

# Rawtenstall Water Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119198
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	326967
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	June Tracey

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	56
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mrs Tracy Cuthbertson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Helen McLenahan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 January 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Burnley Road East Water Rossendale Lancashire BB4 9PX
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 216414
<b>Fax number</b>	01706 218637

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<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 November 2008
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector

## Description of the school

Rawtenstall Water Primary is a smaller than average school serving a semi-rural community. The number of pupils on roll has declined in recent years. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes. They come from a wide range of backgrounds. The proportion eligible to claim free school meals is below average. All pupils are White British; none require support for English as an additional language. The school does not have a nursery but some children have experienced pre-school education before joining the Reception year. Children's skills on entry are similar to those normally found for children of their age. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies from year-to-year. Currently, it is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Rawtenstall Water is an improving school that is providing satisfactorily for all its pupils. It is a much valued part of the local community with which it has good relationships. Some of its work is distinctly good, for example, the care and guidance that pupils receive as a result of the rigorous and regular monitoring of their needs and progress in learning. Teachers and pupils are inspired by the good leadership and management that are encouraging them to raise attainment further. Teachers are dedicated and make pupils feel valued and secure. Pupils behave well, which aids their learning. Parents are pleased with the school's provision and the effect it has on their children's well-being and attitudes. They clearly value what this small school has to offer in terms of its family atmosphere and promotion of values. The inspector agrees that the culture for learning is good. Older pupils said how meaningful is the school's motto: 'Sharing, Caring, Loving, Laughing, Learning'.

Children settle very well into the Reception year and achieve satisfactorily. By the end of the year, overall, their skills in all the areas of learning are typical of children of a similar age. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average in Years 2 and 6. In recent years, the vast majority of pupils achieved satisfactorily from their starting points to reach the expected levels for their age by the time they were 11. Records show, however, that some pupils' progress over time was uneven. Progress now is accelerating. Currently, it is good, with older pupils compensating for ground that was lost in earlier years. Standards in reading and mathematics have risen due to structured programmes for improvement. Standards in writing could be better, although this year's focus on writing is improving pupils' comprehension and grammatical skills. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making good progress because their individual programmes of study lead them on step by step, in small chunks. The experience of success encourages them to work towards the next target. Teaching is satisfactory overall; some of that observed was good. There is a tendency to give too much direction to pupils, thereby reducing their ability to work independently. The school knows which practices are most effective and is endeavouring successfully to make them more universal across the school.

The curriculum provides satisfactorily for pupils of all ages and abilities. Revisions in the last two years have focused on strengthening pupils' understanding and skills in English and mathematics. This has been effective in consolidating pupils' literacy and numerical skills but there is scope for a broadening of opportunities to develop independent learning and research skills. Pupils understand well the concepts of healthy living and are successfully learning what it means to be a good citizen. The planting of bulbs to improve the local environment and concerts given by the school choir are typical of events that foster positive links with the immediate community. Pupils are actively encouraged to think of others beyond themselves by getting involved in raising funds for international appeals. Overall, pupils' personal development is satisfactory.

Changes to the organisation, systems and teaching styles since the previous inspection have been managed carefully in response to self-critical evaluation. Plans for teaching in the mixed-age classes are devised well. Pupils benefit from working in groups that are at a similar stage of learning. The arrangement provides challenge for the most able and encouragement for those who develop at a slower pace. The headteacher carries a heavy workload and is aware that responsibility for monitoring aspects of the school's provision needs to be shared across the entire teaching staff as soon as possible. The school knows itself well and has the full

support of the governors in its decisions and actions. There is good capacity for further improvement.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 3**

