

Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119992
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	358661
Inspection dates	15–16 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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	229
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rachel Williams
Headteacher	Nikki Parkinson
Date of previous school inspection	22 April 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. They visited 17 lessons, observed seven teachers and held meetings with members of the governing body, staff, groups of pupils and parents. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at pupils' work and records of their progress. They also looked at a range of documents, including minutes of governing body meetings, the school's development plan, a range of policies and the school's monitoring of its performance. The inspectors took account of 55 questionnaires from parents and carers, 125 questionnaires from pupils in Key Stage 2 and 22 questionnaires from staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Inspectors investigated the quality of teaching in the subjects with the most and least successful national test results.
- They examined the performance of different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and looked-after children in public care.
- They considered how effectively the school's monitoring and evaluation systems promote better outcomes for pupils.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized primary school. While the majority of pupils are of White British origin, the proportion from minority ethnic groups is above average. A number of these pupils are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above that found nationally. The school has gained several awards including Healthy Schools status, the Financial Management Standard in Schools and the Eco Award. Since the previous inspection, the school has appointed a new headteacher who took up post in September 2010.

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

This is a satisfactory school, which is well respected within its local community. The very safe and welcoming ethos enables each pupil to feel well cared for and valued as an individual. Pupils of all ages and from a wide range of backgrounds report that they feel extremely safe in school. They are highly appreciative of the care provided by their teachers and other staff and know that good-quality support is available whenever they need extra help or advice. The school can point to a number of examples of the effectiveness of its work in securing good outcomes for pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable than their peers. Pupils are proud of their school.

Other important strengths include:

- robust safeguarding arrangements
- a culture of mutual respect and cooperation, which promotes pupils' confidence and self-esteem effectively
- strong and effective relationships with parents and carers.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory but improving at an increasingly rapid rate. Since the previous inspection, senior leaders and teachers have worked hard to promote better learning and progress for all groups of pupils. Gaps in attainment and progress between different groups of pupils are closing due to effective intervention strategies, particularly for those pupils who speak English as an additional language and for those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals. An increasing proportion of the most-able pupils are attaining levels above those found nationally in English and mathematics.

Writing skills are not taught systematically across the classes and year groups and there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at length or to use a range of more complex writing styles. Consequently, pupils' achievement, although at least satisfactory, is not as good as it could be. In some classes, pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds (phonics) is less well developed because there is inconsistent practice in the teaching of phonics across Key Stage 1.

Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, the learning experiences that children are able to access in the outdoor provision are less tempting than the range of opportunities available indoors. This is because not all of the six areas of learning are catered for fully and the full range of resources are not available for the children to access independently.

Inspectors found many good features of teaching in most lessons observed. For example, teachers generally provide clear explanations about new concepts because knowledge of the subjects they teach is secure. In most lessons, teachers use new technology effectively to help clarify pupils' learning. While most teachers display good technical skills,

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the impact of teaching on learning is not always as good as it should be. This is because lessons lose pace when teachers talk for too long or lose focus on the intended learning.

The well-established systems for checking on the progress made by pupils provide a wealth of data. However, such data are not always presented in formats that are easy for staff to interpret or do not provide a sharp enough focus on the performance of individuals or groups of pupils. As a result, leaders and managers are not as clearly informed as they might be of pupils' prior learning.

The journey of improvement over the last three years is due to the decisive and effective action taken by a focused leadership team and a committed governing body, together with the determination of hardworking staff to ensure that they get the best out of pupils. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning does not always focus on the impact that teaching has on pupils' learning. School self-evaluation is mostly accurate, if a little over generous at times, because it is not always linked to the outcomes for pupils. Therefore, the school's capacity to sustain and build on its current successes is satisfactory.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve pupils' learning and progress from satisfactory to consistently good by:
 - ensuring that the key concepts and skills that underpin effective reading and writing, particularly those that develop pupils' phonic knowledge, are taught systematically
 - refining the system for tracking of pupils' progress and rigorously analysing data on the progress of individuals and groups of pupils in all year groups to enable teachers to make a closer match between pupils' prior learning and the activities they are given
 - ensuring that the judgements made about the quality of teaching take full account of pupils' learning and progress in each lesson.
- Strengthen provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - evaluating the learning potential of all activities and routines, including access to good-quality outdoor learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

There are examples of consistently good learning and progress for pupils, particularly in Reception and in Year 1. Here, pupils forge ahead because the work is challenging and the pace of learning is brisk. Pupils tackle activities with enthusiasm and concentrate for lengthy periods. They particularly enjoy working collaboratively to investigate and solve problems practically. Pupils have well-developed mathematical calculation skills and can apply these with increasing success to solve real-life number problems.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well, particularly those with the protection of a statement and those who are at the school action plus stage. Their needs are identified clearly and the provision to meet them is regularly

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reviewed. Secure links with outside agencies, such as the educational psychologist and speech and language therapists, ensure that extra help for individual pupils is available as required. As a result, they achieve in line with their peers. However, the help for pupils at school action stage is variable across classes and year groups.

Some groups of pupils, such as those who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who speak English as an additional language, including those pupils who have recently arrived in the United Kingdom, make good gains in their learning as a consequence of effective intervention and support. Nonetheless, inspection evidence shows that there are times when pupils' progress and learning slow to satisfactory, particularly when they continue with an activity long after they have gained all they can from it and are ready to move on to more difficult work.

