

Raunds Park Infant School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121852
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	327583
Inspection date	11 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Marion Wallace

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.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	4–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	96
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
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Bishop
Headteacher	Julia Bowles
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Park Street Raunds Wellingborough NN9 6NB
Telephone number	01933 622415
Fax number	01933 625879

Age group	4–7
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Raunds Park is a small infant school. Most pupils are White British. The few pupils who speak English as an additional language are fluent. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well below average. Children start school in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Reception class. Pupils are taught in mixed age classes in Years 1 and 2. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Raunds Park is a good school. It is popular with pupils and parents because it is a caring and welcoming place. Pupils enjoy their education. Parents are pleased with their progress and appreciate the friendly and informative way the school works with them. One parent summed up the views of the vast majority, saying, 'A super school, teachers instil a love of learning, children go from strength to strength.'

Achievement throughout the school is good. Most children enter Reception with the skills and knowledge expected for their age with slight variation from year to year. Children make good progress in Reception and move into Year 1 with standards that are slightly above average. From Reception to the end of Year 2, pupils experience good teaching and, consequently, the majority of pupils attain standards that are above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Standards in writing have not been as high as those in reading and mathematics because writing skills have not been sufficiently well developed in the past. This year, there has been a strong focus on raising standards in writing. Strategies to tackle this are proving effective and standards are improving rapidly. Preparation for pupils' future economic well-being is good. Pupils develop good social skills and personal qualities and they make good progress in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, although teachers sometimes miss opportunities for pupils to use their writing across the curriculum.

The curriculum is good. Pupils enjoy all the activities planned for them. The curriculum is shared successfully with parents, who appreciate parents' workshops such as 'Stay and Play,' and literacy and numeracy sessions that help them promote learning. Teaching is effective because teachers consistently use a range of methods to extend learning. Pupils are well cared for and there is a strong focus on valuing and supporting all pupils. There is a thorough approach to equality and inclusion that encourages all pupils to do well. This is supported by the good procedures to track their academic progress. Child protection, risk assessment and safeguarding procedures meet current statutory requirements.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, together with their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils know how to stay safe and healthy. They learn to make a positive contribution to their school, local, national and global communities because the school's promotion of community cohesion is good. Relationships are strong and, consequently, attitudes are positive and behaviour is good.

Governors are supportive and involved in planning for improvement. Some governors have not yet developed the necessary skills and knowledge to confidently challenge the school to bring about improvement. Leaders at all levels have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school has improved since the last inspection, for example in raising standards in writing and improving provision for information and communication technology. The school's leadership and management provide the school with good capacity for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The provision in Reception is good. Children develop good attitudes to learning because they enjoy the activities planned for them and they make good progress in all areas of learning. Parents confirm this and comment on how well children settle into school life. Welfare is good

