

Rothley Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120155
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	327213
Inspection dates	23–24 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Alison Cartlidge

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	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	311
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Gladstone
Headteacher	Fiona Parr
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 May 2006
School address	Mountsorrel Lane Rothley Leicester Leicestershire LE7 7PS
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Age group	4–11
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 13 lessons, and held meetings with governors, members of staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work, and looked at examples of pupils' exercise books, school policies and assessment information. They also read and analysed the 87 parental questionnaires returned.

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

- achievement of more able pupils in writing across the curriculum
- how teaching can be improved to make it consistently good or better
- the impact of outdoor provision on children's progress and enjoyment in the Early Years Foundation Stage
- the impact of leaders' monitoring and evaluation on provision and pupils' progress.

Information about the school

Pupils come to this large primary school from the village of Rothley and the surrounding area. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is in one 60 place foundation unit. Almost all pupils are of White British origin. The school has recently been awarded the Gold Artsmark.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

2

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This good school is improving rapidly under the dynamic leadership of the headteacher. The school is particularly successful in providing all pupils with an outstandingly varied, interesting and purposeful curriculum. Consequently, pupils develop a keen interest in learning and attend school as much as they can. Children make a good start to their education in the Early Years Foundation Stage and particularly benefit from the outstanding outdoor area. In Years 1 to 6, good teaching in most lessons enables pupils to build on what they have already learnt and to make rapid progress. Attainment rises to above average by the end of Year 6, although pupils do not always complete enough written work that reflects their capabilities in subjects outside literacy lessons. This is especially true for more able pupils. They do not always receive sufficient challenge to produce good quality independent writing.

Pupils follow the good example set by staff and become thoughtful, confident and mature individuals. They are well prepared well for later life. Teachers and learning support assistants work together well to make pupils feel exceptionally safe and welcome at school. As one pupil said, 'All teachers are really caring.' Members of staff praise and encourage pupils by displaying good work across a range of subjects. Teachers frequently mark pupils' work but do not always provide clear enough guidance to help them to improve. They identify the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities swiftly, and provide good support enabling these pupils to make the same good progress as others.

Pupils are rightly proud that their contribution towards the school and wider community is outstanding. They support each other and members of staff around the school with tasks such as the playground super leaders, and raise considerable funds for charities. Pupils behave well, and show care and consideration for others. For example, they write thoughtful prayers for those less fortunate than themselves and show genuine interest in and respect for cultural differences.

Teachers provide many interesting practical activities in most lessons, although occasionally they do not challenge all pupils well enough or ensure that all pupils are involved in discussions. When this happens, the pace of learning slows and some pupils do not learn as quickly as they should.

Good self-evaluation and monitoring enable senior leaders to be fully aware of what

they need to do next to make the school even better. They demonstrate their good capacity to improve through their impact on shaping the curriculum. They have improved rates of progress by making greater use of information on pupils' progress to pinpoint what needs to be developed. They are right to have prepared other leaders to share this responsibility so that progress in each subject can be sustained year on year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the quality of pupils' writing in all subjects, especially those who are more able, by:
 - providing more independent writing tasks in various subjects that reflect the pupils' capabilities
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils should achieve in each lesson
 - making sure that teachers always provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve.(Timescale July 2010)

- Improve the proportion of good teaching to 90% by:
 - making sure that all pupils are interested and involved in whole-class discussions
 - ensuring work is sufficiently challenging for all learners.(Timescale April 2010)

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils' thorough enjoyment of school is an important factor in their good achievement. Lessons observed by inspectors showed that pupils are polite and well behaved because they form good relationships with members of staff and each other. Their tolerance and respect for others enables them to settle to tasks quickly, cooperate sensibly and achieve well. They are particularly enthusiastic about the many practical and purposeful activities in lessons. The rate of learning is not consistently good in a few lessons, because work is not always challenging enough. In addition, at times, some pupils are quietly inattentive during class discussions, and not all teachers ensure that these less enthusiastic pupils join in.

While pupils make good progress, and attainment in English, mathematics and science is at least above average in most years, there is some variation from one year to the next. Whole-school developments lead to improved achievement, although standards are not always sustained for attainment to be judged to be high overall. In the current year, the school has been successful in raising attainment in writing. Leaders are aware that pupils' writing in subjects other than literacy currently does not reflect the extent of their improved writing skills, especially for the more able.

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are making more rapid progress than in the past because a recently improved system for tracking progress is

identifying their needs sooner and enabling effective support to be organised.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. It enables pupils to feel safe in the knowledge that other pupils and members of staff will help them if they have a worry. The work on 'who is my neighbour' helps pupils to think widely about the needs and beliefs of others in this country and worldwide. The school council is confident that it plays a large part in running the school and has particularly good impact on developing the outdoor areas. Pupils have a thorough knowledge of how to live healthily, although they do not always follow their own advice by bringing healthy food to school for lunch.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good, with a few variations. Leaders are working successfully to help a few teachers to challenge always the more able pupils well enough and to involve all pupils in discussions. Teachers make good use of resources, including information and communication technology, to support teaching points. For example, in a particularly successful lesson in a Year 4 class, pupils used laptops to develop their skills in using protractors accurately when measuring angles. Across the school, the teachers' inventive use of fun, practical tasks, together with valuable support from skilful learning support assistants, boosts pupils' confidence and desire to learn, including those who find learning difficult at times. The school has a successful means of assessing pupils' learning in English and mathematics. Pupils are fully aware of the purpose of the 'tickled pink' and 'green for growth' marking scheme. While work is also frequently marked in other subjects, leaders are aware that teachers do not always show pupils clearly how they could improve, especially in written work, so that assessment can become outstanding.

