

Robert Le Kyng Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126281
Local Authority	Swindon
Inspection number	328478
Inspection date	13 May 2009
Reporting inspector	Liz Kounnou

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	Community
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	406
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	Jane Dale
Headteacher	Maran White
Date of previous school inspection	27 June 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Westcott Street Swindon SN1 5HS
Telephone number	01793 523119
Fax number	01793 521648

Age group	4–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors who evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues:

- Why standards in writing are slow to rise in Key Stage 1
- Why pupils do well in Key Stage 2
- How effectively the school promotes community cohesion.

The evidence was gathered from visits to lessons, analysis of information about pupils' progress and attainment, scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, discussions with staff, pupils and governors, and analysis of the parents' questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This large school includes a special resource unit to support pupils with multiple learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is consequently higher than average. More than a quarter of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and about one in five are learning to speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils who join or leave the school during each academic year is higher than average. The school has held the Basic Skills Quality Mark since 2006, gained the Healthy School Award in 2007 and a Dyslexia Friendly Schools Award in 2008. A privately run children's centre and nursery share the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This good school has the support of a very large majority of parents. 'A happy, well-run school with some exceptional staff', reflects the views of a number of parents. Parents are pleased that their children do well in the school; pupils make good progress overall. When they start school in the Reception Year, the attainment of many children is well below average. At the end of Year 6 standards are in line with the national average in English, mathematics and science. This trend of good achievement has continued since the last inspection. Pupils who attend the special resource unit do well due to good attention to their personal needs. A parent of a child in the unit praises the 'excellent integration in classes'. Those pupils learning to speak English as an additional language are supported well all through the school so that they make good progress. Support for their parents is a strength of the school's good provision for community cohesion. Courses to help parents learn English have enabled them to settle in the community; a number are now employed at the school.

Parents appreciate the good leadership and management, in particular the strong direction of the headteacher. A number of strategies have been implemented to help pupils in Years 1 and 2 reach higher standards in writing since the last inspection. This year a newly introduced programme to teach phonic skills more carefully has been successful. As a result, the proportion of pupils in Year 2 who are on track to reach the expected level in writing for their age has increased substantially. This demonstrates the good capacity to improve the school further. Nonetheless, writing standards remain below average in Key Stage 1. This is partly because a number of pupils who are new to speaking English join the school in this stage. However, while pupils develop phonic skills at a good rate in their small teaching groups, they do not make full use of these skills independently in other writing activities. School leaders are well aware of this because the pupils' progress is carefully tracked. Progress has improved since the last inspection. Accurate assessments are made in the school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness. There is a wealth of data about individual pupils to show their progress over time. Currently, data are collated by pencil and paper methods rather than using information and communication technology. These methods have limitations that prevent school leaders from exploring the trends in the data rigorously, especially for different groups such as the new children. This means that the pace of improvement is slowed to some extent. This is particularly so in Key Stage 1, where leaders have not fully resolved the dip in writing standards when children move on from the good provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Governors support the school well and have identified a key priority to introduce electronic methods for managing data.

Pupils talk enthusiastically about the opportunities provided by the good curriculum. They are particularly excited by specialist sports activities, which encourage pupils to be active and maintain good, healthy lifestyles. The curriculum is designed well to promote enjoyment so that pupils have good attitudes to work and want to come to school. Attendance is improving and is satisfactory overall. An active approach to learning is evident all through the school. The breadth and style of activities ensure that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Good teaching and learning capture pupils' interests. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to be involved in assessing their own progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. Pupils know their personal targets, including the level they are working towards, and teachers' marking often explains how they could improve their work. This is a strength of the good care, guidance and support for learning.

Pupils are happy and safe because good attention is paid to health and safety issues. Procedures to safeguard pupils meet all requirements. Parents comment on the extra measures taken to ensure safety, and the prompt response to any issues, such as bullying. Pupils' confidence and good relationships are striking features of their good behaviour. They are keen to take part in lessons, and especially enjoy the 'talk partner' activities. Their ideas are actively sought in lessons, where they cooperate well with one another. A science lesson in Year 4 required mature attitudes when pupils attempted to find out the optimum temperature for salt to dissolve in water. Pupils exercised care concerning safety issues, listened very well to each other's ideas and had a lot of fun! School council members are proud of the contributions they make and have high aspirations for even more improvements. Other volunteers help to run the school bank and monitors help maintain good order at break times. 'We like being involved in everything, it helps make our school better', was one typical comment.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage achieve well because their time at school is packed with interesting activities that help them make good progress in their learning and development. A fantastic outdoor area is used in all weathers to provide opportunities for learning across the curriculum. The good partnerships with parents that exist made a major contribution to the refurbishment of this area. One parent wrote that her child 'loved every minute at school'. During the inspection children delightedly investigated the feel and smell of a tray filled with spaghetti strings as part of their topic on the senses. An 'eye-clinic,' set up outside, provided opportunities to explore how far they could see. Yet another group were fascinated by making handprints with scented paint, and others were supported very well by the teaching assistants as they tasted a variety of different foods. These activities are representative of the creative way that good teaching and learning ensure lots of fun, and help children learn to play together. There are plenty of opportunities to develop early writing skills, and a good, simple system for children to show how well they enjoyed the activity or succeeded by placing their work in red, amber or green trays. The green tray, for success, was overflowing. As a result of the good provision, children reach broadly average standards at the end of the Reception Year. Good leadership and management in this stage of the school ensure that children work and play in a safe environment and that their welfare has a high priority. Appropriate tracking systems provide leaders with useful information about how well each child is doing. To improve accuracy, all children now complete a formal writing assessment at the end of the Reception Year. This adds to the good transition arrangements when children move into Year 1.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils in Years 1 and 2 use the skills they gain from phonics teaching in their independent writing, so that they reach higher standards.
- Improve analysis of data relating to groups of pupils, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, to pinpoint precisely where improvement is needed.

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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	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

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	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	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	2
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**

14 May 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robert Le Kyng Primary School, Swindon SN1 5HS

Thank you all for making us so welcome and helping us when we visited your school. Robert Le Kyng is a good school, you make good progress and standards are average by Year 6. The staff and governors work well together to help you to succeed at school. Most of your parents think it is a good school, and that the headteacher and staff work very hard to make them feel welcome.

- Here are the things that are best about your school:
- You thoroughly enjoy the special sports activities that help you keep healthy by taking lots of exercise.
- You behave well all through the day and work well together.
- The curriculum is good and your careful work on display helps the school to look bright and cheerful.
- You have a lot of fun in lessons and teaching and learning are good.
- You volunteer to do a lot of things to help the school and other people in your community.
- Pupils supported by the special resource unit get plenty of help in classrooms, both from teaching assistants and other pupils.

There are two things that could be even better. We have asked the school to help pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 to reach higher standards in writing. In these classes you could help by remembering the things you learn in 'Read, Write, Inc.' groups when you write in other lessons. We have also asked the school to check more carefully how well children in all the different groups are doing, so that school leaders know exactly what they need to do to help you make better progress, especially in Key Stage 1.

Thank you again for being so helpful and friendly when we came to see you.

Yours faithfully

Liz Kounnou