

The Rose School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	134625
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	328937
Inspection date	3 February 2009
Reporting inspector	Eric Craven HMI

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	40
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Tony Martin
Headteacher	Ms Nicola Jennings
Date of previous school inspection	23 May 2006
School address	Swindon Street Burnley Lancashire BB11 4PF
Telephone number	01282 453 072
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools.

Description of the school

The Rose School opened in September 2005 and, as a consequence, no pupils have yet been at the school for their entire secondary education. The school provides for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Most have experienced a turbulent education, including exclusions and periods of absence, prior to attending this school. All of the pupils come from the area of East Lancashire. All have a statement of special educational needs or are being formally assessed. There are 15 girls on roll and six pupils are looked after by the local authority. Three quarters of the pupils are eligible for free school meals. Most of the pupils are white British with about one in six coming from an Asian heritage. The school is part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative and is due to be relocated into new buildings in September 2010.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The Rose School is providing a satisfactory education for its pupils and some aspects of its provision are good. Most of the pupils arrive with standards that are below average. This is because of their poor experiences of schooling, which for many have made them disaffected with education. However, because of the good work the school does in helping most of the pupils re-connect with learning, they make satisfactory progress overall.

Pupils are helped to learn by the good care, guidance and support provided by staff and the generally good teaching that takes place. The good relationships pupils have with staff and the consistent management of their behaviour helps remove the barriers to their learning. Disruptive behaviour in lessons is dealt with decisively so that the effect of this on other pupils' learning is minimised. Staff show respect for pupils who, in turn, generally do the same. Staff are vigilant with regard to the safety of pupils. The quality of teaching varies and includes the occasional unsatisfactory lesson but nevertheless it is good overall. Because of their previous experiences, many pupils find learning difficult and consequently their progress is restricted. However, the better teaching is helping to overcome the legacy of underachievement many pupils have when they arrive at the school.

The pupils' personal development is good. The behaviour of most pupils is good for most of the time, although a very small number of parents who responded to the questionnaire would disagree. Attendance, although still unsatisfactory, is on the rise. It is adversely affected by a small number of pupils and the school is working earnestly to increase their attendance and it has had some success. Most pupils enjoy school and are positive about what it does for them. They value the points they can earn and what they can achieve with these and this plays a big part in helping them manage their own behaviour. They feel able to go to members of staff for support if needed. Although they say there are a few instances of bullying, they feel these are dealt with effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of differences between cultures and individuals and the school's good work on promoting community cohesion has been a stimulus for pupils' learning in this area. Pupils make a valuable contribution to their school community and wider afield. They readily undertake jobs at school and they raise funds for those in need.

The curriculum is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements for what should be covered but it is hampered for two reasons. The amount of time devoted to teaching is below that recommended for secondary-age pupils. This is compounded as the school uses most of two afternoons each week for activities that are used as rewards for the pupils. The school has increased the range of externally accredited courses for pupils to follow and there has been an expansion of the use of alternative provision for some pupils. Enrichment activities are greatly valued by the pupils, especially the residential weekends that they all get a chance to attend.

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with some good aspects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are a cohesive team who have begun more recently to drive the school forward at an increased pace. Some necessary developments are in the early stages of development. For example, the school has begun to track the pupils' progress more systematically, although an analysis of this data for groups of pupils and the whole school is still to be completed. Quality assurance has become more systematic and the school is gathering information from a wider variety of sources to check on its success. Because these developments are fairly new, they are yet to make a significant impact on pupils' achievements. The school improvement plan is a useful road-map for the school but it has insufficiently sharp measures

to check on its success, particularly in terms of further improving the quality of teaching and improving the rate of progress pupils make. The school's collaboration with parents and other professionals is good. The governing body brings good experience and commitment to its role as a critical friend of the school.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use a wide range of strategies to improve levels of attendance.
- Increase the amount of taught time in the school day so that the curriculum can make as full a contribution as possible to the progress pupils make.
- Make better use of information gathered from assessments of pupils' progress and monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning to make the targets in the school's improvement plans more specific.
- Increase the proportion of lessons judged to be good and outstanding.

A small proportion of 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

Although standards are low when comparing the pupils' test and examination results with those of other pupils nationally the pupils make sound progress at this school from their starting points on arrival. A few pupils make even better progress than this. In 2007, a grade D was the highest grade achieved by a pupil in GCSE examinations. However, in 2008, two pupils achieved a grade C in English and one a grade C in mathematics. The school has recently improved its arrangements for tracking the progress pupils make. A thorough analysis of these records is still to be undertaken. However, tracking information suggests that the progress being made by individual pupils varies considerably from inadequate to outstanding but that overall it is satisfactory. The poor attendance of a minority of pupils means that their academic achievements, as well as their personal and social development, are significantly impeded by their absence.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils take big strides forward in their personal and social development at this school. This is because staff show them respect and listen to them. They are encouraged to make a contribution and they do so readily. Some of the things pupils have suggested have been acted upon by the school, for example, at the pupils' request, the school has developed a room where pupils can go to calm down. Pupils recognise their views are valued. Their appreciation of how to live healthier lifestyles has developed well. For example, increasing numbers of pupils are taking the opportunity to discuss smoking cessation with the school nurse. They also take up the opportunities given to them to engage in physical activity. Sometimes, pupils do challenge staff and show poor behaviour. However, most of the time when this occurs, they get 'back on track' fairly quickly. Pupils recognise what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. The incidents of poor behaviour that have required fixed periods of exclusion are falling. The pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. The pupils receive a good preparation for life after school through work-related learning which begins in Year 7 and includes work experience and college placements in Key Stage 4. Since the school opened in 2005, the rate

