

Roundwood Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	110228
Local Authority	Buckinghamshire
Inspection number	342346
Inspection dates	18–19 June 2009
Reporting inspector	Mary Summers

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	4–9
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	121
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 Peter Smith
Headteacher	Mrs Carole Chandler
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	Church Street Gawcott MK18 4HY
Telephone number	01280 813 066
Fax number	01280 813 066

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Gawcott and Tingewick Infant Schools became Roundwood Primary School in September 2007. The school is set on two sites, about two miles apart, and serves pupils from a large rural area. Most pupils come from White British families although several minority ethnic groups are represented in smaller numbers. A small but significant number of pupils from Traveller backgrounds attend the school. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is broadly average, although there are far more pupils with statements of special educational need than found in most schools of this size. Their needs are mainly associated with behavioural, social and emotional problems or moderate learning difficulties. The school roll fell sharply between 2005 and 2007 while the amalgamation took place, but is now rising rapidly and is oversubscribed this year. The current headteacher was the previous headteacher of one of the infant schools prior to amalgamation. The school has won the Activemark award for its work in promoting fitness among pupils.

Children have the opportunity to start in the Early Years Foundation Stage in the term following their fourth birthday. They attend part-time in the spring and summer terms and full-time in the autumn term.

Tingewick Pre-School, a privately run organisation, operates from the school site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Roundwood Primary is a good school. The amalgamation process has been very well managed so that already the new school has a real sense of identity, even though it is split over two sites. The key to this has been the very good leadership of the headteacher, coupled with the strong support of staff. Parents are very happy about the school's work with their children. One, expressing the views of many, wrote: 'Roundwood is a fantastic school and the merger has worked well. The children love it and are doing well.'

Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are extremely polite but also ready to express their views and ideas. They show excellent levels of initiative, for example, by refereeing their own football matches at lunchtime and organising fund-raising activities to support a boy in Uganda. They take their responsibilities seriously as school councillors or as monitors, taking registers to the office and helping around the school. They contribute very well to village life, maypole dancing at the fete and exhibiting artwork at the local church. They are well aware of the need to maintain healthy lifestyles and keep themselves safe in and out of school. They enjoy all the experiences provided for them, including the good range of clubs after school which help them to develop individual skills and talents. They are extremely well prepared for the future.

Teaching is good and ensures that pupils progress well throughout the school. Teachers make their lessons stimulating so that they engage pupils' interest and maintain their interest. They give them clear targets at which to aim and encourage them to reflect on their learning and say how well they have achieved the objective. Teachers track the pupils' progress meticulously and, along with the headteacher, identify those who may benefit from extra support. Teaching assistants provide different sorts of interventions, but all are carefully tailored to meet pupils' different needs. Consequently, all groups of pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 reach above average standards in the national assessments in reading, writing and mathematics and continue their good progress through Years 3 and 4.

All adults know the pupils well and this makes for a very warm and supportive atmosphere, where pupils thrive and grow into responsible young people. School leaders are rigorous in their systems to ensure pupils' safety, carrying out regular safety checks and risk assessments. Good attendance is encouraged, with awards being given during assemblies and recognised in annual reports.

The headteacher monitors the work of the school well and is accurate in her evaluations of performance. Assessment information is analysed thoroughly in English and mathematics to identify where improvements can be made. Science has not been monitored and analysed as rigorously and, as a result, pupils' progress is inconsistent in different year groups. The school has already registered to take part in a national initiative to address this more effectively.

The school promotes community cohesion extremely well within the school, local and global context. It is the hub of the community, and is promoting very effective links between the two neighbouring villages. However, there are no links with different UK communities to help pupils learn about life in multicultural Britain. Governors have played an important role in ensuring that the financial aspects of the amalgamation have been managed smoothly and that sufficient funds are available to support premises improvements on both sites. The school is in a strong position to continue to improve in the future.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children's attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage varies considerably but overall is broadly as expected for children of their age. Effective induction procedures mean that parents have confidence in school staff and that children settle quickly into school life. One parent of a Reception child commented: 'My child has enjoyed a fantastic journey through his first year at school. The staff have taught him so much without him really realising - perfect for that transition from pre-school.'

Children make good progress and achieve well in Reception because the teaching is good and the curriculum is lively. Most meet and many exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the year. A great many interesting and meaningful experiences are organised to help children develop good social skills and learn more about the world around them. They visit a local farm regularly to learn about animals and wildlife generally, and they took part in a recent bird watch, following this up with some vibrant drawings and paintings of different species. The outdoor area is well organised and there are plans to provide more shelter so that the outdoor curriculum can be fully utilised at all times during the year.

The Early Years Foundation Stage is well led and managed. There is a very good ratio of adults to children and these adults are well deployed to support individuals and groups of children. Children's achievements are tracked carefully to identify any individuals who need extra practice or support in specific skills.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor and evaluate science more rigorously to ensure that pupils' achievement is as good as it is in English and mathematics.
- Develop links with communities within the UK to promote community cohesion more effectively and help pupils understand more about life in multicultural Britain.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the national assessments for Year 2 pupils have been consistently above average for the last few years. Achievement is good. Last year the school identified that boys were underachieving in writing. They quickly addressed this by ensuring that the opportunities they offered boys were suited more closely to their interests. This year school records show that boys are making much better progress and more are in line to reach higher levels in the national and teacher assessments. Pupils continue to achieve well in Years 3 and 4, with more-able pupils often making exceptional progress. A group of Year 4 pupils quickly grasped the idea of long multiplication during one lesson, and proceeded to work out a series of complex examples with minimal help from the teacher.

