

Robert Miles Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122685
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	327782
Inspection date	12 March 2009
Reporting inspector	Bob Roberts

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	185
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Chris Miller
Headteacher	Mr Rob Gilbey
Date of previous school inspection	8 December 2005
School address	Market Place Bingham Nottingham Nottinghamshire NG13 8AR
Telephone number	01949875011
Fax number	01949876269

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector. The inspection evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the quality of teaching, the personal development and well-being of pupils, and achievement and standards. The inspector gathered evidence from visits to lessons, assessment data and documents, and meetings with governors, groups of pupils and school managers. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspection found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Robert Miles Junior serves the small town of Bingham, increasingly diverse in its composition, with a significant number of children attending from beyond the town. Population trends in the town are leading to a slight reduction in the numbers at the school. Almost all the pupils are from a white British heritage and there are very few for whom English is not their first language. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above 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: 1

This is an outstanding school. Its most notable feature is its success at promoting values as well as developing skills, knowledge and understanding. There are excellent opportunities for pupils to learn and to achieve to their full potential. The school is successful because of the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and the teamwork among the staff. Pupils thrive and love coming to school. Parents are exceptionally supportive of the school, praising the teaching, the leadership of the headteacher and the excellent range of opportunities outside the classroom. There were many comments along the following lines: 'My son is in his final year but I wish he could stay here longer', and 'It is obvious to see what a wonderful school it is.' These positive views are supported by the inspection.

Most pupils come into Year 3 with good levels of achievement from the local infants' school. The change of school is smoothly managed and pupils settle well. The teaching they receive is excellent. It sustains and builds on the already high standards. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 standards are consistently above average. Standards in mathematics and science were, for some time, above those in English but the school's focus on the teaching of writing over the last two years is leading to exceptionally high standards. All groups of pupils make at least good progress and, for many, progress is outstanding.

These high standards are achieved as a result of the quality of teaching and learning. In its self-evaluation, the school judged the quality of its teaching to be outstanding and visits to lessons during the inspection confirmed this view. Teachers are very successful at making learning enjoyable. As one pupil said: 'Some of the time we don't know we're doing it but we are.' Teachers plan tasks to make learning as active as possible and use modern computer technology skilfully to maintain interest and motivation. They plan lessons with a careful eye to the best way to group the pupils for different subjects or activities. Pupils have become used to assessing their own work and that of their peers before having their judgements checked and evaluated by the teachers. By this means they become increasingly independent and aware of their own learning needs. They work extremely well together and refer to their targets knowledgeably and enthusiastically. Pupils' writing, evident from displays and in books and folders, such as the work stemming from the study of the Second World War, is exceptional.

The broad curriculum offered by the school meets the interests, aptitudes and particular needs of children very well. Statutory requirements are met. There are well-developed links between subjects across the curriculum and plenty of opportunity for pupils to practise key literacy and numeracy skills. Excellent planning for cross-curricular projects, such as that on Egypt, builds in opportunities for art, design, science, numeracy and writing as well as history and geography. The school is committed to ensuring equality by adapting the curriculum on occasions to meet the needs of particular groups and by providing support for children with medical or additional learning needs. Specialist teachers are used in a number of areas of the curriculum, such as physical education and music. Many parents commented on the extensive range of extra-curricular activities available. These are planned and communicated very well to pupils and parents. Levels of participation are monitored by the school and are very high. The range of opportunities is continuously being modified in order to engage as many pupils as possible, because the school is very aware of how involvement in such activities benefits pupils' personal and social development. A programme of educational visits, opportunities to work in teams in competitions of various kinds, and links to a local secondary school for enrichment opportunities in the creative arts and mathematics, further enrich the outstanding curriculum.

The care, guidance and support that pupils receive was judged outstanding at the last inspection and it remains so. Arrangements for the welfare and safeguarding of children are robust and are reviewed regularly. Pupils feel cared for and secure. The school places a high priority on the inclusion of all children and on equality of opportunity. This feature is evident, for example, in the provision of individual counselling for children with emotional difficulties that hinder their learning, and in the successful integration of pupils who have been permanently excluded from other schools. Several parents of children with learning difficulties or disabilities wrote fulsomely about the support their children have received. The school listens carefully to the views of parents. When there is, for example, one of the rare occurrences of friction between pupils, the school has introduced the practice of consulting the parents involved some time afterwards to see if they are happy with the school's handling of the incident. There are effective working relationships with a wide range of external agencies. This excellent care and support is designed to enable all children to make the best progress they can and to enjoy their learning. Pupils are well aware of their individual targets and how well they are doing. The quality of the marking in their books is excellent, offering high quality guidance on how to improve. Their progress is celebrated by means such as the honours assemblies at which attitudes and personal qualities are praised just as highly as academic success.