and children make good progress in their personal and social development. There is an effective balance between activities the children choose for themselves and those led by the teacher. Learning outdoors is good. Children are encouraged to take responsibility, organise themselves and learn new skills. Movement is used well to promote children's creative development; children enthusiastically made spiky shapes when imitating dragon movements. The 'Super Heroes writing den' is well used to encourage writing skills. Relationships are good and consequently, children learn to behave well. Adults are enthusiastic role models and children reflect this, talking confidently about the current Year of the Dragon and the Chinese New Year. They develop good awareness of the wider world and more able children can locate the position of China on the world map. Teaching is good and adults use questions well but occasionally they miss opportunities to target questions to children of different ability. Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the use of writing across the curriculum by ensuring every opportunity is taken for pupils to develop their writing skills.
- Ensure all governors develop the skills and knowledge necessary to challenge the school that pupils are achieving as well as possible.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils achieve well and the proportion of pupils on course to reach the expected and higher levels continues to improve. Pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average in Years 1 and 2 in reading and mathematics. Until recently, standards were below average in writing. Rigorous assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, swiftly followed by successful improvements to teaching, have ensured standards are now broadly average in writing. All children have individual targets that are continually reviewed and new targets are set when appropriate. Standards in history and information and communication technology (ICT) are above average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as their peers.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils work and play well together and they are enthusiastic learners. They have positive attitudes and behave well because the school's emphasis on developing these aspects through the 'Values Education' has been very successful. Attendance has improved and is now average. Pupils are polite and demonstrate sensitivity to the needs of others; for example, they invited a visiting adult to take a turn at using the interactive whiteboard. They feel very safe and secure and they say that they can talk to adults if they have any concerns. Pupils appreciate the rewards in assembly and they are confident that their efforts are acknowledged and celebrated. They make a good contribution to the school and local community. Members of the school council are proactive in working towards school improvements, such as writing a letter to the manufacturing firm when their 'Friendship Stop' broke unexpectedly. Pupils demonstrate a good awareness of the lives and beliefs of people in other countries and are aware of the importance of looking after the environment. They have a good understanding of their local community and enjoy visiting the local secondary school, shops and fire station. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good planning effectively takes account of pupils' different abilities. Pupils make good gains in their learning because lessons are well organised and teachers successfully use a range of methods to involve pupils in their own learning and ensure lessons are fun. In a mathematics lesson, Year 2 pupils enjoyed making structures from straws and plasticine that deepened their knowledge and understanding of 3-dimensional shapes. Opportunities to share ideas with a partner are also used well. Lessons have a clear focus and proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers use questions well but they often miss opportunities to target questions to different abilities within the class. Pupils' progress is assessed well and recorded rigorously. Electronic whiteboards are used effectively to improve their skills and knowledge. Strong relationships and good attitudes and behaviour contribute to a positive climate for learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy the well-planned curriculum. It is effectively organised and planning is closely matched to pupils' abilities in the mixed age classes. The provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are used well to enhance learning. In history, pupils write about the Great Fire of London but opportunities to develop writing skills in other subjects are sometimes missed. Pupils use computers well to develop their knowledge of modern artists such as Mondrian and Pollock. Curriculum enrichment is good, lunchtime activities are well attended and pupils talk enthusiastically about the clubs where they learn to use sign language, sing, play games or sew. Visitors and visits to the local bakery and library are broadening pupils' knowledge and understanding of their local area and enriching their cultural experiences. Personal, social and health education is planned well and ensures pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe and be healthy.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pastoral support is strong. The school provides a safe and secure environment which effectively nurtures pupils' learning, personal development and well-being. Teaching assistants are well deployed and support the academic and pastoral needs of all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Academic guidance is good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have thorough knowledge of their individual targets. They feel well informed about their progress and can discuss their targets with confidence and enthusiasm. There is an effective system to track how pupils are progressing and to set challenging targets for them to aim for. This ensures they make good progress as they move up through the school. The quality of marking is good and informs pupils clearly how to improve their work. Arrangements for safeguarding and pupils' welfare are given the highest priority and meet government requirements. Attendance is average, and improving as a result of the school's dialogue with parents to encourage good attendance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear vision. She is well supported by senior staff and all staff, who work well together, and this has contributed to the school's good improvement. Subject leaders have clear roles and they provide a strong steer to improve standards and achievement. The school knows its strengths and staff work hard to eliminate any identified weakness. Improved use of assessment procedures, tracking and target setting to raise standards is leading to significant improvements. The school's focus on writing is leading to notable improvements in the standard of pupils' written work but the quality is inconsistent across all subjects. The governing body provides good support but is not yet challenging enough.

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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?	2
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?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
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?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
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

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	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
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?	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Raunds Park Infant School, Wellingborough NN9 6NB

Thank you all very much for welcoming us to your school. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers. We will remember how beautifully you all sang your school song and we were impressed when many of you accompanied your singing with sign language. You and your parents told us that Raunds Park is a good school and we agree with you.

These are the things we found that your school does well.

- You get off to a good start in Reception and continue to make good progress through the school. As a result, you reach above average standards by the end of Year 2 because teaching is good.
- You all enjoy learning very much and your attendance has improved and is now satisfactory.
- You make good progress in your personal development. Your behaviour is good. You are sensible and caring to others and you are very aware of how to keep safe.
- You enjoy and benefit from the many lunchtime clubs, visits to the local secondary school, visits and visitors.
- Your school cares about you very much and teaches you a lot about how to be healthy and care for others.
- Your school council is a well-organised group and is working well with your teachers to make sure that your school continues to improve.
- Your headteacher and senior teachers lead the school well and all the staff work effectively together to make sure that the school is an exciting fun place.
- What we have asked your school to do now.
- Give you more opportunities to use your writing skills in all subjects.
- Ensure that governors check that your school is doing as well as it can.

You can help by continuing to work really hard. Thank you for a very enjoyable and memorable visit to your school and best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

Marion Wallace Lead inspector