

The Roebuck School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119237
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	331280
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Lynne Read

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)	362
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 Craig Proudfoot
Headteacher	Miss Jackie Burns
Date of previous school inspection	21 May 2008
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Inkerman Street Ashton Preston Lancashire PR2 2BN
Telephone number	01772 729337
Fax number	01772 769640

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	24–25 June 2009
Inspection number	331280

© Crown copyright 2009

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger than average school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage. The proportion of pupils who take up free school meals is broadly average, although it is known that some families do not claim their entitlement. There is an average proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities compared with most schools but a higher than average proportion receive additional funding for special educational needs. Most pupils are of White British heritage with around 13% having Caribbean, African or Asian heritage. Just less than 5% of pupils are learning English as an additional language. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are set into ability groups for mathematics and those in Year 6 are also set for English. The school provides for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes.

The school has three sites with the Nursery, sports hall and field at some distance from the main building. Extended provision includes a breakfast club and after-school care run by a private provider, and inspected separately by Ofsted.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

The Roebuck is a satisfactory and improving school and provides sound value for money. Pupils' personal development and the Early Years Foundation Stage are good. Parents have positive views of the school. Their comments include, 'My children are well cared for' and 'the school has improved greatly over the last 12 months'. Good links with other schools and agencies provide many benefits. For example, the local sports partnership provides varied opportunities to develop skills and talents.

Achievement at the school is now satisfactory, but standards are below average and still need to rise. Many improvements have taken place recently in teaching and management. These include better checking of pupils' progress and more challenging goals for learning. Pupils are making good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and at least satisfactory progress across the rest of the school. Current records show progress is often good in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6 but slower in Years 3 and 4. Some good improvements have been made in writing, especially for the boys. Progress in mathematics and science is hindered to some extent because pupils' skills in problem solving, investigating and experimenting are not sufficiently developed.

Personal development, including behaviour, is good and pupils enjoy their lessons. They make a good contribution to the school community; for example, elected councillors ensure that pupils' views are known. They learn about life outside school by taking part in enterprise activities and links with industry. Such experiences, together with good attitudes, prepare them satisfactorily for life in the wider world.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, and some is good. However, the school recognises that the proportion of good teaching is not high enough to reach its own challenging targets. Interesting and practical tasks ensure pupils are well motivated and enjoy their learning. In most lessons, teachers provide a good level of challenge but this is not consistent, especially in Years 3 and 4. The curriculum is satisfactory and well enriched through an interesting range of out-of-school clubs, visits and visitors. A strong emphasis on personal, social and health education enables pupils to make informed choices about their lifestyles and they learn how to stay safe and healthy.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong, effective leadership and communicates her vision clearly. The roles of senior and subject managers have developed well so they have an accurate view of the school's strengths and a clear agenda for raising achievement further. Having seen initial successes, for example in achievement, behaviour and attendance, managers and staff are eager to move on. There is satisfactory capacity for the school to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's development on entry to the Nursery is below that which is typical for their age and a significant proportion have difficulty with personal and language skills. Progress is good and, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, attainment is broadly average. Personal and social development is a strength and children's good behaviour was very evident during the

inspection. Children enjoy their learning. Those in the Reception class talk eagerly about their stick insects and the Nursery children were very enthusiastic about their 'bug hunt'.

Children's progress is assessed constantly and tasks are planned effectively to build on developing knowledge and skills. There is a good balance between learning in short, focused sessions with an adult and times when children choose their own activities. Welfare arrangements are satisfactory. Good induction into the Nursery and again into Key Stage 1, not only helps children to settle in, but also ensures good continuity of learning. Risk assessments are carried out diligently and the school is currently responding to some issues identified. Learning areas are bright and stimulating, especially in the Nursery. Parents are valued as partners in the learning process and are well informed about progress through their children's 'learning journey' files.

Staff are well led by the coordinator and work effectively as a team. The Nursery benefits from an exciting outdoor classroom. The Reception classes have access to a very limited outdoor space and include sessions on the field and playground to ensure that children have full entitlement to all areas of learning. Staff are exploring ways of integrating this work more closely into the theme of the week.

What the school should do to improve further

- Place more emphasis on problem solving, investigating and experimenting to improve achievement in mathematics and science.
- Ensure that all groups of pupils are consistently and fully challenged in Years 3 and 4 in order improve progress across Key Stage 2.
- Improve the proportion of good teaching and ensure it is consistently challenging across 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

Staff and pupils have worked hard to overcome past underachievement. Some improvements in progress and attainment are emerging. The full impact on national test results has yet to be seen and standards are below average by Year 6. Senior managers and governors are fully committed to raising standards further. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 1 and standards are now broadly average by Year 2. An increased emphasis on learning sounds and letters is leading to good progress for many in reading and writing.

Detailed and convincing tracking records show that progress is now satisfactory in Key Stage 2 but there are variations between subjects and age groups. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and are catching up for shortfalls in their previous learning and are now making better progress than they did in the past. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' progress is satisfactory but does not always reach the expectations set by the school itself. Across school, progress in reading is often good and it has improved in writing. Progress in mathematics and science is satisfactory but slower. Knowledge and understanding in these subjects are sound but pupils' experimental, investigative and problem solving skills are less well developed. Boys and girls make equal progress from their starting points. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are

learning English as an additional language are well supported; they learn well and make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being, including pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, are good. They are effectively encouraged through a good programme for personal and social education. Across the school, pupils enjoy learning and are very confident in their own abilities. They say that relatively rare incidents of bullying are dealt with swiftly and they feel safe. Pupils value the many rewards on offer for good conduct, attendance, effort or thoughtful actions. As a result, behaviour is good for the majority and pupils are very considerate of each other. Most pupils have satisfactory attendance and the school does everything it can, with the help of outside agencies, to discourage unnecessary absences.

