

Road Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	121854
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	340028
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2010
Reporting inspector	Christopher Parker

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	162
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glenn Nightingale
Headteacher	Alison Bailes
Date of previous school inspection	13 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Fifteen lessons, taught by seven teachers, were observed. Meetings were held with pupils, the headteacher, subject leaders and the Chair of Governors. The inspectors looked at records of the pupils' progress, lesson plans, some of the school's policies and a sample of the pupils' work. Questionnaire responses from staff, pupils and 54 parents and carers were analysed.

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

- the impact of school improvement planning, subject leadership, the curriculum and teaching on pupils' learning, progress and attainment in writing
- how well barriers to learning have been overcome as a result of the support and guidance given to pupils facing particular challenges
- the steps taken to improve outdoor learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Information about the school

The school is slightly smaller than the average primary. The proportions of those known to be eligible for free school meals, those from minority ethnic groups, and those who speak English as an additional language are all much lower than average. The number of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, but there are a higher proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs than is usually found.

The school has a number of accreditations including the Healthy School Award and the Northamptonshire Active Young Citizens Award.

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?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school. Pupils are very motivated because they find the school's curriculum interesting and many activities memorable. The headteacher and staff have developed an outstanding curriculum. The pupils talk with great enthusiasm about the events and activities that have grabbed their imagination. Parents also commented on the success of the curriculum, one writing the 'toy museum was a particular hit!' The enthusiasm of the staff and pupils permeates all aspects of learning. Older pupils know and discuss the levels they are working at, their targets and what they need to do to improve. Pupils contribute confidently to discussions because the ethos is so positive and supporting.

These elements of the school's work, together with good teaching, and excellent care, guidance and support, are resulting in quickly rising attainment which is now above average. The pupils' progress is also accelerating. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are making good progress.

As a result of excellent safeguarding arrangements, parents and pupils are unanimous in their view that the school keeps them as safe as possible. Behaviour is excellent. The pupils are polite and very well mannered. The school's partnership with parents is extremely productive. Parents refer to 'great communication', and are provided with an excellent range of information. Events such as the recent literacy evening, where Year 6 reading ambassadors gave a presentation on the importance of reading, have been very effective in promoting a partnership in learning.

Since the last inspection the school has made considerable improvements. Expectations are high throughout the school. Marking is very effective in helping the pupils to improve their work, and subject leaders play a full role in the leadership of the school, robustly monitoring and evaluating the pupils' performance in each subject.

Central to the improvement of the school is the headteacher's excellent leadership and management of teaching and learning. The governing body and the staff are ambitious and keen to improve the school further. Together they carry out detailed and accurate self-evaluation which is supported by a comprehensive range of evidence. Although leaders and managers know the strengths and areas for improvement, the resulting development plan is not focused sharply enough on the most pressing priorities. Similarly, there is a lack of clarity about the desired impact on pupils' learning and progress, and the precise criteria against which success can be measured. Nevertheless, given the improvements since the last inspection, especially in the quality of teaching, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure the school development plan sets out clearly and in detail:
 - exactly what improvements are needed
 - the expected impact on pupils' learning and progress
 - the criteria against which success can be measured.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The pupils are achieving well. They enjoy lessons very much and reflect maturely on how the 'new' curriculum motivates them and provides interesting opportunities for learning new knowledge and skills. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils make good progress. They listen carefully to their teachers, and learn and practise new skills enthusiastically. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 were highly engaged in interesting activities around a Brazil theme that, for example, encouraged them to talk about and share words that described animals of the rainforest. The teacher's constant questioning and prompting enhanced their learning.

In Years 3 to 6, many of the lessons seen during the inspection used a visit to London Zoo as a stimulus for both writing and solving mathematical problems. Scrutiny of the work completed by pupils this year shows that in Year 6 they complete a very good range of activities that clearly enthuse them and, as a result, make particularly strong progress. The school's comprehensive analysis of progress and the results of recent tests at the end of Year 6 confirm that attainment has improved considerably this year. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported by teaching assistants, who provide excellent care and patient guidance. This allows individual pupils to make good progress as they get older, and to attain at levels which are getting closer to their peers.

The pupils make a good contribution to their own and the local communities. The oldest pupils work as reading ambassadors, illustrating well how they support and influence younger pupils. Rates of attendance are high, and pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. There is an extremely positive ethos within the school, with high expectations for very good behaviour and for consideration of others. When asked about bullying, one pupil replied, 'it's not anything that happens in this school'.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Improvements in marking since the last inspection are central to the good progress that pupils are making, particularly in writing. Teachers give clear guidance to pupils about what they need to learn next, in the form of targets and in comments on their work. One pupil said that the teachers 'will always go over things to help you to understand'. The teachers also make good links between subjects, and use visits and visitors to create interesting tasks. This was the case when Year 6 pupils were talking about and planning to write a poem about the rainforest, following their visit to London Zoo.

The thematic curriculum, developed by the school, is extremely popular with the pupils. They respond very positively to the 'wow factor' activities that the teachers plan, which absorb and maintain the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The inflating of a hot air balloon on the playground, a visit to the north Norfolk, and a very special 'royal' visitor to Years 1 and 2 are just a few events that pupils speak animatedly about, clearly motivating them and underpinning faster progress and higher attainment.

