

Rocklands Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120847
Local Authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	327377
Inspection date	23 October 2008
Reporting inspector	Susan Aldridge

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	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	43
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	3
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Charles McIlwhan
Headteacher	Mrs Catherine Mills
Date of previous school inspection	7 November 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	74 The Street Attleborough Norfolk NR17 1TP

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	23 October 2008
Inspection number	327377

Telephone number
Fax number

01953 483369
01953 488079

Age group	4-11
Inspection date	23 October 2008
Inspection number	327377

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Rocklands Primary School is a small school that serves the village of Rocklands All Saints and the surrounding rural area. Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion eligible for free school meals is below average. The percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities varies from year to year, but is currently below average. Children entering the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) in Reception have knowledge and skills that vary widely from year to year. There was a change of headteacher at Easter in 2007. Since September 2007, Rocklands and Great Ellingham primary schools have entered into a partnership, with the same headteacher but different governing bodies and separate budgets.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Rocklands Primary is a good school, which is how it evaluates itself. Parents are delighted with the provision it makes for their children. A high proportion returned questionnaires, all of which were positive. As one rightly pointed out, the school has maintained the high quality of its provision in spite of 'the massive changes the school has seen over the last couple of years'. This is the result of good leadership and management, in particular well-developed teamwork among the small staff and strong and committed leadership from the headteacher, lead teacher and governors. There is a good capacity to improve further.

Pupils enjoy coming to school very much and they flourish in its nurturing environment. Whatever their starting points, they get a good start in the EYFS, and make good subsequent progress so that they achieve well in their time at the school. Parents appreciate the fact that their children make such good progress. Standards vary greatly from year to year, reflecting the small size of cohorts, but are generally above average. Good achievement is associated with the good quality of teaching and learning, the good academic guidance and support that pupils receive and their positive attitudes to learning.

Pupils' personal development is good. It is promoted well by a good range of learning experiences and good enrichment of the curriculum. The latter is greatly enhanced by the constructive partnerships that the school has developed with the local community and other schools, particularly Great Ellingham and a local secondary school. Pupils contribute well to the school and wider communities. An International Week, running during the inspection and jointly organised and run with Great Ellingham school, provided pupils with a wealth of well planned simulated experiences of 'travelling' to different countries and continents, making an excellent contribution to pupils' cultural and global awareness. Pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experiences, including socialising with pupils in their partner school. Teaching about healthy living and personal safety is effective in encouraging pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles at school and to behave safely and sensibly. Since pupils develop rapidly their basic and social skills, as well as their capacity to work independently, they are strongly placed to benefit further from secondary education.

Self-evaluation is good. Stakeholders' views are sought and constructive criticism is taken seriously. As a result, parents and pupils have an influence on what happens in the school. Parents are involved well in school life. Staff and governors know well where the school's strengths and areas for development lie. However, the school does miss some opportunities to measure its success. Assessment information in the EYFS is used to measure the value that the school adds for each child but does not take account of progress beyond that measured by the foundation stage profile, and several children progress to working within National Curriculum levels by the time they reach the end of reception. Similarly, progress made within each area of learning is not used to evaluate the provision from year to year. In Years 1 to 6, assessment information for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not collected which means that evaluation of the effectiveness of provision is limited.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The EYFS co-ordinator and staff work effectively as a team to provide a stimulating learning environment and a wide range of activities to promote children's learning and enjoyment. Good

teaching, together with the good curriculum, ensures learning is fun and children make good progress in lessons, achieving well by the end of Reception. An excellent feature of the EYFS curriculum is the 'forest school' where children enjoy immensely outdoor learning in a woodland environment. From their variable starting points, children make good progress and achieve well. By the end of Reception, their knowledge and skills are generally above those expected in all areas of learning. Children grow in confidence as learners because planning takes full account of their individual needs. Children behave well in and around the school because staff maintain very good relationship with them and manage behaviour consistently and effectively. The welfare needs of all the children are met well with good levels of supervision, thorough risk assessments and good guidance for learning. The provision is well led and managed. Good partnerships exist with parents and clear priorities for improvement are identified such as the development of the outdoor area. The school knows well how outcomes compare with schools locally and nationally, but existing assessment information is not fully exploited to evaluate progress in each area of learning or to identify the full extent of progress made by the higher attaining children.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the school's self-evaluation of its provision by
- measuring accurately the progress made by children in the EYFS in each area of learning, including those who are working within National Curriculum levels
- assessing pupils' attainments in all areas of the National Curriculum and using this information to evaluate the provision in detail.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are in mixed age classes, but teaching takes good account of pupils' existing knowledge and understanding as well as what each age group should be learning. Pupils are involved well in their learning. They regularly refer to their targets when they are working and become adept at evaluating their work and that of others, by using criteria against which they can judge their success. As a result, girls and boys of all ages and abilities make good progress in lessons. Staff have high expectations and set challenging targets to raise attainment. Pupils' progress towards these is kept under careful review, and any who start to fall behind or experience difficulties are quickly spotted and given extra support to accelerate their progress. As a result, they make good progress and achieve well. Standards fluctuate widely from year to year. For instance, in 2007 standards in Year 6 were average, provisional test results in 2008 were well above average in English, mathematics and science, reflecting the above average starting points of that group of pupils. They were average in Year 2 in 2008, as this year group came from a lower starting point. Standards vary across the school, but currently are mainly above average.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They say that they often feel proud of themselves because the school recognises and rewards acts of good citizenship. They are polite, sociable and well behaved, and have a good awareness of the customs and cultures of others because there is good enrichment to encourage understanding and tolerance. Respect for nature and the environment is fostered well through the 'forest school' initiative and the gardening club. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in above average attendance. The