Pupils have a good understanding of healthy living and staying safe. They are well informed about potential dangers and know how to use the internet safely. They take part in a good range of sports clubs and competitions and understand about healthy diets. Pupils play an important part in decision making through their elected school council. They engage eagerly in fundraising projects and take responsibility for jobs around school. These factors, together with the improved achievement, prepare pupils soundly for their future education and citizenship.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and often good in Key Stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6. Pupils take an active part in their learning, either through discussion, role-play activities or using resources in interesting and exciting ways. In lessons, relationships are very positive and pupils receive good encouragement and support. Teaching assistants are deployed effectively so pupils who have learning or emotional difficulties have the support they need.

Many worthwhile improvements have been made in teaching to improve the proportion of good practice. However, they are not all consistently embedded. Teachers now have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve. There is a good pace to lessons and tasks usually match the needs of different ability groups. However, in some lessons, especially in Years 3 and 4, the work set for pupils does not always stretch them fully. Staff are including more practical work in lessons but there is insufficient problem solving and investigative work in mathematics and experimental work in science. In some classes, marking and advice is highly effective in showing pupils how to improve their work, but in other classes it is less effective. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to be independent learners by evaluating their own progress but this is not yet the case in all classes.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some good enrichment for learning. Teachers have made a start in linking subjects together so that pupils have more frequent opportunities to consolidate their reading, writing and computer skills. This is especially successful in Key Stage 1. Special teaching programmes boost progress, especially for pupils who are not meeting expectations

and those who need extra help with their learning. Similar provision for the gifted and able pupils is at an early stage of development.

The good range of school clubs offers a wide choice of activity, including sport, and most pupils find something to interest them. Regular visits out of school are well chosen to broaden children's horizons and fire their interests. Themed events such as the music, arts and drama or multi-cultural weeks add to pupils' enjoyment and extend their knowledge and understanding of other places and cultures.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils receive good pastoral support and safeguarding meets requirements. A good programme of personal and social education effectively supports pupils' personal development. Good links with health and other professionals support pupils and their families. The school goes to good lengths to secure special resources and support for pupils with learning, social or emotional difficulties. As a result of these measures, behaviour is now good, and attendance and progress have improved. Risk assessments are completed appropriately and staff and governors pay regard to safety issues. They are aware of the need to improve some health and safety aspects of the school site and have appropriate plans in place to do so.

Pupils receive satisfactory guidance to help them improve their work. New systems of marking and assessing work are providing pupils with more accurate information about their progress and giving suitable guidance for improvement, in the form of targets. These changes are reaping success in Key Stage 1. Some Key Stage 2 pupils refer to their targets during lessons so their efforts are focused. In some cases, however, pupils are unsure of their targets and are less clear about how to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides strong, determined leadership and is driving the school forwards successfully. She is well regarded by parents, staff and governors. This is an inclusive school. Different groups of pupils, for example, those with additional needs, are supported effectively and have full and equal access to all that the school offers.

Measures taken to eliminate underachievement from the past are proving to be effective and very good use is being made of the support offered by the local authority. New systems for assessing, monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school have been introduced. Pupils' progress is now checked termly so that swift action can be taken where expectations are not being met. However, in the short timescale, the improved achievement has not yet made an impact on the school's national test results.

Community cohesion is satisfactory. Pupils participate in local competitions and church events and their global awareness is developing well. For example, they recently achieved the Fair Trade Pledge and their fundraising helps to support an orphanage in Uganda. Governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. Governors bring a good level of experience and expertise to leadership and management and some are actively involved in school life. They

are keen to recruit more parent governors and are completing a planned programme of training to enhance their role further.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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?	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?	3
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	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	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?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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	3
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	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**

Dear Pupils

Inspection of The Roebuck School, Lancashire. PR2 2BN

Thank you very much for your warm welcome and for helping my colleagues and me when we came to inspect your school. I would like to tell you what we found out.

Roebuck Primary provides you with a satisfactory education and has some good features. Your behaviour is good; you get on well together and take good care of each other. Your school council is making a difference and many of you said that lunchtimes have improved since the introduction of the 'Healthy Heroes' menu and different seating arrangements. You enjoy your learning and try hard. We enjoyed chatting with some of you and learning about the things you do. You were very friendly and gave us lots of help. You say that you especially enjoy the different activities provided out of lesson time.

Please thank your parents for sending us lots of replies to the questionnaire. They are happy with the school and especially pleased with the changes made recently and the care that your headteacher and staff take to make sure you are happy.

Those of you in the Nursery and Reception classes are making good progress. Well done! In Key Stage 1 you work hard and have made some good improvements in your writing. I enjoyed reading some of your imaginative stories about Burglar Bill's adventures. In Key Stage 2 your progress is improving but those of you in Years 5 and 6 are learning faster than those in Years 3 and 4. Your knowledge and understanding of mathematics and science are developing nicely but skills in problem solving or experimenting are not as strong. Therefore, I have asked your school to make sure that the work in Years 3 and 4 is really stretching your brains. I have also asked your teachers to make sure you have more opportunities for problem solving in mathematics and investigation in science. I'm sure you will enjoy the extra challenges.

Thank you once again for the interesting conversations we had throughout the two days and for letting us know your views so clearly. Please accept my best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mrs Lynne Read

Lead inspector