

Raysfield Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109052
Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Inspection number	324887
Inspection dates	10–11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Anthony Shield

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	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Richard Sayer
Headteacher	Jonathan Bird
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2006
School address	Finch Road Chipping Sodbury Bristol BS37 6JE
Telephone number	01454 866795
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Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Raysfield Junior School is of an average size. Most pupils are of White British origin and live in the immediate area. An above-average proportion of pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A small minority of pupils join or leave the school at times other than Year 3 or Year 6.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Raysfield Junior School is an improving school. Although overall its effectiveness is satisfactory, there are a number of good features. The strong commitment to the valuing of individual pupils shines through. This results in delightfully friendly, polite and responsible pupils. Their good personal development is the most striking feature of the school and is the result of the good care, guidance and support provided. The school's values, 'Love to learn, learn to care; belong... believe... achieve!' are threaded through all aspects of the school.

The driving force behind the school's improvement in recent years has been the leadership of the headteacher. He has demonstrated a determined resolve in steering school improvement. Staff share the headteacher's values and determination and there is a good sense of teamwork. Leadership and management are satisfactory and recent initiatives have begun to make a difference to pupils' achievements. However, there is a realistic recognition that more needs to be done. Self-evaluation is accurate, but as yet not all staff have the confidence or the skills to take the lead in monitoring and their contribution to school improvement is mixed. The school has sensible plans in place for further improvement, and its capacity to improve is satisfactory.

Achievement is satisfactory. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average, and given their starting points, pupils make satisfactory progress. Skills in writing are a barrier to more rapid progress, but recent initiatives are improving pupils' skills in this area. Teaching is satisfactory and, while much is good, it is not yet consistently so. In lessons, pupils are keen to do their best and teachers create a hard-working ethic. Teachers know their subjects well and manage the learning effectively. However, assessment is not always used to set tasks matched to the needs of individual pupils, nor to build successfully on pupils' prior attainment. While topics are carefully chosen to interest pupils, teaching does not always do enough to excite and inspire the pupils to be active and curious learners. The school's curriculum is satisfactory, and makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Its effect on achievement and standards, particularly strategies to improve standards in literacy and numeracy, while improving, has yet to impact fully.

Pupils enjoy school and good relationships with their teachers. Their good behaviour stands out. While a very small number of pupils present challenging behaviour, this is well managed by teachers. Most parents are very supportive of the school's work and few have any misgivings. Many commented to inspectors how much they appreciated the leadership of the headteacher. Typical of a number of comments was, 'I believe the headteacher is an inspiration. He is well respected and a good role model for the children.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment to set work that is more closely geared to the needs of individual pupils and which builds on their prior attainment.
- Provide teaching which excites and inspires pupils to be more active and curious learners.
- Develop the capacity and confidence of all staff to take the initiative and contribute to school improvement.

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

Results in national tests in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science have varied in recent years and have been broadly average overall. Significant improvements were made in 2008 following a less successful year, and these improvements are likely to continue as a result of higher expectations and more consistently effective teaching. Given their starting points, most pupils make satisfactory progress. Although writing remains a relatively weaker area, action taken to tackle particular aspects has been effective. Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with lower attainment in writing than in other subjects and for a few, there is some catching up to do. Girls achieve better than boys, although the difference is not significant. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in class and through withdrawal groups and, as a result, they feel included and make the same progress as other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils get on well together in the singularly happy atmosphere. Teachers pay careful attention to pupils' personal development, and pupils grow confidently in this atmosphere of mutual trust. They are respectful of others and take their responsibilities seriously whether as peer mediators, school council members, or play leaders. They enjoy contributing to the wider community through community events such as the Chipping Sodbury Festival. Attendance is above average reflecting pupils' enjoyment of school. Assemblies are thoughtful occasions and pupils show a good understanding of spiritual, social, moral and cultural values, although their understanding of multicultural and multi-faith Britain is less developed. Pupils have a good awareness of healthy lifestyles and the importance of diet and regular exercise. Healthy Schools and Active Mark status shows the school's commitment to this aspect of pupils' development. They feel safe and are confident that bullying will be dealt with effectively. The overwhelming majority of pupils behave sensibly and work cooperatively together. They are satisfactorily prepared for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils' progress is satisfactory because, while much teaching is good and improving, some inconsistencies remain. Typically, lessons are characterised by warm relationships and purposeful attitudes. Teachers manage pupils confidently and teaching assistants work well in partnership to ensure all pupils feel included and make progress. Teachers work successfully to keep pupils' attention and frequent use of praise encourages pupils. As a result, they are keen to please and pupils work hard to do their best and answer questions enthusiastically. Teachers do not give enough attention to providing opportunities for pupils to ask questions and find things out for themselves. The planning of lessons is carefully done. However activities are not always well matched to individual pupils' levels, nor is assessment used consistently well to build on and reinforce what pupils already know and understand. Topics are well chosen to interest pupils. Year 4 pupils were enjoying work on Greek myths for example. Even so, not all teaching inspires pupils to be active participants or to develop a deeper interest in the subject. Feedback

