

Royton Hall Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	135341
Local Authority	Oldham
Inspection number	329085
Inspection dates	17–18 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Jim Crouch

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	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	348
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	Mr Roy Butterworth
Headteacher	Mrs Jane Wilson
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	High Barn Street Royton Oldham Lancashire OL2 6RW
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average sized school serves the community of Royton. It was established in January 2008 as the result of the merger of an infant school and a junior school. The headteacher has been in post since January 2008. The school currently operates on two sites, but will be moving to a new single site in September 2009. Most pupils are White British, but there is an increasing number of pupils of mixed race and minority ethnic heritage. A small number of pupils are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. There are more boys in the school than girls. The number of pupils eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is average, as is the number with a statement of special educational need. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of a single unit, which provides for Nursery and Reception age children. The school holds the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards.

There is an out-of-school care provision on-site which is run by a private provider and did not form part of this inspection.

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 with good features. These include pupils' personal development, the way that the school promotes their care and well-being and the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average and overall achievement is satisfactory. In 2008 the progress of pupils completing the Key Stage 2 tests was inadequate. A detailed analysis of the performance of these pupils and those currently in the school, enabled the senior leadership team to identify areas of underperformance and initiate changes, particularly in the teaching of mathematics and the support for individual learners. As a result, all groups of learners are now making at least satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1 and 2.

Pupils enjoy school and attend well. They talk enthusiastically about how the new 'Creative Learning Journey' curriculum has made lessons more enjoyable, particularly when the learning is based around a visit such as the recent Year 5 and 6 day at Formby. Pupils feel safe and know how to develop healthy lifestyles. They use the healthy tuckshop at break and join in enthusiastically in the improving range of sporting activities provided by the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good with, for example, school assemblies providing good opportunities for pupils to reflect on how they can contribute to improving the lives of others. They contribute well to the life of the school and the local community and have some links further afield through the School Linking Project.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. In the best lessons teachers and teaching assistants work well together so that all pupils are challenged and take an active part in the lesson. However, in some lessons activities do not provide sufficient challenge for all groups of learners. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to monitor their own progress and marking is not used consistently to inform them of how to improve. As a result, progress in these lessons is not as good as it might be. The good curriculum achieves a balance between developing basic skills and increasing pupils' awareness of the world in which they live. It promotes their personal development well. It is enriched through a good range of extra-curricular activities and many school visits. Care, guidance and support are good. The school works well with a wide range of partner organisations to promote pupils' well-being. Parents say that staff are approachable and supportive and that the school keeps them well informed of the progress their children are making.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In the short time it has been open the headteacher and governors have established a shared vision for the school. Good self-evaluation has identified key priorities for improvement and effective management by senior leaders has enabled staff to work together to improve the provision and address areas of underperformance. However, this has yet to fully impact on pupils' progress and middle managers are not yet involved enough in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. Performance management is used well to develop staff confidence and competence. The recent improvements in tracking the progress of individuals and groups of learners and in teaching and learning have led to pupils making better progress. The school has demonstrated good capacity to improve further. As a result, value for money is sound and improving.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's skills on entry to the Nursery range from typical for their age to being less well developed, particularly in language and communication skills. Children settle quickly into school life because of good induction arrangements and the good level of care and support. Parents say they are delighted with the welcome their children receive. Staff provide a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities which engage children and help them to become confident learners. As a result, they make good progress and most are working securely at the nationally expected levels by the end of Reception Year. The indoor learning environment is spacious, bright and welcoming and staff make the most of a building that does not lend itself well to children moving freely between activities. The outdoor provision is not as good, an issue that will be addressed with the move to the new premises. Teaching is good. There is a good balance between activities led by adults and others chosen by children. It is enhanced by the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) which, for example, enables children to watch the way in which a caterpillar develops into a butterfly. As a result, children develop a love of learning. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those in the early stages of learning English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are identified early and good support is quickly put into place. The staff are well led by the recently appointed coordinator who has, for example, increased the contribution made by teaching assistants to both teaching and assessing children's progress.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 and 2 so that all groups of learners make good progress.
- Make better use of marking and pupil self-assessment so that pupils are more aware of how to improve.
- Ensure that middle leaders and managers are able to contribute fully to monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.

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

Pupils start Year 1 with skills and abilities that are matched to those expected for their age. In 2008, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was close to the national average although girls and some pupils with additional learning needs did not perform as well as expected. Improvements in teaching and learning and the good use of intervention strategies mean that all pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now making at least satisfactory progress. Standards in reading are above average by the end of Year 2. In 2008, fewer than expected Year 6 pupils attained the higher level (Level 5) in mathematics and science. Improvements in teaching, particularly in mathematics, and good support for individuals have led to a rise in standards in both subjects. As a result, pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2 and standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and make at least satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils show confidence and good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good. Incidents of racism and bullying are rare and pupils say that the school takes appropriate actions to address such occurrences. Pupils know how to stay safe and develop healthy lifestyles. They know how to eat healthily and thoroughly enjoy extra-curricular sporting activities and 'Freddie Fit' sessions in school. This commitment to health and fitness is reflected in the school's achievement of the Healthy Schools and Activemark awards. Pupils have good opportunities to contribute to school life through membership of the school council and the recently created Eco-committee. They act as classroom monitors and buddies. They make a contribution to the local community through links with the elderly and are actively involved in supporting a wide range of charities. Pupils are making satisfactory progress towards their future economic well-being by developing inter-personal and problem-solving skills and through taking part in enterprise activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

