the life of the school.

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

Standards in the 2007 national tests were below those of schools nationally, except in reading at Key Stage 1 and English at Key Stage 2 where they were in line. Indications for this year are that results will be similar. Following the methodical teaching of a commercial, phonics-based scheme, many pupils across the school have made remarkable progress in reading. This has

increased their confidence so that they willingly attempt unknown words and sound out complex spellings with increasing accuracy. Their concentration and presentation skills have improved and they are reading a wider range of books for enjoyment. Consequently, in many classes the pupils' English work is at an appropriate level for their age. Their computer work is also of a satisfactory standard. Progress in English is good for all pupils, not just those with specific behaviour, emotional or learning needs, as was the case in the past. These pupils continue to make good progress. They achieve suitably challenging targets because of effective adult support and well taught intervention programmes. While pupils in all year groups are now making great strides in their learning and are making up lost ground due to more systematic teaching, this has not yet raised standards in all subjects to the expected level. Standards in science are variable but improving. Standards in mathematics remain too low. The school rightly is targeting calculation skills next term because weaknesses in the use of these skills are preventing pupils from making sufficient progress in mathematics.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Spiritual, moral and social development are good and cultural development is excellent. Children have sung in Dorchester and Christchurch Cathedrals, they have enjoyed salsa, yoga and Italian lessons, visited places of cultural and historical interest such as Stratford on Avon and produced artwork of a high standard with visiting artists. Links to schools in African and European countries continue to develop a world perspective. Pupils say that they feel secure and happy in school, enjoying positive relationships with adults and each other. They were adamant that bullying, once commonplace in the classroom and playground, is no longer such an issue. They, and their parents, trust the headteacher and staff to deal with any bad behaviour fairly and promptly. Behaviour is good. Pupils only occasionally have to be reminded to adhere to the code of conduct. A number of children with emotional difficulties do not handle stress well. Staff manage them effectively so that incidents rarely disrupt lessons allowing learning to take place peacefully. Children work well together in class because they are trusted to do so and enjoy opportunities to make choices and to work independently. They play an increasingly active role in the school, are proud of their contribution to the school council and are positive that their views are valued.

Punctuality has improved but attendance figures remain below the national figure due to the absences of a small number of pupils and holidays taken by some families in term time. Attendance at after school clubs is limited because some parents find it difficult to make several journeys to school in the afternoon.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching has improved greatly since the last inspection and is good overall. Teachers and teaching assistants have responded positively to the need to confront and eradicate the weaknesses that existed, for example in marking and in the teaching of science in Key Stage 1. A concerted team effort has led to pupils enjoying their education more and making good progress in lessons. Enthusiastic and increasingly skilful teaching of well-adapted work, is enthusing pupils and narrowing the gaps in their knowledge and understanding. In some classes, outstanding teaching has raised standards well above the levels predicted. Rightly, the school

is focussing on improving the teaching of mathematics next year, as this is a weaker aspect of provision. Local authority advisory staff have played a crucial role in supporting teachers, developing their skills and knowledge effectively and, indeed, in covering classes thus ensuring consistent provision. Pupils have responded positively to teachers' higher expectations and enjoy the dynamic and challenging work set in many lessons. More effective questioning by adults and opportunities to discuss work with partners have accelerated pupils' critical and creative thinking skills. Teaching assistants work closely with teachers and provide excellent support for groups of pupils, particularly those who find learning difficult.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