The quality and standard of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) is satisfactory. Children experience a good start to their education through a gentle and well timed introduction to the mixed-age class for Reception and Key Stage 1 pupils. They integrate quickly and soon start to gain confidence and some independence, for example, in registering each morning by finding their names on a display board. Parents are pleased with the school's provision. One commented on how she saw her child flourishing more day-by-day, changing from a shy to a more confident child. Although there is a wide variation, the majority of children enter school with knowledge and skills typical for children of their age. They move on with their learning at a satisfactory pace so that at the start of Year 1 most are reaching the early learning goals and attaining at average levels. Their social and organisational skills develop well and children learn to make good choices when linking play to real life experiences. The range of resources is adequate but there is no listening equipment at present and there are not enough malleable materials. Good support from an adequate number of staff helps children to develop simple concepts in number and reading satisfactorily. The benefits of play activities are limited at times by the smallness of the Reception group, but, even so, children enjoy discovering the exciting world in and around the classroom. Planning is in hand to extend further the continuous provision for learning through to Year 1. Teachers' planning and assessment take proper account of children's individual needs and all areas of learning are adequately covered. The Reception year teacher is new to the school. She is currently sharing responsibility for the full implementation of the EYFS with the headteacher.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards further, especially in writing, by ensuring that pupils make steady progress year on year and by encouraging them to become more independent learners.
- Improve the progress of children in the EYFS.
- Share responsibilities for subject leadership and other aspects amongst all staff as soon as is practicable.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' achievement from their starting point is satisfactory overall. Standards are broadly average in Years 2 and 6 in English, mathematics and science. The small numbers in each Year group means that all assessment data are treated with caution. Currently, pupils are making good progress because the structured and systematic programmes for improvement put in place since the previous inspection are raising standards and compensating for uneven progress for many pupils, in both key stages, in recent years. This was mainly due to rapid changes in staffing and a period of temporary leadership of the school. Assessment records for individual pupils show the positive impact of the school's recent focus on reading and mathematics; standards in these areas are rising consistently. The school has identified scope for further improvement in writing, which is a priority in the school's development plan for 2008/09.

Rigorous and early identification of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to benefit quickly from well targeted support from adults. Consequently,

these pupils make good, consistent progress and achieve the realistic targets set for them. Other pupils are on track to reach the levels expected for their age and to improve their performance still further. Records show that, overall, there is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall and good in many aspects. Most pupils like school. They behave well in class and about the school and establish good relationships with each other and adults. They like the fact that they mix with and know pupils from all year groups. Parents' comments support the view that their children are benefiting from the nurturing and close relationships that emanate from this small school. Pupils' moral and social development are good; progress in spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Too few opportunities are presented for pupils to discuss and understand issues relating to living in Britain's multi-cultural society.

Attendance is broadly average. Pupils say that they feel safe and secure in school and that adults are always on hand to help them if they have any concerns. The school guides and supports pupils well in developing good attitudes to learning and an understanding of what contributes to healthy living.

The high priority given to the promotion of basic literacy, numerical and technical skills since the previous inspection is raising pupils' confidence when transferring skills to other subjects. Pupils' independent learning and research skills are a focus for further attention and improving. Some pupils, particularly in the lower Key Stage 2 class, are too dependent on adults to lead them on rather than trying things out for themselves first. Pupils work well when collaborating with others, particularly in oral work. This raises self-esteem and opens up opportunities for the less confident to contribute ideas and opinions. The quality of pupils' written work is variable; for a few pupils, it does not reflect well on their attitudes to learning. Pupils respond well when given the opportunity to take responsibility. They make a good contribution to the wider community through their support for charities and active involvement in local events.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Some of the teaching is good; it includes practices that could improve learning further for all pupils. Currently, where learning is at its best, pupils are making much quicker gains in understanding. Teachers in all classes have high expectations. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and the targets they are expected to achieve within given time limits. Pupils generally listen carefully and follow instructions. The tasks set for the different ability groups in each class are appropriate and mostly start at the point of pupils' prior learning, so avoiding needless repetition. This applies also to homework.

The management and organisation of lessons contribute significantly to the quality of learning and to pupils' willingness to see tasks through to conclusion. Structured and detailed lesson plans provide a good basis for extending knowledge and developing skills at rates relevant to pupils' age and ability. In the best lessons observed, teachers and other adults circulated all

the time, asking questions of individual pupils and groups. Work was also marked on the spot, which encouraged pupils to carry on or provided the opening for discussion about misconceptions. The most productive work incorporated open-ended tasks that encouraged pupils to predict and use their initiative. Opportunities for developing pupils' independent learning skills are not given a high enough profile. This reduces pupils' ability to work independently, for example, in mathematics, to embrace more investigative work and problem solving. The marking of pupils' written work is inconsistent. It usually highlights effort, or lack of it, but its use in offering guidance to pupils to improve and in setting high expectations is not consistently exploited.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. Its revision since the previous inspection has focused effectively on securing the provision for English and mathematics and providing up-to-date resources for information and communication technology (ICT). This approach has been successful, leading to noticeable improvement in attainment and skills in these subjects. The rolling programme of topics and content in other subjects is well planned so that pupils in the mixed-age classes experience continuity and progression in their learning. Pupils say that they enjoy practical activities, particularly in physical education, art and music. The whole-school curriculum is currently being reviewed with a view to adopting a more creative approach to underpin all subjects.