of attendance has been poor. A contributor to this has been the poor attendance of a few pupils who, despite the school's best efforts, have not been prepared to engage in education. Some of these have now left the school. Strategies to provide part-time alternative provision for other disaffected pupils has helped improve the attendance rate considerably from what it was two years ago.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning varies but enough of it is good for it to be judged good overall. The characteristics of the good teaching observed were: lesson plans that include clear and measurable objectives for pupils to achieve during the lesson; teachers and teaching assistants working in harmony to provide support for those in need and; pupils being engaged by the work set for them. Less successful teaching, does not, for example, use the latter part of the lesson to check on pupils' learning and to reinforce their learning well enough. The weaker teaching does not sufficiently raise the aspirations of the pupils so that they are eager to learn. The assessment of pupils has improved and is enabling the school to more readily identify pupils who underachieve. These pupils receive one-to-one support for literacy and numeracy. The numbers of pupils supported in this way has increased recently as the school has devoted more resources to this work. Some of these pupils make good progress as a result of the interventions.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum has been strengthened by the recent inclusion of music on the timetable. Nevertheless, too little time is developed to subjects that can help improve the academic progress pupils make and to raise their standards. The school has used its available resources effectively to match the curriculum to pupils' needs. For example, a few disengaged pupils have been provided with part-time placements with alternative providers which has increased their involvement in education. The headteacher recognises there are other pupils with poor attendance who could benefit from additional packages of provision such as these. Those who have earned sufficient points choose their activities on the two afternoons they are available. The few pupils who do not achieve their points undertake community service in the school. The activities on offer, including a girls' club, meet the pupils' needs and are valued by them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff care for the pupils well. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and there is mutual respect. Pupils receive effective support for their individual needs through their behaviour and curriculum targets. Pupils are well aware of these targets. They are all helped to make a contribution to their annual reviews by either attending the review, making a written contribution or both. Marking of work has improved but the headteacher is focused on making further improvements so that it consistently tells pupils how they can improve further. The school meets safeguarding requirements. Each pupil has a personal risk assessment and senior leaders follow requirements in respect of vetting staff and recording their suitability for employment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior staff take soundings from pupils and parents to find out their views on how well the school is doing and, where appropriate, their views are acted upon. Recent improvements to the systems for tracking pupils' progress and quality assuring teaching and learning and other aspects of the school's work put the senior leaders in a better position to identify priorities for action. However, information from pupil assessments and monitoring does not inform the school improvement plan sufficiently fully. Curriculum co-ordinators are beginning to monitor the progress of pupils more systematically. Creditably, they have all recently audited their subjects and have action plans as a result. However, these lack sufficiently specific targets for improving the outcomes for pupils. Governors are committed and supportive and are good advocates for the school. They are well informed and ably led by the chair of governors who knows the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors fulfil their role well. Although progress was initially slow, the school has recently made inroads into the areas for development identified at its last inspection in 2006. However, attendance remains unsatisfactory. Its self-evaluation arrangements have improved and are now satisfactory and its capacity to improve further is sound.

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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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
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	3

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	4
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	3

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?	3
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	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Rose School, Lancashire, BB11 4PF

Many thanks for the welcome you gave me when I inspected your school recently. I was pleased to meet three of you and a past pupil for a discussion about the school.

I have judged that your school is providing you with a satisfactory education and that some of the work the school does is good. The progress you make at school is satisfactory. I found that your personal and social skills are good. Although a few pupils now and again do not behave well most of you are well behaved for most of the time. You were polite and respectful to me and to the staff. Your learning about healthy lifestyles is good. One of the reasons why you develop these good social skills is because staff look after you well and help you learn to behave well. The quality of teaching is generally good although this does range from lessons that are excellent to the occasional one that is unsatisfactory. The curriculum is also satisfactory and I know you enjoy the options afternoons and the residentials you get the chance to attend. However, the school could help you achieve more if more time was given to lessons. Attendance is not good enough overall although I do realise that most of you attend quite well and a few of you attend all of the time. However, there are some pupils whose attendance is very poor and they are not benefiting from their education as a consequence. The senior staff are doing a sound job and some aspects of their work are good. There have been some recent improvements to the way they check how well you are doing and how the school is doing overall. This information is not always used well enough in making plans to further improve the school. The governing body are doing a good job.

To help the school improve I have asked Ms Jennings and the governors to:

- improve rates of attendance
- increase the time allocated for lessons during the school day
- use the information from its checks on how well you and the teachers are doing to help plan for the future
- make even more of the teaching and learning good and outstanding.

Please help all you can, particularly by attending the school every day, so that you learn as much as possible and can leave the school with as many qualifications as possible.

Yours faithfully

Eric Craven

Her Majesty's Inspector