

John T Rice Infant and Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122452
Local Authority	Nottinghamshire
Inspection number	359252
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Mary Davis

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

Type of school	Infant
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tracy Asher
Headteacher	Maureen Tunney
Date of previous school inspection	12 December 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 10 lessons and all five teachers, and held meetings with groups of pupils, groups of parents, representatives of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies and development planning; the analysis of data related to the tracking of pupils' progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; pupils' work and 50 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from staff.

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

- How well do the school's judgements of good learning and progress in lessons and satisfactory teaching match up, and do all groups of pupils, particularly those of higher ability, make good progress in lessons?
- Have the school's strategies to promote good attendance been effective in raising attendance levels?
- How well does the school promote community cohesion and what impact does this have on pupils' understanding of life in a multi-cultural society?

Information about the school

John T Rice is a smaller than average school of its type serving the Newlands estate near the Mansfield-Newark boundary. Very few pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also small, with none at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The school has National Healthy Schools award at gold standard.

There is a children's centre run by the local authority on the same site.

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

John T Rice Infant and Nursery School is a good school. Adults work as a committed and cohesive team to ensure the care and well-being of the children. One parent commented: 'Every member of staff knows every child in the school and this makes the children and parents feel special'. Parents particularly praised the 'fantastic' level of care provided for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, one saying 'I couldn't have asked for better teachers and teaching assistants. I'm really impressed'. Adults lead by example and warm relationships are evident throughout the school resulting in positive attitudes to learning and pupils showing care and consideration for each other. They have an outstanding understanding of how to stay healthy and can explain the importance of washing their hands to prevent germs spreading. They are confident to talk to visitors, are welcoming to those new to the school and have a good understanding of right and wrong. Pupils of all ages work and play well together with the youngest learning quickly how to share and take turns. Pupils were able to sit silently for two minutes during the 'Poppy Day' assembly, showing respect and understanding of what they were celebrating.

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points as a result of the good teaching they receive throughout the school. The school has been quick to identify underperformance, such as that of boys in writing in 2010 and has introduced effective strategies to address this which are already having a strong impact. For example, the new thematic curriculum is providing increased opportunities to write for a purpose and pupils enjoy role play activities as preparation for writing tasks. Teachers use assessment information well and most set tasks that are appropriately challenging for all groups of pupils, keeping an effective overview of the progress made by the whole class during a lesson. Occasionally, pupils of the highest ability are not provided with tasks that are sufficiently challenging to stretch them. The leadership is addressing this by planning opportunities to share the good practice that exists across the school.

The school provides excellent care for pupils for whom circumstances make them vulnerable and also for their families. An open-door policy ensures that there is always a warm welcome into the school and a high level of support is provided for parents who ask for help, for example on behaviour and attendance issues. The school works in close partnership with a wide range of external agencies to enhance the support and guidance provided. For example psychologists are providing a relaxation course to promote the emotional well-being of the most vulnerable. The school works unstintingly to promote good attendance, frequently raising awareness with parents through attendance newsletters and rewarding those with good attendance levels. As a result, the large majority of pupils attend well. However, a small minority of parents take their children on holidays during term time, thus adversely affecting the continuity of their learning.

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The headteacher is supported by a strong team who share her passion for taking the school forward and who ensure that the care of pupils is at the heart of all they do. Middle leaders, teachers and teaching assistants are fully involved in development planning and as a result, all feel valued members of a team. They have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and all are held to account for the progress made by pupils in their care. Improved tracking of progress and rigorous analysis of the performance of groups of pupils ensure that underachievement is quickly addressed, and that all have equal opportunities to succeed. The school works well to promote community cohesion, particularly raising pupils' global awareness and understanding of different beliefs. Links with the local community are particularly strong. The leadership has successfully addressed the issues raised at the last inspection and there have been significant improvements in many key areas, particularly in the quality of teaching. The school is therefore judged to have a good capacity to sustain these improvements.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment by:
 - providing sufficient challenge for high achievers
 - embedding strategies to improve boys' writing
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good or better across the school by sharing existing good practice.
- Raise attendance levels by:
 - further promoting the value of regular attendance with parents.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

When they start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, children's skills and experiences are generally well below those typical of children of their age. They make good progress during this key stage and, on entry to Year 1, are just below national expectations. By the end of Year 2 they have reached standards of attainment that are broadly average when compared to national expectations. This represents good progress, particularly in mathematics and writing where all pupils achieved or exceeded their targets. Progress seen by inspectors in lessons was also good and the schools' current tracking of progress shows that boys are now achieving as well as girls in writing. Pupils of all ages are able to concentrate well, are keen to do well and enjoy collaborating in pairs or small groups. They show a keen awareness of the needs of others and are quick to offer help when they can see someone is stuck, for example in accessing the correct computer programme for a numeracy task. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make equally good progress to their peers as a result of the focused support they receive.

Pupils are able to explain how to eat healthily and understand the importance of drinking water. They enjoy the variety of sporting activities provided, particularly 'wake and shake', the apparatus in the playground and dance lessons. They also understand that the school rules are designed to keep them safe and can explain, for example, safe use of the climbing frame. The school council is proud of its role and its members say that their suggestions are followed up, for example in providing a cycle shelter and playing music during lunchtimes. Year 2 pupils produced a guide to help children entering the school,

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including explaining rules for good hygiene. Although pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are well developed, average literacy and numeracy skills, together with average attendance, result in the development of skills that will support their future economic well-being being currently satisfactory. Pupils have a good awareness of children that are less fortunate than themselves in different parts of the world and are keen to raise funds, for example for the flood victims of Pakistan.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	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

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

How effective is the provision?

