

Robin Hood Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102984
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	323721
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Kekshan Salaria HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	361
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Andrew Theobald
Headteacher	Mrs Emma Walford
Date of previous school inspection	11 July 2006
School address	Thorncroft Road Sutton Surrey SM1 1RL
Telephone number	020 8642 4292
Fax number	020 8643 8173
Email address	robinhoodjunior@suttonlea.org

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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, and held meetings with the chair of the governing body, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of evidence, including the questionnaires completed by 71 parents.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the progress of pupils in English and mathematics
- the effectiveness of teaching in ensuring that it challenges all learners, including higher-attaining pupils
- the impact of the school's work in addressing the key issues for development from the previous inspection
- the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels in contributing to the school's improvement.

Information about the school

Robin Hood is a three-form-entry junior school, that is larger than the average primary school. A large majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well above the national average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is in line with national figures. The headteacher has been in post since April 2009.

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

4

Capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements in the school.

Pupils enter the school with attainment that is above the national average. However, they leave the school with average attainment. This reflects inadequate progress by pupils, particularly the higher-attaining ones, from the time they join the school in Year 3 to when they leave in Year 6. There is too much inconsistency in the standards pupils attain in different subjects. The school's data from recent assessments demonstrate a further decline in writing and mathematics this year although in science results have consistently remained well above national averages.

There is some effective teaching in the school, which motivates and challenges pupils. However, too much teaching across the school is satisfactory and this is insufficient to accelerate pupils' progress in order for them to reach the standards of which they are capable. Although staff prepare lessons conscientiously, the activities are sometimes not planned sharply enough to challenge different abilities, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. In too many lessons, pupils sit passively without active participation. This slows the momentum of lessons and some pupils lose concentration. Marking is varied. While some is regular, helpful and encouraging, other marking does not provide pupils with sufficient guidance on how to improve.

Pupils are proud of many aspects of their school and their personal development is good. Pupils' behaviour is consistently good and they respond well to their teachers in lessons and around the school; 'lessons are fun sometimes', said one pupil. Pupils are polite, helpful and relate well to each other. Attendance is satisfactory.

The school is beginning to develop the curriculum to make it more interesting and relevant with stronger links between the subjects, but this is not yet seen fully in lessons. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are generally well supported and inspectors observed teaching assistants working effectively with them.

The senior leadership team demonstrates good intentions. However, senior leaders lack the expertise and focus to evaluate weaknesses rigorously. An example of this is the unrealistic view of the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, their judgements on the quality of teaching and learning are over-generous, which means they are not able to identify and hence address key weaknesses in order to promote the rapid improvements that are needed. Senior leaders have not demonstrated the ability to devise solutions and improve provision with the necessary speed and rigour. For example, they have focused on improving the quality of learning in English and mathematics but standards in these key areas continue to decline. This is further hindered by their lack of expertise in using data effectively in order to address the widespread underachievement.

Additionally, senior leaders act as the subject leaders for key areas. However, it is unclear how they are held to account for pupils' outcomes. Governors, while supportive, are also failing to hold the school to account for the decline in standards. Consequently, the school's capacity for sustained improvement is inadequate.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards and achievement, particularly in writing and mathematics, by improving the quality of teaching and learning through:
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve
 - ensuring assessment data are used to plan lessons that challenge all learners, particularly the higher-attaining pupils.
- Ensure leaders at all levels:
 - evaluate accurately the work of the school
 - develop strategic plans that focus on outcomes for the pupils
 - pursue improvement relentlessly and rigorously by systematically monitoring all aspects of the work of the school to ensure improvement plans are implemented
 - develop a secure oversight of their subject areas, undertake thorough analysis of all available performance data and are held fully accountable for their responsibilities.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils do not achieve well enough during their time at the school. Their attainment on entry to the school is above average. Until 2007, standards at the end of Year 6 were above average, but they declined significantly in 2008, particularly in English. The data provided by the school suggest that the standards reached by the current Year 6 for 2009 are broadly average. Given pupils' above-average starting points, this also demonstrates inadequate progress.

In a limited number of lessons, pupils are engaged in their learning because they are challenged. However, the many higher-attaining pupils become bored and passive learners in some lessons. Because of their good attitudes and behaviour, they continue to be engaged but many do not acquire new knowledge and skills at a

sufficiently fast rate. Underachievement is widespread. Too many of the current Year 4 and Year 5 pupils, for example, have made inadequate progress in writing and mathematics during their time in Key Stage 2. Pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for and make satisfactory progress because the school provides high levels of additional support.

Pupils are well informed about healthy eating and taking sufficient exercise and most of them respond enthusiastically. Playtimes and lunchtimes are sociable occasions when pupils chat and play together amicably. Effective transition arrangements involve parents, pupils, and staff from the local schools. These arrangements ensure that the move to secondary school is smooth. Pupils report that there are only a few incidents of bullying and that these are dealt with effectively by staff. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to keep safe. The school's work on raising awareness of environmental issues is having a positive impact. Pupils enjoy the satisfactory range of after school clubs. Personal, social and health education lessons make a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. They provide good opportunities for pupils to learn about and discuss issues which help them become good citizens. Pupils show concern for others and take part in successful fundraising events for charity.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3
How well do pupils achieve and enjoy their learning?	4
To what extent do pupils feel safe?	3
How well do pupils behave?	2
To what extent do pupils adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do pupils contribute to the school and wider community?	3
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
How well do pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3
What is the extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

How effective is the provision?

Although teaching is satisfactory overall, not enough is of the good quality that would help raise standards. Many teachers are relatively new to the profession and have a sound understanding of how to structure a lesson but have not yet acquired the skills and experience needed to teach consistently well. Senior leaders have not developed a coherent programme of improving teaching from its current satisfactory standard to the good standard necessary to accelerate achievement.

