

Ruishton Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	123822
Local Authority	Somerset
Inspection number	327997
Inspection date	25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	5–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	140
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	Hugh Griffith
Headteacher	Neil Dalton
Date of previous school inspection	31 January 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Newlands Road Ruishton Taunton TA3 5JZ
Telephone number	01823 442832

Age group	5–11
Inspection date	25 June 2009
Inspection number	327997

Fax number

01823 443664

Age group	5-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a smaller than average school. There is a Resource Base for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who are integrated across the school. Pupils come from a wide geographical area. A higher than usual proportion join the school in Years 3 to 6, including several who attend for the specialist provision. Nearly all pupils are of White British heritage.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It provides pupils with a high level of care and support. The good curriculum is carefully adapted to the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Activities are made interesting and pupils say that learning is fun. They enjoy school a good deal and attend well. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well because of the good levels of support and resources provided. Progress is stronger in Years 3 to 6 than in other years and in these year groups standards are rising. In English, leaders are rightly focused on improving writing because there are too few pupils reaching the higher levels, particularly by the end of Year 2. Pupils' good personal development and well-being are a strength of the school. They have very positive attitudes to learning and behave considerately towards each other. Children make a secure start in the Reception Year.

Most parents comment positively about the work of the school. They rightly cite the school's warm and friendly atmosphere. They value the helpful and approachable staff. A parent's comment, typical of many, is that 'Ruishton School excels in its kind and caring atmosphere. The children are highly encouraged and supported.' Another parent reported that 'Every child is made to feel special and valued.' Pupils comment similarly. They say they like lessons and feel very safe in school. Pupils have a clear voice in communicating what they would like to be changed through the school council and most express their views with much confidence and maturity. Although there are few formal responsibilities or rules, the pupils live up to the school's 'expectations' for behaving and helping each other. They value pupils from different backgrounds and those with disabilities equally and comment that 'they are just our friends'. They have a good awareness of the benefits of healthy snacks and exercise. Older pupils, for example, talk knowledgeably about medical conditions caused by obesity. Many attend the good range of clubs and sporting activities on offer after school.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leaders know what needs to be improved. However, development is hampered because monitoring and evaluation are not always sufficiently sharp. As a result, the teaching is satisfactory but it is not yet consistent enough. In lessons, relationships between children and adults are strong and there is a positive learning atmosphere. However, more able pupils are not consistently challenged to do as well as possible. Care, guidance and support are good. Pastoral care is the stronger element. Satisfactory academic guidance helps pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to get better.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children come into school with skills and knowledge that are in line with expectations. They make satisfactory progress across all areas of learning. However, they make good progress in their personal development. Most meet the goals expected by the time they enter Year 1. The children are looked after and cared for well. They are happy and secure in the calm learning environment. The children behave well and form good relationships. Activities provided meet their needs satisfactorily. They develop good vocabulary, for example in literacy, and read simple texts alongside the teacher. However, opportunities for the children to choose whether to learn inside or outdoors are too limited and this in turn limits their independence. While the outside area is used regularly, it is not set up sufficiently well to cover all of the areas of learning.

Leaders have evaluated the effectiveness of the provision suitably and there are plans, for example, to provide a covered space.

What the school should do to improve further

- Sharpen monitoring and evaluation to ensure that pupils are consistently challenged in lessons so they are able to do as well as they can.
- Improve the use of the outdoor area so that children are free to choose to develop their learning inside or outdoors.
- Develop the provision for writing particularly to enable the pupils to reach the higher levels.

