

Robertswood School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110360
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	337477
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Joy Considine

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	454
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Bevan
Headteacher	Olwyn Davison-Oakley
Date of previous school inspection	30 June 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons, observing 11 teachers and held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, school leaders and governors. Although they did not meet with parents, they evaluated 87 questionnaires from parents and carers. Inspectors looked at school improvement plans, minutes from governors meetings, pupils' progress data and other documentation relevant to the inspection.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how successful the school has been in closing the gap between the performance of boys and girls across the school
- how successfully leaders and managers have been in raising achievement in mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6
- how successfully the school has identified appropriate actions to raise attainment and achievement for all pupils
- how well children in the Early Years Foundation Stage perform in each area of learning.

Information about the school

The school is much larger than most primary schools. Most pupils are of White British heritage with few who speak English as an additional language. There is a smaller proportion than average who are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is much lower than average. Their particular needs are mainly moderate learning difficulties and speech, language and communication difficulties. There is provision for Early Years Foundation Stage in the Nursery and Reception classes. The school has received awards for Healthy Schools and the School Travel Plan Gold Award. There is an acting headteacher in place until the new substantive headteacher joins the school in the autumn term.

There is a breakfast club and an after-school club that is not managed by the governing body and is subject to a separate inspection.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education for pupils. The acting headteacher has quickly identified gaps in provision and has worked with staff and governors to produce a focused action plan for development. There has been some staff turnover which has had a negative impact on progress but despite this, pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is broadly satisfactory and it is good in English. The gaps in performance between some groups of pupils and subjects are closing because of the new tracking systems which ensure pupil progress is carefully monitored. The quality of teaching is variable across the school and is satisfactory overall. New assessment systems are helping teachers to plan lessons that are better matched to the needs of pupils. However, this is not yet consistent across the school. Most pupils now have targets for literacy and numeracy but some of these are too general to be helpful in informing pupils about how well they are doing and what their next steps are. The curriculum has some strengths, particularly in subjects such as art and design, and music, and meets requirements. Teachers plan learning to ensure pupils develop their skills and knowledge in individual subjects. However, at this stage, there is no formal overview of the curriculum to enable senior managers to effectively monitor pupils' learning.

Provision for pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have an excellent understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles. They thoroughly enjoy the wide range of physical activities available to them and they have a good appreciation of what they need to eat to stay healthy. The school has reviewed policies and procedures for safeguarding and, at the time of the inspection, these met all statutory requirements. The acting headteacher has worked closely with staff and governors to raise expectations of what the school can achieve. School leaders have evaluated the quality of provision and have put into place actions to raise attainment and achievement. Until recently, subject leaders played little part in monitoring, self-evaluation and development planning. This has meant that their roles in improving pupils' progress in their subjects were limited. School leaders have now established staff responsibilities and accountabilities so that they have a clear role in school to raise standards. This is closely linked to performance management targets for all staff. The school's satisfactory capacity to improve is evident in the challenging targets for improvement that have been set. Actions are in place to raise the quality of teaching so that it becomes consistently good or better. This, together with the clear commitment of staff to ensure that pupils receive the best possible education, confirms the school's capacity to improve further.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching to close the remaining gaps in performance that the school has identified by:
 - embedding the use of assessment across the school to plan lessons
 - refining the targets set for pupils so that they are focused more closely on what individual pupils need to do to achieve the next level in their work.
- Improve curriculum planning by:
 - developing a whole-school curriculum overview showing what is to be taught in each year group
- Develop the roles of all leaders so that they can play a more active role in monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvements in their areas of work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils are happy and they enjoy school. They say they feel safe in school and that there is always an adult who can help out when problems arise. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school was good, and pupils are polite, friendly and helpful. They have a strong sense of right and wrong and are developing a good understanding of cultures other than their own. They have a good awareness of the need to help others in the community and do so by taking part in local events and national charities. Pupils' satisfactory development of their literacy, numeracy and information technology (ICT) skills, together with the good development of their personal skills, prepares them soundly for the next phase of their education. Despite efforts made by the school to encourage good attendance, it is only satisfactory. This is because there are a number of families who take holidays during term time.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall. There are examples of good progress such as in one lesson, pupils had to work out the costs of owning a pet over a period of time. This meant they had to consider fixed costs of items such as a bed as well as running costs such as food and vet bills. This was challenging for pupils as they had to consider the problem from several angles and they made good progress in developing their numeracy and problem solving skills. Work in pupils' books, however, shows that the rate of progress is inconsistent. For example, in some classes, pupils completed simple photocopied worksheets and this restricted their opportunities to record their work independently and slowed the progress they were able to make. Additionally, in some subjects such as mathematics, pupils do not have enough opportunities to solve problems and to apply their skills to other aspects of the curriculum and this also slows the progress they make. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because they now have work that is better matched to their needs.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and balanced and supported by enrichment activities such as 'themed' weeks when pupils are able to explore a particular topic in depth. For example, at the time of the inspection, pupils were doing 'Sports Week', during which they were able to try out a variety of different sporting activities. These were linked to healthy lifestyles so pupils were further developing their knowledge of the need to stay fit and active. Most teachers capitalise on opportunities to relate their lessons to current issues, for example the World Cup, so that pupils are able to learn about other countries such as Ghana. However, the school is in the process of establishing a curriculum map that will outline more clearly what is being taught in each subject and so provide senior leaders with a better overview of the curriculum.