Extra-curricular learning opportunities are comprehensive, and their impact is very well illustrated by the high-quality musical performances the pupils were practising prior to a concert for parents.

Thorough recording, incisive analysis of pupils' progress, and detailed plans for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities all contribute to the improving attainment by the end of Year 6. The very effective care and guidance is particularly evident in the support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The circumstances of each pupil are very well known to the headteacher, and to the teachers and the teaching assistants supporting them. This allows them to work with

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parents, carers and agencies to very good effect to remove barriers to learning, particularly for those who face multiple challenges.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides excellent leadership of teaching and learning, and a clear vision for the school that pupils and staff share. Expectations are high, and the teachers are very receptive to initiatives, such as the thematic approach to delivering the curriculum, that have improved learning and accelerated progress. There has been evident impact from the wide range of strategies devised to accelerate progress, but formal development planning is not as fine-tuned as other aspects of leadership. The plan is very clear about the broad areas for improvement, but does not have a sharp enough focus to move the school onto the highest level.

The monitoring of the quality of teaching is very well focused on helping the individual teachers to improve their practice. As a result, teaching has improved and continues to improve. The headteacher and subject leaders check the quality of the pupils' work and the teachers' lesson plans, and carry out a detailed analysis of performance on the subjects that they lead. The headteacher and literacy leader have examined the progress made by boys in reading and writing, and taken steps to ensure that all pupils are interested and motivated to learn. These steps have resulted in improved progress, and illustrate very well the school's excellent approach to equality of opportunity. This is also evident in the way the special needs coordinator carefully analyses the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Members of the governing body are very involved in the life of the school visiting lessons and evaluating its performance. The governing body is focussing on further improving its own performance so that it can play its part in continuing the school's pursuit of excellence, for example by developing an approach to discussing with pupils their perceptions of the school.

There are excellent arrangements in place to make sure that the pupils are as safe possible. Day-to-day arrangements are realistic and proportionate. Risk assessments for the many visits the pupils undertake are comprehensive. There is a good-quality action plan to develop community cohesion which has resulted in a growing range of national and global contacts to broaden the pupils' outlook.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children are taught well so that they make good progress and are well prepared for Key Stage 1 by the end of the Reception Year. The children enjoy the activities, both the ones that are led by adults and those that they choose themselves. The adults make effective use of the indoor and outdoor facilities and resources. The extended covered area has enhanced the range of activities planned and made available to the children.

Most children display considerable confidence when talking to adults and learning new skills. The adults encourage the children to become increasingly independent. Children tick off on their 'jobs list' the activities they have completed. The adults are very involved in making all activities purposeful, and guide learning successfully. Occasionally the children are left slightly too long without adult intervention and opportunities extend learning further are missed. Careful deployment allows the adults to continually monitor and assess each child's progress. During the inspection the children took part in the Brazil theme day along with the pupils in Years 1 and 2. They attended a samba workshop, where they participated fully, gained new vocabulary and developed their sense of rhythm. Some wrote postcards, with a few children spelling some simple words correctly.

The Early Years Foundation Stage leader works closely with parents and carers, and encourages their involvement, particularly in language development activities. She monitors the progress made by the children in all areas of learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and keeps the headteacher and governors abreast of the children's overall needs and their development.

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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

Most parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are very happy with school and its work. Many made very positive additional comments when they returned it, saying that they were 'delighted' and 'very pleased' with the school. A number of parents and carers said that their children had made particularly good progress. Several parents and carers of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities commented on the effective support that their children receive.

A few parents and carers expressed concerns. These focused on the promotion of healthy eating and a perceived bias towards girls in some activities. Inspectors found the pupils to be well informed about the importance of healthy lifestyles, and found the school to be particularly effective in motivating and interesting boys through a diverse curriculum.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Roade 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 54 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 162 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	65	16	30	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	38	70	16	30	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	26	48	19	35	8	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	31	57	16	30	5	9	2	4
The teaching is good at this school	36	67	11	20	3	6	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	56	18	33	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	61	19	35	2	4	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)	27	50	19	35	0	0	2	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	29	54	16	30	4	7	5	9
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	22	41	26	48	4	7	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	43	23	43	2	4	2	4
The school is led and managed effectively	37	69	12	22	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	69	10	19	6	11	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.



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roade Primary School, Northampton, NN7 2NT

Thank you for taking the time to talk to me and my colleague when we visited your school. This letter is to tell you about what we found during our visit. You are certainly at a good school.

What a great curriculum! Visits from time travellers, hot air balloons on the playground, and trips to the coast - to name just a few of your experiences this year. It is very clear from talking to you, visiting lessons and looking at your work how much you enjoy these activities, and how much they make you want to work hard at school. Everyone we spoke to said how thoughtful and well mannered you are, and we agree. Your behaviour in school is excellent, and you are very positive and want to learn a lot of new skills and knowledge.

The excellent curriculum, the good teaching, and the outstanding care, guidance and support the school gives you, all help you to make good progress.

All at the school are very ambitious about giving you the best education they can, so I have made a few suggestions to the headteacher and the governing body about how they can make even clearer plans to improve the school. You can help too, by continuing to be enthusiastic and by playing a full part in all of the events the school offers.

We enjoyed being in your school, and hope that in the future it is even more successful in helping you to do as well as you possibly can.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Parker

Lead inspector

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