Pupils are tolerant and understand the needs of others, valuing the friendships they make. They mix well together because of the good and often excellent trusting relationships they have with adults in the school. Assemblies are instrumental in the formation of the positive whole-school ethos. Pupils are clearly able to reflect on a wide range of spiritual issues. Pupils' commitment to supporting the rest of the school and the wider community is reflected in the positions of responsibility they take on, such as peer mentors, and in the range of local and national awards achieved by individuals and the school as a whole. The numbers of pupils regularly involved in the school's sports teams demonstrates their commitment to leading healthy lifestyles.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
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	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
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

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How effective is the provision?

Important strengths in teaching are:

- a calm, purposeful learning environment where pupils are well behaved, friendly and keen to learn
- good opportunities for pupils to share their knowledge and thinking in discussions which contribute to their improving learning in lessons
- pupils' good collaboration in pairs and small groups and their willingness to help others when they encounter difficulties
- pupils' involvement in evaluating the quality of their own work and that of others.

There is much good teaching across the school. However, the learning that results from a proportion of teaching is no better than satisfactory. This is because teachers do not always take account of what the pupils already know and can do and, therefore, do not always ensure that planned activities fully meet the needs of different ability groups. Long-term planning, especially that for writing, does not focus well enough on developing key skills or ensure that each unit of work places sufficient demands on pupils. As a result, the teaching of writing throughout the school has not been as effective as in reading or mathematics.

Richness is added to school life for very many pupils by the very popular and wide range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils describe many memorable experiences, such as the national Lego competition, the daily massage sessions and playing drums in the steel band. Gifted and talented pupils are supported through different activities in timetabled sessions, visits and activities outside of the school day.

Through strong links with parents and carers and effective partnerships with a range of agencies, the school provides very good support for pupils with specific needs and the most vulnerable pupils. This is reflected in the progress and increasing confidence of several pupils who are in public care. There is a clear belief in the importance of expecting the best from all pupils.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body provides good support and challenge to the school. Its members are knowledgeable and skilled individuals who take their roles seriously and are fully committed to the continuing improvement of the school. They carefully monitor budgetary

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decisions, securing the best value from spending, and seek to make savings where possible. Policies are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis. Safeguarding arrangements are good. There is a good awareness of policy and procedures among the staff at all levels, all of whom receive regular training in all aspects of safeguarding, including child protection.

Although the school is strongly committed to promoting equality of opportunity, much of the school's assessment and tracking of data on pupils' progress is confusing and difficult to follow. As result, leaders are not making best use of the data to understand the underlying reasons why some groups of pupils are making better progress in their learning than others. This restricts senior leaders' ability to identify and disseminate good practice more widely and, therefore, the promotion of equality of opportunity is currently no better than satisfactory.

Community cohesion is satisfactory, but is particularly strong in terms of its impact within the school's immediate community. Pupils' understanding of national and global issues is adequately addressed through the curriculum and through links emerging links with other schools in more diverse localities. However, planning and evaluation of this aspect of the school's work are underdeveloped.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
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 are happy, are willing to take part in activities and achieve well. Teaching is consistently good. As a result, children make good progress and they meet, or in some cases exceed, the early learning goals for their age. Sometimes, however, adults lead too much of the learning. Therefore, opportunities to provide a greater chance for pupils to initiate their own choice of activity are missed. There is not enough freedom for children to move independently between indoor and outdoor areas as part of their work and play.

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Although the children do get the opportunity to work in the sensory garden and grow vegetables in their allotment patch with adult supervision. The physical separation of the two Reception classes and the difference between the two in the quality of accommodation are a barrier to equality of opportunity, securing the consistency of provision for children and to the sharing of good practice by staff.

Leadership and management are good. Expectations for behaviour are clear and so children behave very well. Staff work well as a team and provide a secure learning environment which reflects the children's cultural background.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

As seen in the table below, the very large majority of parents and carers who returned questionnaires have a positive view of the school and are happy with their children's experience at Robert Bakewell School. The school was asked to consider ways of ensuring that the views of parents and carers are more captured on a more formal and regular basis.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre 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 55 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 229 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	35	64	19	35	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	64	20	36	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	23	42	30	55	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	25	45	27	49	2	4	1	2
The teaching is good at this school	31	56	24	44	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	26	47	25	45	4	7	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	26	47	29	53	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)	28	51	27	49	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	44	30	55	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	21	38	31	56	1	2	2	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	40	31	56	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	30	55	25	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	67	17	31	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Robert Bakewell Primary School and Community Centre,
Loughborough, LE11 5UJ**

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We enjoyed having lunch with you and talking to you. We really liked seeing your vegetable garden and were pleased to hear that some of what you grow goes to the local community. It was pleasing to hear from you that you really like the daily massage lessons and that you enjoy taking part in the national Lego competition. It was lovely to see all the awards that the school has gained. This is a real achievement - well done!

You have really helped us. We think your school is a satisfactory school and these are the main things that we thought you might like to know about.

Adults really care for you and help you if you are worried or upset.

The school works closely with your parents and this helps you to learn.

You enjoy school and behave well.

You are kind and helpful to each other and share your toys and books.

You are good at helping around the school and do what adults ask you to do.

You really know how to stay safe and keep healthy.

The school is working hard to make things even better for you. We have asked the adults in charge to make sure that:

- teachers always give you work that makes you think hard and helps you make faster progress and reach even higher standards, particularly in reading and writing
- all your teachers sharpen up the way they keep track of what you have learned and check whether you have done well enough
- those teachers who are involved in checking how well you are doing in class look at exactly what you have learned
- the two Reception classes work more closely together so that all children have equally good resources and experiences for learning.

We hope that you will all continue to enjoy coming to school and try your hardest so that you are successful in the future.

Thank you again. We wish you continuing success.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Wordsworth

Her Majesty's Inspector

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