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

Progress is satisfactory through Years 1 and 2. From broadly average starting points, standards in Year 2 have remained average since the time of the previous report. The 2009 results in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. There are too few pupils writing with sufficient maturity to reach the higher Level 3. From Year 3 onwards, progress strengthens. The 2008 results in Year 6 were average in English, mathematics and science, similar to the time of the previous inspection. However, the 2009 results in English show a marked improvement in standards. Even so, the numbers of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in reading are higher than those reaching Level 5 in writing. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well. This reflects the success of interventions and adaptations made in order to meet their specific needs.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Many pupils comment that it is a 'happy school' and that any poor behaviour is quickly dealt with. At playtimes, the large field is used extensively with football being a favourite. There is also a large choice of other equipment for the pupils to use in the playground. Pupils use the willow structures to sit quietly or chat together. At the end of their break, pupils return sensibly to lessons ready to work. They show a good level of concern for each other in the playground and around the school. They say assemblies enable them to think about the lives of other people, and involve prayer and reflection. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and wider community. The school council is respected by the pupils as a way for them to share their views. Decisions made are communicated through regular newsletters. The strong moral and cultural values which are promoted by the school give pupils a good understanding of those from different faith and ethnic backgrounds. The pupils value the wide range of the popular after school activities. They show good leadership skills and are willing to take the initiative when necessary. They use their common sense to deal with any issues that arise. These skills, together with very positive attitudes, ensure that they are well placed to face future challenges.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Across the school, pupils' motivation and good behaviour are helping them to learn. They respond quickly to instructions, and cooperate well with each other in group work. Teachers promote positive relationships and manage pupils sensitively. In whole-class teaching, the pupils are keen to demonstrate what they know and answer questions confidently. However, in a few lessons, teachers do not move the learning on quickly enough. While planning identifies specific activities for different groups of pupils, it is not always sharp enough to provide sufficient challenge, particularly for the more able. As a result, there are occasions when pupils do not make as much progress as they could. Teaching assistants and teachers have a very good understanding of how to adapt activities to meet the needs of pupils with specific needs. This is done very effectively, for example to explain vocabulary or develop reading skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum contributes well to pupils' overall good enjoyment. It is particularly strong in meeting the pupils' pastoral needs and ensures that the pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities gain full access. Some of the resources provided to help these pupils develop basic skills are excellent. Work provided in classes is often practical and catches the pupils' interest. Assemblies are used well to promote pupils' spiritual development. The many additional clubs, visits and trips help to extend their experiences. For example, pupils develop their understanding of environmental issues through working in the school's garden, growing their own food. The school's pastoral curriculum provides strong support for pupils to work together as a community. Pupils regularly use ICT in their work, for example to help with writing. However, more needs to be done to develop strategies to help pupils write in greater depth and with more maturity.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The high level of care and support provided can be seen in the way the adults value every pupil in the school. The school provides a very safe and secure environment in which to learn and pupils are given good information about how to keep themselves safe. This prepares them well for the future. At the time of the inspection, child protection and safeguarding arrangements met current government requirements. Risks are carefully assessed prior to visits and trips. The school promotes good attendance and pupils say they always come to school unless they are ill. Leaders track the progress of pupils with learning difficulties/and or disabilities and evaluate the success of specific programmes to help them to learn. Pupils have appropriate targets for literacy but these are not always used regularly enough. Similarly, marking acknowledges success but does not consistently set the next steps for learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher sets a strong lead to ensure that learners with specific needs are highly valued, and that equality is promoted. The Resource Base is a success because staff have very good

knowledge and skills to support the pupils. Financial management is good and spending is improving provision. Given the highly inclusive nature of the school and strengthening progress in Years 3 to 6, it provides good value for money. A system to track standards across the school is in place. However, the use of this information to determine the progress in different year groups is at an earlier stage of development. Teaching is evaluated regularly but inconsistencies in teaching remain, particularly in helping staff to self-evaluate. The capacity to improve is satisfactory. Steady progress has been made in improving issues identified in the previous inspection. Governors are committed and very supportive of the school. They are aware of what needs to be improved and are suitably involved in the satisfactory self-evaluation of the school's provision.

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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

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 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	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?	3
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?	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	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**

26 June 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ruishton Primary School, Ruishton, TA3 5JZ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and were very impressed with your friendliness. Your views are important to us and the information you gave us was a great help. Your school provides you with a satisfactory education and overall you are making satisfactory progress.

What your school does particularly well:

- You get off to a secure start in Reception.
- Adults care for you particularly well and those of you who find learning difficult or need extra help do well.
- Progress is improving in Years 3 to 6.
- You behave well and are credit to the school, helping to make it a very happy and welcoming place.
- You express your views confidently and show concern for each other.
- You enjoy school a good deal and attend well.
- The work you are given is often practical and interesting.
- You all get on well with each other and with your teachers.
- Your headteacher and other adults ensure that you are all included as much as possible.

We have asked your headteacher and the other adults to do these things:

- Help you to learn better in all of your lessons.
- Improve the use of the outdoor area by the youngest children, so that they choose for themselves how to develop their learning inside or outdoors.
- Give you better support to help you to improve your writing.

With your hard work, you can help your school to improve further.

Best wishes

Yours faithfully

Peter Clifton

Lead Inspector