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

Inspectors observed a limited number of good lessons which were characterised by effective planning and teaching that supported pupils in developing extended explanations. In these lessons, teachers' expectations were high and the pace of learning lively. In the less effective lessons, the pace was too slow to motivate pupils to learn well. In particular, some teachers spend too much time talking, allowing insufficient time for pupils to explore issues for themselves, consolidate their understanding and reflect on what they have learnt. Teaching assistants in these lessons are supportive and help pupils do their work but are not always clear on how to address pupils' particular learning needs.

Although senior leaders are not using assessment data to tackle underperformance, the use of assessment in lessons is developing. The sharing of learning objectives and the use of success criteria are a consistent feature of lessons. Some teachers refer to these during the lesson while others are less secure in using them to assess how well pupils have achieved. Similarly, the use of 'talk partners' to enhance speaking and listening skills is not fully embedded. The school has recently changed the way it sets targets for individual pupils. Pupils are aware of their targets and some can remember them although they have not been involved in setting them. It is too early to judge the impact of this initiative.

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. The school rightly places a strong emphasis on moral, cultural, personal and social development. Pupils are encouraged to value and celebrate their cultural diversity and to appreciate each other as individuals. There is satisfactory use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum. However, approaches to establishing cross-curricular links between subjects are at an early stage of development. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in subjects beyond English.

The school is secure, clean and welcoming. Most pupils feel supported and safe at school. They participate in decision-making through the school council and know to whom they should turn if they have a problem. Staff look after pupils' emotional, social and physical needs well, contributing to their good behaviour and enjoyment of school. Senior leaders liaise effectively with outside agencies in targeting appropriate support to the pupils who need it. The school has won a Healthy School Award and it is evident that pupils are given plenty of opportunity to make healthy choices in their midday meals and snacks.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Although senior leaders have effectively ensured that pupils work in a calm and tidy environment, the effectiveness of leadership and management is inadequate. Little progress has been made since the last inspection in the key areas for improvement, including improving teaching and learning, effective use of assessment in planning to meet the needs of higher-attaining pupils, and improving links between subjects.

Self-evaluation is inaccurate. Senior leaders hold an unrealistic view of teaching and learning and are unclear about how to improve things at a suitably rapid pace. For instance, not enough teaching is better than satisfactory and weaknesses in the use of assessment information to inform target setting are only recently beginning to be tackled.

Monitoring lacks rigour and does not sufficiently evaluate the impact of the school's work on pupils' learning. The quality of teaching, learning and the progress the pupils are making is not rigorously checked. The majority of lesson observations do not focus sharply on pupils' learning and do not always comment sufficiently on the progress of pupils of differing prior attainment. As a result, senior leaders' view of the school is too optimistic.

Senior leaders record and analyse test results and other assessments in much detail but do not use this information effectively. The school has focused on English and mathematics as key areas for improvement for the past two years. However, inspectors identified widespread underachievement in writing and mathematics, particularly in Years 4 and 5. The school is not rigorously implementing strategies for improvement to ensure that all pupils are making the progress of which they are capable. Additionally, data are not analysed in relation to higher-attaining and other groups of pupils to inform interventions or to spot patterns and trends.

Governors work hard, are supportive and committed to the school's success. However, they have not challenged senior leaders sufficiently to account for weaknesses in the school's performance. This is because they do not have accurate information about the school's performance that can be used to inform decisions and to challenge the school. Consequently, the governance of the school is inadequate.

Provision for community cohesion is satisfactory. There is a strong cohesive community within the school. However, senior leaders have not strategically analysed what the school needs to do to promote cohesion within the wider community.

Satisfactory attention is paid by senior leaders to ensure the quality of safety and care for the pupils. There are, for example, effective procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work in the school.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	4
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and	4

tackles discrimination	
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Views of parents and carers

Approximately 20% of parents responded to the parental questionnaire. Although the majority expressed satisfaction with the work of the school, a number expressed concerns about aspects of the school's work including:

- the lack of progress that their children make
- communications between school and parents.

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robin Hood Junior School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school. If a parent has more than one child at the school, we asked them to record an answer against all the questions, for each of their children.

The inspection team received 71 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 361 parents and carers registered at the school.

	Always	Most of the time	Occasionally	Never
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	30	32	8	1

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. In 2007-8, 15% of schools were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well. In 2007-8, 49% of schools were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils. In 2007-8, 32% of schools were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2007-8, 5% of schools were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, training or development. This may refer to the acquisition of skills, knowledge, understanding or desired attributes. Attributes include qualities or personal competencies which are important to the development of the pupil; for example personal, social, cultural, emotional or health.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.



10 September 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robin Hood Junior School, Sutton, SM1 1RL

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. It was delightful to talk to so many of you and we enjoyed our visit very much. I am writing this letter to tell you what we found out about your school.

These are the things that we liked about your school:

- you are confident, have good attitudes to work, behave well and show respect to each other, staff and visitors
- you told us that you enjoy coming to school and particularly like the range of clubs and other activities on offer
- mostly you feel safe at school and know that if you have a problem, there is always an adult to talk to
- you told us behaviour has improved and even though some bullying still happens, you are happy with the way adults dealt with it.

The inspection team feels that many of you are not making the progress you are capable of so we have asked your school to make sure that the work set in lessons challenges you so that you can learn more quickly and do even better. We also feel that your school will need some help, so we will be checking on its progress very carefully. This means that you and your teachers will get extra support and inspectors will visit your school regularly to see how well you are doing.

You can help the school by sharing your views and working hard. Once again, thank you for answering our questions.

Yours faithfully

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector

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