Parents and volunteers are encouraged to become involved in the school's provision. They do, with good effect. The school offers a realistic range of extra-curricular activities covering sport, music and crafts. Given the small staff, the school is providing well for learning and enjoyment outside the mainstream curriculum. This is helped by the fact that pupils have an input into suggesting activities in which they are interested. The school benefits from links with local high schools, for example in sport and modern foreign languages. The latter has stimulated pupils' interest in languages. Spanish is now an integral part of the curriculum in Key Stage 2.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

This aspect of the school's work is good. It forms the framework for the improving progress and personal development of pupils throughout the school. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils, including those for child protection, are well established and fully met. Teachers and other adults are vigilant in undertaking supervision.

This is a school where every child is truly known and treated as an individual. Because the school is small, pupils regularly talk to and socialise with others of all ages. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very good. Not only are their needs identified at an early stage, they are acted on. Where necessary, specialist advice and support is sought from external agencies. In school, support for these pupils and for others who may have shorter-term needs from time to time is very well organised and effective in raising pupils' self-esteem and moving their learning on. The school invests in a high level of support staff, which is particularly beneficial taking into account that all pupils are taught in mixed-age classes. The support extends to the most able pupils also, generating time for them to work separately with an adult on more challenging work.

The pastoral care of pupils has a high profile. It ensures that pupils feel confident in their ability to achieve well whatever their potential. This is made possible by regular, sensitive and rigorous assessment of pupils' progress. Underachievement is tackled without delay through modifications to lesson plans, or, more likely, though setting aside time for pupils to work in a small group.

The school is the only public building in the small village of Water. The headteacher and staff are vigorous in their efforts to involve the school in local events and to foster a sense of interdependence.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is proactive in driving the school forward, as is evident from the good improvement since the previous inspection. Changes have been managed well and are inspiring the staff. They have already had a positive effect on pupils' progress and attainment. Contributory factors are the rigorous systems and procedures that have been implemented to a well planned time scale. Older pupils commented on improvements to the building and playground, which they say they had been asking for, and the better quality of resources, particularly in ICT. An additional factor in the improvement is the high quality of monitoring of teaching and of pupils' learning. This is mainly carried out by the headteacher because the staff is very small and half the teachers are new this term. It is the outcomes of monitoring that are informing training programmes and professional development. Currently, the headteacher carries a heavy workload, some of which needs to be devolved as soon as is practicable. The governors are supportive and committed to moving the school on further. They understand the importance of the school's self-evaluation in celebrating success and in setting priorities for subsequent years.



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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	2

### Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	3
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	3
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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/or disabilities make progress	2

<sup>1</sup>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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	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 eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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	3
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**

18 November 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rawtenstall Water Primary School, Lancashire, BB4 9PX

Thank you for your welcome and for sharing your thoughts with me about your school. I can see why you like it so much. It is small, friendly and caring and you get a lot of individual help from your teachers and other adults, all of whom are keen for you to make the most of your talents and to grow into responsible citizens. Your behaviour and learning reflect well your school motto: 'Sharing, Caring, Loving, Laughing, Learning'.

I was impressed by your good behaviour and understanding of how important it is to your learning. It affects too your relationships with each other. By showing respect and supporting each other you make the school a happy place to work in. Your contribution to displays about school, be they of your own work or about school and community events, indicated to me that you have pride in your achievements. In lessons you usually listen well and follow instructions without needless repetition from your teachers. This enables you to get on quickly with your activities. I was pleased too to hear that you understand the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. I hope that you follow this through in practice in your daily lives.

You probably noticed that I took a particular interest in finding out about your learning in English and mathematics. This was because your progress in developing skills in reading, writing and mathematics is fundamental to your well-being in the future and to your ability to extend your learning in other subjects. I think that you can improve your writing further by making sure that spellings are accurate and that the grammar is correct. It gave me pleasure to see some pupils in Class 2 using a thesaurus to find alternative words to add quality to their writing. To make your work better still, the school could encourage you to be more independent. Some of you do not persevere enough with the tasks set before asking the teacher for help. In addition, I have asked all staff to work together so that they share the management of all subjects.

Thank you once again for your welcome and willingness to talk to me during the inspection. I wish you all well in the future.

Yours sincerely

June Tracey

(Lead inspector)