Most of the lessons observed during the inspection were good or better and the leadership's extensive monitoring indicates that the quality of teaching has steadily improved since the last inspection. Well-established classroom routines enable learning to progress at a fast pace with no time wasted. Lessons are well planned and structured. This helps teachers and pupils to evaluate understanding as they go through the lesson. Teachers are usually quick to adapt their teaching to address any misunderstanding. Teaching assistants are well deployed, taking a vital role in the classroom, and are skilled in questioning techniques to provide appropriate challenge and support. Pupils and adults work as a team and pupils are confident to make suggestions as to how they can improve their work.

The thematic curriculum is newly established following consultation with parents and pupils and includes opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills through, for

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example, learning about electricity or how the human body works. Areas of learning in Key Stage 1 provide opportunities for further development of those established in the Early Years Foundation Stage, including personal, social and health education and opportunities to support emotional development.

Transitions between key stages are well managed and include the involvement of parents and pupils in welcoming new children and their families. The identification and support of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is well organised and support individually planned, including the wide involvement of external agencies. This high level of care enables all pupils to be fully included in activities and to achieve.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a strong team ethos and atmosphere of mutual support within the school, with all adults working together towards a common aim. Staff greatly value the support and guidance of the headteacher, who supports their professional development and encourages and values the contribution of all. The strong leadership of teaching and learning has established a pattern of monitoring and identified training needs to address areas of weaknesses and, as a result, there is now a high degree of consistent practice across the school and clear priorities identified for further development. The governing body, several of whom are newly appointed, involve themselves in the life of the school and challenge and support the leadership appropriately. They undertake their statutory roles and responsibilities satisfactorily. Safeguarding procedures are robust, including child protection policies and practice and all staff are appropriately trained, including in first aid. Safeguarding issues are well incorporated into the curriculum and as a result pupils have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school works hard to ensure that parents are fully involved in their children's learning and informed about their progress. The school responds to suggestions made by parents, for example, by introducing Spanish as a modern foreign language, and regularly consults parents on every aspect of the school's work. Partnerships with the neighbouring family of schools and the children's centre are strong, supporting both learning, for example in music and sport, and the transition between key stages. The school takes a leading role in coordinating the support of external agencies.

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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	2
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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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 enter the Nursery with skills that are well below age-related expectations, particularly in language and social development. Their gradual introduction to school during this year enables them to make good progress, learning to play well together and to follow classroom routines. This is as a result of a calm and well-ordered approach that enables children to feel secure and to develop independence. On transfer to the Reception, their skills are still slightly below the expected level. Good progress continues and by the end of the key stage, their skills are close to expectations. Children generally behave well and those who find sharing and playing productively difficult, are encouraged to be kind and helpful. Personal independence is promoted so that by the end of the key stage, children are very aware of caring for the environment, have a good understanding of different cultures and celebrations and are able to make decisions and take responsibility. Inspectors observed children drawing Rangoli patterns on the playground outside, following learning about Diwali. They then were able to record their achievement by taking photographs themselves, and deciding when they had finished to their satisfaction. The bright, airy and well-equipped area includes curtains between the two classes that can be drawn back once the nursery children have settled, to allow free flow of a wide choice of activities which are seamlessly managed by the adults. Assessment procedures are strong and planning focused on children's individual needs. The key stage is well managed with strong teamwork evident. The leadership has identified the need to provide more opportunity for the promotion of creative 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

The overwhelming response of the minority of parents and carers who completed questionnaires was positive, with the overwhelming majority saying that their children enjoy school and that the school keeps their children safe. A few parents felt that they were not sufficiently involved or informed about their child's learning, but inspectors found the reverse to be true with a wide variety of opportunities being provided during the school year.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at John T Rice Infant and Nursery 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	78	11	22	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	40	80	9	18	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	28	56	20	40	2	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	60	19	38	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	30	60	19	38	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	56	20	40	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	60	20	40	0	0	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	54	19	38	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	26	52	22	44	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	29	56	17	35	2	4	1	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	27	54	20	40	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	33	66	16	32	1	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	70	13	26	1	2	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



15 November 2010

Dear Children,

Inspection of John T Rice Infant and Nursery School, Mansfield, NG19 0LL

Many thanks for the welcome you gave to me and my colleague when we visited the school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. We were particularly impressed by how well you behaved during the Poppy Day assembly.

Our inspection has judged that you go to a good school. You make good progress and the standards that you reach in reading, writing and mathematics are around average, although boys last year did not do as well as girls in writing. We have asked the school to help you to raise standards in all your subjects and to make sure that they provide work which stretches you. We are pleased that boys are now improving in writing and have asked the school to make sure that this continues. We were impressed by your good behaviour, the care you show for each other and that you have such a good understanding of how to stay healthy and how to keep yourselves safe by following school rules. You concentrate well and enjoy your lessons and all the activities that are provided for you, including all the sporting activities and dance. We were pleased to see how well you learn and play together. Your teachers provide lessons that are exciting and care for you well, so that you feel safe. The school council helps to improve the school by, for example, asking for cycle shelter so that your parents can bring you to school on your bikes and scooters. You also do a lot to raise money for children who are less fortunate than yourselves, for example, for the victims of the Pakistan floods.

The leaders of the school are working hard to make sure you learn well and develop well as young people. We have asked them to make sure that you attend school regularly so that you continue to learn well. You can help them by continuing to work hard, to 'Aim High and Shine'. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis

Lead inspector

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