on progress, including marking, is mostly good and pupils know their targets and usually what they need to do to improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets requirements. An appropriate emphasis on basic skills through literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is balanced by work in a range of other subjects. Increasingly, links across subjects are being developed to give context to the learning and make it more meaningful. Music is a particular strength and the singing in assembly was especially joyful. There is a wide-ranging programme of visits, visitors and extra-curricular clubs which offer good enrichment. Pupils speak enthusiastically about these opportunities. Recent curricular initiatives, including the 'Nessy' programme to help pupils struggling with spelling, reading and writing and 'Challenger' lessons to extend the more able, are beginning to improve pupils' progress, but have yet to have a full impact on standards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school's commitment to the care and welfare of all pupils is clear, and is reinforced through its motto 'Learn to care'. This approach ensures pupils feel valued, cared for and safe. All staff will go the extra mile to help and support pupils. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and intervention programmes are well planned to support pupils with specific needs. Intervention strategies are adopted to pre-empt problems, and close links with outside agencies and parents are effective. Arrangements for ensuring pupils' safety and welfare are good, and child protection procedures are securely in place. There are detailed systems for monitoring pupils' progress. These systems are being used with increasing effectiveness to support and challenge pupils to fulfil their potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher has worked successfully to drive school improvement. Pupils are now much more confident to 'believe and achieve' that they can do well. His vision is widely shared and he has provided a clear steer to the work of the school. His analytical approach, especially of performance data, has done much to ensure realistic and accurate self-evaluation. Using these data, targets are set which have done much to raise expectations. However, there is room to aim even higher and ensure that targets are both challenging and realistic. The headteacher has the full confidence of parents. He is well supported by his senior team, but the skills and confidence of all staff to lead, monitor and contribute to school improvement need further development, so that leadership is shared more widely. Much good work has already taken place in literacy and numeracy, particularly in the identification of what needs to be done. As a result, there are encouraging signs of progress in improved teaching and more rapid pupil progress. Procedures for checking teaching and the quality of provision are in place and leading to greater consistency across the school. Community cohesion has been thoughtfully considered and audited, although its impact has yet to be evaluated. Governors are committed and hard-working and through their perceptive insights provide good levels of support and challenge.

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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?	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	3

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/or disabilities make progress	3

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are 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
The extent to which 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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of 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

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	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	3
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
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**

12 February 2009

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming us to your school. We greatly enjoyed talking to you, and particularly liked the friendly welcome you gave us. Your school is improving and is providing you with a satisfactory education.

What we liked most about your school.

- You are well behaved, friendly and get on well with everyone.
- You are growing up into very sensible young people.
- You work hard in lessons to do your best and take part enthusiastically in all the activities your school arranges for you.
- The school take very good care of you, and the support given to those of you who need most help is good.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress because the teaching helps you, but there is room for you to do even better!

What we have asked your school to do now.

- Make sure the work you do in lessons builds on what you already know and makes you think and work hard.
- Provide teaching which gets you excited and involved and interested in finding things out for yourselves.
- Make sure that all staff know how to check how well things are going and take part in making the school even better.

Thank you once again for your help during the inspection.

With best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Tony Shield

Lead inspector