An increasing number of lessons are good or better, but this has not yet led to all groups of pupils making consistently good progress. Teachers are confident and have good working relationships with pupils. They make good use of praise and rewards. As a result, pupils are keen to contribute to lessons because they know their ideas will be valued. For example, in a science lesson on soluble substances a pupil was praised for suggesting that how well salt would dissolve in water, would depend upon the temperature of the water. In the better lessons teachers use a good range of strategies to engage and motivate all groups of pupils. In the weaker lessons learning is less well managed. There is sometimes a lack of pace and some activities, while enjoyable, are not always well matched to learning outcomes. Opportunities to challenge all groups of learners are sometimes missed and, as a result, progress is not as good as it might be. Teaching assistants usually provide effective support in class and are skilled in working with individuals to raise levels of literacy and numeracy. However, sometimes, particularly during teacher-led activities, they do not contribute as well as they might.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced, meets statutory requirements and promotes pupils' personal development well. The recent introduction of a theme-based approach to teaching some parts of the curriculum is making learning more enjoyable and meaningful and helping pupils make greater sense of what they are learning. It has already provided some good opportunities for pupils to practise and improve literacy and numeracy skills and allowed them to contribute more to deciding their next steps in learning, through the use of the 'learning wheel'. However, because of its relatively recent introduction the scheme has not yet had a strong impact on standards and achievement. Pupils have good opportunities to develop and apply ICT skills to extend learning and enhance the presentation of their work. The good personal development programme helps pupils to develop mature attitudes to, for example, healthy lifestyles, and the introduction of philosophy for children has promoted the development of thinking skills. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits which broaden pupils' learning through first-hand experiences and by visitors to school who offer particular expertise.

In addition, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are being introduced to the study of French. The increasing number of study clubs and sporting activities at lunchtime and after school add to pupils' enjoyment of school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care and pastoral support for pupils is woven into all aspects of school life. Pupils know who to turn to if they have problems and most parents are happy with the support their children receive. Barriers to learning are quickly identified. The enthusiastic inclusion coordinator and support team ensure that the needs of vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well met. There is good liaison with outside agencies and effective links with partner high schools aid the smooth transition to the next phase of education. Child protection and safeguarding procedures are in place and meet current government requirements. Academic guidance is satisfactory. Pupils and their parents are well informed of their progress towards their learning targets. However, teachers do not consistently identify next steps in learning through the marking of work or provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of fellow students.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher and senior leaders have successfully brought together staff from two different schools. Despite the difficulties presented by opening a new school on a split site, the senior leadership team have developed a shared vision for the school and created a positive environment in which staff are cooperating well to improve the continuity of provision. Self-evaluation is used well to establish the strengths of the school and its areas for improvement, through actions such as regular lesson observation and work scrutiny. A well managed programme of staff development and actions to ensure the sharing of good practice, such as regular subject coordinator meetings, mean that staff are growing in confidence and increasing their ability to take on responsibilities. Middle leaders manage their own areas effectively but are still developing their role in terms of evaluating and monitoring the work of the school and contributing to whole-school improvement. This is an inclusive school. Its good commitment to equality is evident in its vision statement and the good support for all groups of learners. Its contribution to community cohesion is satisfactory. There are good links with its local community and with partner organisations and it is beginning to reach out to other communities and cultures. However, it is in the early stages of evaluating the impact of its work in this area. Governance is good. Governors know the school well and work closely with school leaders to improve provision. They contribute well to monitoring and evaluation and have demonstrated the capacity to challenge the work of the school.

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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	NA
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?	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	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	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	3

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	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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**

Inspection of Royton Hall Primary School, Oldham, OL2 6RW

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so polite and friendly. The inspectors enjoyed talking to you and hearing all of the things you like about your school.

We found that your school gives you a satisfactory education. We were particularly impressed by your good attendance and your keenness to do well in lessons. You show good awareness of the needs of others through your charity work and the way in which you support each other in school. The staff have worked hard to help you enjoy your education by developing a good curriculum with lots of extra activities and visits. We know how much you enjoy the new 'Creative Learning Journey' curriculum. We found that your school looks after you well and that you make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. You make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and 2 because teaching overall is satisfactory.

There are three important things we think could be better. I have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 and 2 and to make better use of marking and self-assessment in lessons so that you are more aware of how to improve your work and make better progress. I have also asked the school to make sure that subject leaders and other coordinators contribute more to checking that the school is working as well as possible.

Of course, you also have an important part to play in helping your school to carry on improving. You can do this by continuing to be as positive about learning as you are now and keep trying to improve all aspects of your work.

I know that you are looking forward excitedly to moving into your new school buildings and wish you well for the future.