attendance of most pupils is excellent, but family holidays taken during term-time reduce the overall figure. Pupils take on many responsibilities at school, including leading the twice-daily wake-and-shake sessions. They also contribute to village life, by entertaining the elderly and, for a small school, they raise considerable sums of money for charities. Pupils eat healthily at school and take part in before and after school clubs, such as gymnastics. They know well how to keep themselves safe. Their good academic achievements and well-developed capacity for working independently means that they are well prepared for secondary school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Good planning that caters well for pupils of all ages and abilities is key to the rapid pace of learning and underpins pupils' progress. In addition, learning is encouraged well by the good relationships that staff have with pupils. As a result, pupils are confident learners. Small class sizes mean that pupils readily get help when they need it. However, they are also encouraged effectively to work independently, which they do well. Pupils concentrate well and tackle tasks with enthusiasm, which helps to increase their progress. All staff are encouraged to develop their skills and they do. Teaching assistants provide good quality support in class and for small groups of pupils who need additional help. Parents are involved well in their children's learning; they receive good information to enable them to encourage pupils to continue to learn at home and several volunteers help regularly in school. Most lessons proceed at a good pace, but occasionally progress slows because pupils are insufficiently involved and so they lose interest.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is well enriched. In addition to those subjects that the school is required to teach, all pupils have opportunities to learn a range of foreign languages, including French, Spanish, German and Italian. Having a linguist on the staff makes this possible. Where the school does not have the expertise or resources to provide something that pupils need, it sources this through partnerships. For instance, extra-curricular sports clubs are run by a local provider. Provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. Some join older pupils for lessons at Rocklands, others attend workshops at a local high school. A suitable range of additional programmes is provided for pupils who need help with learning and the school plans to extend these. It also plans to link subjects together more to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable for pupils. However, it has not yet considered how it will evaluate the curriculum to make sure that pupils learn all the skills that they should. The school compensates well for what it lacks in outdoor space by utilising facilities in the wider community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Parents are confident that their children are well cared for in school. Most pupils say that they feel safe. They have a voice through the school council and can share concerns via an 'anxiety box', although they do not always use this. Pupils value the school's arrangements for recognising and rewarding acts of kindness, good manners and behaviour. There are effective systems for encouraging improvements in the behaviour of those who find this difficult to achieve all the time. Child protection and health and safety matters, including risk assessments,

are carefully attended to. Good support for pupils who find learning harder than most includes weekly visits from a governor with expertise in this field. Academic guidance is good. As pupils mature they take increasing responsibility for their learning and progress. This includes setting some targets for themselves, marking and evaluating their own work. The oldest pupils are clear about what they need to do to move from one level to another. However, they have too many targets at once so do not always know them or experience success in the short term.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Quite rightly, parents have confidence in the school's headteacher and staff. They find that communication between school and home is good and feel that staff work 'exceptionally hard'. This is certainly true, as all teaching staff have several responsibilities each and they work well as a team to combine their efforts. Staff contribute well to monitoring, evaluation and improvement in the subjects of English, mathematics and science. Although they guide and support colleagues in teaching other subjects, they do not have a clear idea of what standards are like in these, and so they are limited in the extent to which they can evaluate provision. Governance is good. Between them, governors have many skills pertinent to their roles and they help to determine developments. For instance, the chair was most influential in the decision to form a partnership with another school. Although governors have not yet evaluated their own effectiveness, this is planned for the near future. The budget is managed well and has been targeted to areas of greatest need, such as refurbishment of the internal environment.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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

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?	2

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	2
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

24 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rocklands Primary School, Rocklands All Saints, NR17 1TP

Thank you for making us welcome in your school, and a special thanks to those of you who spoke to us about school life. We enjoyed our day.

We came to see how well you are all getting on and whether there are any ways in which the school could be improved.

We agree with Mrs Mills and the staff that yours is a good school. You are all making good progress in English, mathematics and science and by the time you leave school you are well prepared for secondary education. This is because the teaching is good and you are involved well in your learning. We were pleased to hear that you all enjoy coming to school and were impressed with the number of jobs that you do in and around school. Congratulations on the large amounts of money that you have raised in the past to help those who are less fortunate than you are. You certainly eat and drink sensibly at school and take plenty of exercise. The pupils I spoke to answered well my questions about keeping safe. We saw that you behave well and most of you have very good attendance too. It was good to hear that you all feel proud of your achievements in school and enjoy being recognised and rewarded for doing well and behaving as good citizens. Through your school council you are helping to make your school a better place.

Mrs Mills, the staff and governors know what needs to be improved. We have asked them to do two things. They are going to measure accurately the progress that children in Reception make so that they can find out if they do better in any particular area than another. They are also going to check how well you do in every subject so that they can be sure you are learning all the right things. You can help to make your school a better place too, by continuing to let adults know what you think of it, especially if you have any concerns.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mrs S Aldridge

Lead inspector