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

The outstanding, broad and varied curriculum is a key strength in provision and the headteacher has been instrumental in the significant improvement made in this aspect of the school's work since its last inspection. Additional activities and the creative arts add to the pupils' thorough enjoyment of school. Global links are extensive, helping pupils to become very knowledgeable about cultural diversity and to work alongside children from other schools and backgrounds. For example, during the week of the inspection, a group of pupils from Bethlehem shared traditional dancing, and older pupils rehearsed for a dance performance with other local schools depicting the story of Jason and the Argonauts.

The school has improved systems for tracking how well pupils are doing and this information is starting to be used more rigorously to help all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to do as well as they could. The use of this information is not yet consistent between classes to ensure even progress between lessons.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The inspirational headteacher, together with a keen, newly formed senior management team, are driving the school forward quickly, ably assisted by conscientious and challenging governors. They understand the school's strengths and comparative weaknesses from their own rigorous monitoring and focus on raising attainment and improving provision. Senior leaders set a good example with their own teaching. Their strategic placements around the school helps them guide and support their colleagues. Suitable plans are in place to share responsibility to monitor closely pupils' progress, teaching and learning more fully with subject leaders, which will enable them to be more accountable for achieving high standards. Leaders have received training for this role. They have formulated their own clear plans with the aim to help reach and sustain high standards.

Governors are skilled and supportive. They are undertaking an evaluation of their roles to identify how they can contribute further. Governors monitor school development and are keen to raise their profile among parents.

The school promotes equality successfully and tackles discrimination with rigour so that pupils learn to respect each other very well. At the time of the inspection, the school's safeguarding procedures were very effective in ensuring the safety and well-being of all the pupils. The revisiting of policies is frequent and the school works very closely with external agencies to support pupils as necessary. The school has an

exemplary approach towards promoting community cohesion. It has extensive partnerships nationally and internationally to broaden the pupils' horizons beyond the local community.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in communicating ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the school from a large number of different pre-school providers and attainment on entry is wide ranging. The majority of children are working at or beyond the levels expected for this age group. Generally they are better at numeracy than literacy. The outdoor provision has improved exceptionally well since the last inspection and now provides children of all abilities with outstanding opportunities to learn through purposeful play. Most children make at least good progress in all areas of learning. Attainment is slightly above average when they start in Year 1. Close links with parents enable children to settle into routines quickly. Members of staff work together well as a team and ask effective questions, particularly when children are working on tasks they have chosen for themselves. Staff monitor progress rigorously and they share examples of children's work in the 'learning journey' books. Staff have been successful in narrowing the gap in attainment between girls and boys by providing more boy friendly activities such as the 'hide' from which they can secretly observe dinosaurs and the comparison activity for the size of dinosaur eggs. However, occasionally, when children are working as a whole class, staff cater less well for differing needs. Leaders are right to be proud of the way outdoor provision has developed and they have clear plans to provide greater opportunities for children to learn about sounds and letters.

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Views of parents and carers

Most parents are pleased with the work of the school and were especially positive about their children's happiness at school, safekeeping and the encouragement for healthy lifestyles. They make positive comments such as 'A very happy school. Every morning my son can't wait to go to school' and 'The school has a lovely atmosphere.' A small minority of parents expressed concerns over the quality of information on pupils' progress, help to support their child's learning at home and the effectiveness of how well the school listens to their suggestions. The inspection team found that the school provides the same opportunities for parental consultation evenings as most other schools and seeks parents' opinions in questionnaires. The governing body has plans to raise its profile among parents and the school is keen to find other ways of gathering and acting on parents' views.

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

The inspection team received 87 completed questionnaires. In total, there are 311 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	44	36	7	0

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.



25 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rothley Church of England Primary School, Leicester LE7 7PS

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so helpful during our visit. We very much enjoyed meeting you and found you to be polite and friendly. We are pleased that you enjoy coming to this good school.

These are the things we liked most about your school.

- You learn quickly because you have many interesting things to do.
- Children in the Reception Year are particularly good at finding things out for themselves when they are working outside.
- Your teachers are good at making learning fun and are enthusiastic and hard working.
- Opportunities to learn about people in other countries are excellent.
- You behave well and are really good at taking responsibility. The school council has helped to make the playground attractive.
- Teachers and assistants are good at looking after you and helping you to feel safe.
- Your headteacher and other leaders know what needs to take place to make the school even better.

These are the things we would like your school to do next.

- Give you more chances to do your own writing in various subjects, especially those of you who learn quickly.
- Make sure that teachers always give you hard enough work and encourage you all to take part in discussions.

Thank you again for talking with us about your school and showing us your work. We hope that your performance of Jason and the Argonauts went well. You could help your teachers by making sure you always pay full attention during class discussions.

Yours faithfully

Alison Cartlidge
Lead inspector

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