One key feature of this school that underpins the excellent teaching and the high levels of care is the commitment to the emotional well-being of pupils. By the way they are taught and through the relations that are established with teachers, they learn to respect and value each other. They learn to acknowledge and welcome the differences between people and at the same time to value their common humanity. Through the attention paid to environmental issues, locally and globally, and through curriculum elements such as the project on creation, their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Attendance is well above the national average, and a number of parents wrote about having to insist that their children stay off school when they are ill because they enjoy coming to school so much. Pupils show a very well developed sense of how to be healthy. All pupils are consistently involved in contributing to developments through the school council which is prominent in assemblies and consistently consults pupils on issues such as fund-raising. Considerable sums are raised, not only for their own benefit, such as for playground equipment, but for international charitable causes. As an Eco School, pupils take the environment seriously. By all these means, as well as through the excellent development of information and communication technology skills, pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stages of their lives.

The school's effectiveness in securing outstanding achievement and personal development for its pupils is due to excellent leadership. The headteacher would be the first to refer to the importance that stability and teamwork have played in improving provision at the school. What he has done himself is to establish a strong collective belief that by teaching the values of equality and diversity, and by focusing on pupils' emotional well-being and their enjoyment of learning, that progress and high standards will follow more easily. There is an effective emphasis on developing the capacity of staff, both teachers and support staff. The use of data to assess and monitor progress is exceptional. The analysis of strengths and weaknesses is exemplary. Long term strategic planning is high quality, with core aims, expressing the goals and values of the school, broken down into year by year improvement plans. Governors, staff and parents have all been involved in setting the direction of the school and leaders and managers have a clear idea of how their work contributes. Monitoring systems are well established and operate at different levels. External benchmarks and quality management systems are used to inform

development. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. For example, innovative plans are being implemented to engage parents and carers from the more disadvantaged families in the life of the school and the learning of their children. Plans to evaluate the impact of these actions are under-developed. Governors are closely involved in monitoring developments in the School Improvement Plan, partly through their programme of visits. Their recent reconstitution, which has increased the size of the governing body, is a result of their commitment to increasing community and parental contributions still further. The strong teamwork and the commitment to developing leadership and management skills mean that the school's capacity to improve further is outstanding. The school provides excellent value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop a means of evaluating the impact of actions to promote community cohesion.

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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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

13 March 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Miles Junior School, Bingham, NG13 8AR

As you know, your school was inspected recently and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. I very much enjoyed my visit to your school and would like to thank you for the friendly way in which so many of you greeted me and spoke to me.

Robert Miles Junior is an outstanding school. It is very clear that people are happy to be there, either as pupils or working there on the staff. There is, as one of your parents wrote to me, a lovely family atmosphere. You obviously enjoy coming to school, you work hard and behave extremely well. You show friendliness and respect towards each other. The teaching you receive is excellent. Some of you told me how good the teachers are at making learning enjoyable. The work you do is challenging and interesting, and builds your confidence and independence. Outside the classroom there is a wide range of activities. These are changing all the time to suit different people and large numbers of you benefit from these activities. It is a school where you feel safe and cared for. You make excellent progress in your subjects and the standards you reach are high. For example, I saw some wonderful writing in a number of classrooms. Your school council is exceptionally active and you all contribute very well to its work in the school, as well as to projects to help people in this and other countries.

The headteacher and all the staff are doing a very good job. They work very well together, sharing ideas and always trying to think of new ways to improve things for you. At the moment, for example, they are trying out ways of getting more parents involved in the life of the school. They need to find ways to see if what they are doing is working as they planned. Many of your parents filled in the questionnaire that was part of the inspection. Almost all of them think very highly of your headteacher and all the staff. They appreciate the way the school has high standards but that it also wants you to develop as rounded people in preparing you for the next stage of your lives.

I wish you all well for the future.

Bob Roberts

Lead inspector