Inspectors observed some good teaching in the school but there is still too much variation in the quality of teaching and this slows the progress that pupils make. The school put new systems into place to track pupils' progress at Easter and school leaders are now sharing this information with staff. This enables teachers to identify those pupils who do not make enough progress and to put into place strategies to meet their needs. In several pupils' books, teachers' marking is constructive and shows pupils how to improve their work but this is inconsistent across the school. The school provides good care and support for pupils. Because tracking systems are now in place, the school has been able to identify those pupils who are at risk of underperforming. They have

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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provided support such as one-to-one tuition in mathematics to help to improve attainment in this subject. The school works closely with external agencies to support those pupils who are vulnerable and who need additional support.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Although there has been some instability in staffing, outcomes for pupils are satisfactory in most respects and are good in some. This is because the school now has an accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and has appropriate plans in place to rectify remaining weaknesses. The acting headteacher, together with her deputy, has a clear vision for improvements. These have been shared well with staff and governors and this has led them to be more ambitious and strive for excellence. The leadership team monitor teachers' work and provide appropriate professional development to help them to improve their skills. Governors have better information about the school's performance so that they are able to provide more challenge and support to leadership. They have ensured that procedures for safeguarding pupils are in place and as a result, pupils feel safe in school. Relationships with parents are satisfactory and improving. The school has introduced a regular newsletter informing parents of activities happening in school and staff are available in the playground at the beginning and the end of the school day. Although the school promotes equality of opportunity, senior staff recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that all pupils make better progress. The school promotes community cohesion adequately. Staff have carried out an audit of provision and are putting into place plans to further develop this work. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children enter the Nursery with skills broadly as expected for their age. They make good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage because staff use assessment well to provide activities that are matched to children's needs. Children make good progress in literacy skills, particularly in linking sounds and letters. There is a good balance of activities that are led by the teacher and those that children are able to select for themselves. Children get on well together and are able to share and take turns. They have a good awareness of the needs of others and are able to play and work well together. The Early Years Foundation Stage benefits from an outdoor area which is extensive so that staff can plan a wide range of stimulating and imaginative activities. However, the indoor area is rather small and gives the appearance of being cluttered. This can sometimes reduce children's opportunities to select activities for themselves

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

The majority of parents and carers are happy with the school and believes it provides their children with a secure and stable environment in which they can learn and flourish. However, a small minority feel that the school does not deal effectively with poor behaviour. This was explored during the inspection but inspectors found that school procedures for dealing with incidents were secure and that behaviour was good. A few parents also expressed concern about the progress that their children were making. School leaders are aware of this and have taken action to make sure that all pupils make better progress.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robertswood Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 87 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 454 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	52	60	34	39	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	46	46	53	1	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	20	23	50	57	13	15	2	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	30	51	59	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	26	30	51	53	5	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	25	29	49	56	10	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	43	49	43	49	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	25	29	42	48	6	7	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	32	41	47	11	13	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	22	41	47	17	20	3	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	21	50	57	9	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	15	17	50	57	13	15	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	40	41	47	8	9	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



5 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Robertswood Primary School, Chalfont St Peter SL9 0EW

Thank you for making all of us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you all and hearing what you had to say about your school and all the activities that you can do.

We found your school to be satisfactory overall. Your teachers care for you and they provide a safe and secure environment in which you can learn and develop. You make satisfactory progress overall and so there are some things we have asked your school to do so that you learn more in your lessons. We have asked them to:

- make sure that you all know what you need to do to achieve the next level in your work
- make sure that senior leaders have a clearer picture of what you are being taught in each subject
- improve the way school leaders and managers check on what happens in lessons so that they can make the school even better.

I am sure you will do everything that you can to help your teachers to make Robertswood Primary School a really good school in the future. I wish you every success.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine

Lead inspector

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