New projects and different ways of presenting materials this year have improved the quality of the curriculum so that it is satisfactory. The increased amount of art, drama and dance on offer this term is an example of how the curriculum is developing to meet the children's needs. 'The Art Room', a provision for pupils experiencing difficulty in school, has influenced art teaching resulting in examples of pupils' work that show sensitivity and imagination. Visits and visitors have enriched the curriculum. Commenting on the number of visits undertaken this year one parent said proudly, 'Almost every week a class is out somewhere'. Where planning has been adventurous, children have enjoyed practical activities such as writing and directing plays and collecting and observing mini-beasts. These types of activity have provided opportunities for pupils to work independently and to develop creativity. As a result, a purposeful buzz of learning greets the visitor, quite different from two years ago when many classes were so noisy that little learning could take place. The school rightly plans to build on effective subject links made in some year groups to make the curriculum more cohesive and more meaningful for the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Procedures for child protection are robust. Parents particularly appreciate the care for and the skill with which staff manage emotionally fragile pupils and those with learning difficulties. Target setting and regular assessment of pupils' work are well established. This has led to higher expectations of what children can achieve. The school has suitable plans to refine these procedures to ensure that expectations remain high. Marking is regular and feedback to pupils, both orally and in writing, ensures that they know how to improve their work. In lessons, staff check frequently to ensure that pupils understand what they are being taught. The work of the special needs department has been particularly effective in pinpointing children's needs and in securing external support and additional staffing. Links with outside agencies have grown and are a strength of the school providing many opportunities for staff and pupils to work alongside colleagues from a range of services and staff and pupils from other schools.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Outstanding leadership by the headteacher has enabled staff and governors to turn the school around in a relatively short time showing a positive capacity to improve. The headteacher guides the school most effectively with calm authority and with a sincere expectation that everyone will give of their best. Staff and pupils do not let her down. A great feeling of teamwork pervades

the school. In the absence of a deputy, the headteacher has harnessed the skills and talents of other staff, encouraging all to take responsibility for their part in raising standards. The school has been well served by local authority colleagues. They have worked alongside staff developing generic management skills and subject knowledge in English, mathematics and science.

The successful improvements in English are the consequence of the whole-school, teamwork approach to developing pupils' basic skills. A strategic, raising attainment plan was implemented systematically, evaluated regularly and changes were made in the light of findings. Effective training familiarised staff with new materials prior to the introduction of a systematically taught commercial reading and writing programme. Common teaching approaches were adopted. The School Improvement Advisory teachers in the school provided excellent models for their colleagues. Teaching was monitored for consistency and for its impact on the pupils' learning. Staff acted on the comments made by the subject leader, the headteacher and the LA consultants. Staff have responded well to all training opportunities and subjects are being developed suitably. Subject leaders are monitoring and evaluating the impact of initiatives, leading to a comprehensive understanding of standards across the school and an extremely clear idea of where weaknesses persist. The governing body has continued to be vigilant and proactive in challenging the headteacher, staff and local authority and seeking the best for the pupils of Rose Hill. The deficit budget, reduced this year by careful husbandry, remains a concern to the governors as they endeavour to build on the progress made over the last two years.

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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	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	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	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	3

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?	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	1
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

11 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rose Hill Primary School, Oxford, OX4 4SF

Congratulations! Rose Hill is out of special measures. That means that I do not need to come each term to find out how well you are doing. You know that everyone has been working really hard for the last two years to make things better and when I was with you a few weeks ago, I could see that this had happened.

Although there are still some things that need to improve, like how quick and accurate you are with your number work and making the toilets more pleasant, you told me yourselves that lessons are more fun, teachers and other adults are friendly and helpful and children are nicer to each other most of the time. You certainly behaved well when I was visiting. You like art, drama, singing, and all of the visits and the interesting people who come to work with you. I was impressed by how hard you are all working in class and by how much better the work in your books has become but some of you could be even neater. The children in the Foundation Stage are catching you up so you will need to keep working as hard as you can next year. A few of you take an awful lot of time off and the work in your books was not as good as that of other people. Unless you are not well, do try to come to school everyday- and on time. You know that you have a lot of fun when you get there but if you miss too many lessons, it can be hard to catch up.

I think that your headteacher does a terrific job. She helps all of the adults including the governors and together they know what is needed to make the school even better. I agree with them that it would be good to improve mathematics as much as you have improved reading this year. The teachers are going to work at improving how they keep track of your progress and they also want to continue to make the curriculum more exciting. That will be good. They like working with your parents and they are going to try to make it easier for this to happen.

I know that you will do your best and work with your teachers to make sure that Rose Hill continues to improve so that the next time inspectors visit they will think that yours is a very good school.

With my very best wishes for your future,

Cathie MuntHMI