Pupils with statements of special educational need and those with moderate learning difficulties or emotional, social and behavioural difficulties all make good progress. This is because of the high levels of support and encouragement they receive. Pupils from Traveller backgrounds also make good progress because they are fully included in all aspects of school life.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils are extremely polite, friendly and welcoming. They enjoy school enormously and are keen to share their views and achievements with others. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding and their cultural development is satisfactory. They have a developing understanding of life in other cultures and communities. Pupils contribute extremely well to the smooth running of their school through their day-to-day work and as play leaders in the playground. They play a very active role in the local community, performing at local concerts and visiting elderly people. They organise their own fund-raising activities to support a boy in Uganda, exchanging letters to find out the impact of their efforts. Pupils have benefited greatly from the school's work to achieve the Activemark award, gaining a very clear understanding of healthy lifestyles and enjoying regular 'wake and shake' exercises.

Attendance is above average and punctuality is good. Behaviour is excellent in and around the school. Pupils are confident in sharing any concerns they may have with an adult. They know how to keep safe in and out of school, for example on the roads and when using the internet. Pupils' positive attitudes, their confidence, initiative and very good manners, along with secure basic skills, mean they are extremely well prepared for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

One of the main reasons for pupils' good progress throughout the school is the good teaching that they receive. Lessons are carefully planned and organised and pupils are well aware of teachers' expectations of their work and behaviour. Teachers make sure that pupils receive work which challenges them and helps them take the next steps in their learning. They value pupils' contributions and efforts so that pupils are confident in attempting new activities and learning from their mistakes. Teaching assistants play a valuable role in supporting pupils who find learning more difficult. Their work is directed well by teachers so that they have the maximum impact. In most cases teaching is lively and engages pupils' interest and concentration. Occasionally, however, the teacher spends too much time talking, rather than involving pupils actively in learning. On such occasions pupils lose focus and this hinders their concentration and progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum provides a wide range of learning opportunities that engage pupils and make learning exciting. There is a clear focus on the development of literacy and numeracy skills, although other subjects receive good attention. Year 2 pupils, who had been studying a Dutch painting of children learning to play musical instruments, painted pictures of themselves in a similar style and situation. They designed and made simple model chairs and stools, similar to those in the painting, then evaluated them to say how they might be improved. French, music and physical education are taught by specialists and provide pupils with a secure basis on which to further develop their skills. The choir performs to an extremely high standard, recently winning top prize in the Buckingham Music Festival. Unusual events, such as a midnight feast to begin a topic on 'The Dark', enthuse and stimulate pupils, who are keen to take advantage

of all the school has to offer. Staff are presently reviewing curriculum plans to ensure that pupils' skills in all subjects develop successfully as the school grows to take Year 5 and 6 pupils.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Pastoral care is outstanding. The headteacher and other staff know the pupils extremely well and are quick to notice if problems arise. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are robust and health and safety procedures are carefully managed. The school successfully engages all pupils, including those from Traveller families, who play a full part in school life. Rigorous measures taken last year to improve attendance have been very successful.

Pupils receive good academic guidance. Teachers assess pupils' learning carefully and there are effective systems in place for tracking their progress. Marking is good. Pupils respond positively to the useful advice that teachers provide about how to improve their work. They are clear about their learning targets and this increases their motivation and desire to succeed. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are catered for extremely well. The school gains a great deal of advice from external agencies, which it uses effectively to support these pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leaders and managers have maintained a strong focus on standards and achievement during the recent amalgamation. This is seen in the consistently above average standards in the end of Year 2 national assessments and in the improvements in boys' writing this year. English and mathematics have been monitored and evaluated well, resulting in significant gains in pupils' achievements. Science has not been a focus for several years and the school has rightly identified this as an area for improvement and has already begun to take action.

The headteacher has worked tirelessly to ensure that the amalgamation has gone smoothly and that the different groups within the community are actively involved in school life. The school promotes community cohesion further afield very effectively through its links with an aid organisation in Uganda, which helps pupils learn about life in a community very different from their own. Links are yet to be developed with different UK communities, to help pupils understand more fully about life in multicultural Britain.

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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?	2
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	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?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
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

02 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roundwood Primary School, Gawcott, MK18 4HY

Thank you for giving me such a warm welcome when I visited your school recently. It was good to watch you in lessons and to meet and talk with pupils on both sites.

You go to a good school. All the adults look after you really well. It was great to hear your views about the school and about how much you enjoy learning. The quality of work in your books and the contributions you make in lessons show that you are making good progress. You take care with your work and try your best to meet the targets that your teachers set. Your hard work, along with good teaching, helps you to achieve well. Your attendance is good and your behaviour is excellent. You know the importance of keeping fit and healthy, many of you taking part in regular sport in and out of school. The choir and recorder group reach very high standards in their performance, as was shown recently in their success at the Buckinghamshire Music Festival.

The people in charge are doing a good job. They are always looking for ways to make the school even better for you, the pupils. We have asked them to focus on science over the next year, to make sure you are doing as well in that as you are in reading, writing and mathematics. We have also asked your teachers to develop more links with different communities in the UK so you can learn what life is like for children in other parts of the country.

Thank you once again for your help. Best wishes for the future.

Yours faithfully

Mary Summers

Lead Inspector