

Rownhams St John's Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116311
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338790
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2009
Reporting inspector	Michael Barron

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	292
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Laird
Headteacher	Meri Knights
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2008
School address	Bakers Drove Rownhams Southampton SO16 8AD
Telephone number	023 80736417
Fax number	023 80731732
Email address	meri.knights@rownhams.hants.sch.uk

Age group	4–11
Inspection dates	7–8 December 2009
Inspection number	338790

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2009

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 14 lessons and held meetings with local authority representatives, governors, the school's senior leadership team, staff, groups of pupils and parents. They observed the school's work and looked at school development planning, minutes of governors' meetings, school policies, including those associated with safeguarding procedures, assessment and tracking documentation, pupil records and samples of pupils' work. They considered the views of parents and carers in the 107 Ofsted questionnaires returned.

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

- pupils' attainment and achievement in Year 3 to Year 6, with a particular focus on mathematics
- how well teaching meets the needs of pupils of different ages or abilities
- how well the school monitors pupils' progress in mathematics and takes action to address any areas of slow progress
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in ensuring that development planning successfully leads to measurable improvements in the effectiveness of the school.

Information about the school

This is an above average sized school. Pupils are almost all from White British backgrounds and nearly all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, as is the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. There have been changes to the teaching staff and also to the make-up of the school's senior leadership team since the last inspection. The school has gained several awards, including Enhanced Healthy Schools status, Sportsmark and the ICT mark. The previous inspection made the school the subject of notice to improve because significant improvement was required in relation to pupils' achievement in mathematics in Year 3 to Year 6.

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

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

This is a satisfactory school which is recovering after a period of decline. The headteacher, governors and the senior leadership team have worked hard to ensure that the school has implemented effective strategies to improve its effectiveness in a relatively short period of time. They have made good use of the support they have received from the school staff and external agencies such as the local authority in order to ensure that the key issues identified by the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. Effective self-evaluation has led to improvements in the quality of teaching and a resulting improvement in pupils' progress, including in mathematics, where progress was judged as inadequate by the previous inspection. It is also a clear indication of the school's satisfactory capacity for future improvement.

The school has developed effective systems to track the progress of pupils but teachers do not always make good use of this information in their lesson planning in order to ensure that work is matched to the individual needs. Pupils rightly say that there are still occasions when the work they are expected to complete in lessons is either too easy or too hard. When this happens, they do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other pupils because of the effective support they receive with their learning.

Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with average skills and understanding for their age. They make good progress during their reception year because good teaching caters well for their needs, even though the indoor and outdoor Early Years Foundation Stage accommodation looks tired and uninspiring and in need of improvement. As a result, children enter Year 1 with above average standards.

However, this good start is not built on to best effect as pupils then proceed to make satisfactory progress throughout the rest of the school. Even so, by Year 6, pupils attain standards which are above average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. They say that they look forward to lessons, especially literacy, because teachers try to make learning interesting. They also enjoy being given responsibilities, including serving on the school council. However, whilst the school's curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visitors to the school and also visits by pupils to places of interest, pupils are not provided with regular opportunities to increase awareness and understanding of cultural issues, especially the multicultural nature of modern British society. Parents value the

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

way in which the school looks after its pupils and ensures they stay safe, and also the lengths the school goes to in order to involve parents in their children's education.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the work pupils are expected to complete in lessons is consistently well matched to their abilities, especially in literacy and numeracy, by ensuring that all teachers make full use of the available assessment information when planning work for pupils. (Timescale: by the end of the spring term 2010.)
- Provide pupils with regular opportunities to improve their cultural understanding, especially their awareness and knowledge of the multicultural nature of modern British society. (Timescale: by the end of the summer term 2010.)
- Improve the quality of the indoor and outdoor areas in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to provide a more stimulating learning environment for children. (Timescale: by the beginning of the autumn term 2010.)

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

In the lessons observed during the inspection, the quality of learning for children in Reception was good and for older pupils satisfactory, regardless of their ability or background. Pupils enjoy school and this is reflected in their above average rates of attendance. Children in Reception work and play well together. Pupils in Year 2 contributed their ideas confidently when discussing how to create a series of instructions in order to programme a robot during an information and communication technology lesson. Year 6 pupils were happy to explain their work in literacy during a lesson about nonsense poems such as 'Jabberwocky' and talked about how teachers make learning interesting, especially when they use the interactive whiteboards. Pupils try their best throughout the school and this was evident during a numeracy lesson in Year 4, when pupils worked hard and were keen to show off the work they had completed. Work seen in lessons and in pupils' books confirmed that by Year 6, standards are above average, and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education and later life.

There is a friendly and caring atmosphere within the school which is evident amongst pupils and staff. Pupils say that there is always someone to turn to if they have a concern or a problem. They behave well and apply themselves well to their work in lessons. Whilst pupils' moral and social development is good, their spiritual development is outstanding and this is reflected in the school's ethos. Pupils are keen to describe what they like most about school and how they enjoy taking part in local community and church events. They are far less confident when involved in discussions about different cultures or the multicultural nature of modern British society and this reflects a gap in their knowledge and understanding.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

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

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

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
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	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

When observed teaching was at its best during the inspection, teachers used a variety of approaches to make learning really interesting; for example, very effective use was made of laptop computers during a science lesson about making a reflective jacket for an alien. Teachers worked very well with effective learning support assistants to ensure that pupils needing extra help with their learning, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, received the level of support they needed to succeed. However, in a small number of observed lessons introductions were too long and, because assessment was not used effectively enough, pupils asked to complete work that was not adequately matched to their abilities. This resulted in pupils losing interest and not making the progress they were capable of. The variability in both teaching and learning is the reason why pupils' progress is only satisfactory.

The school has developed a curriculum which links subjects together well in order to make lessons more interesting, and pupils say that they enjoy this approach to learning. Visits to places of interest, including residential visits, help increase pupils' understanding of the immediate world in which they live. Provision for personal, social and health education is good and ensures pupils are well aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. Pupils say they really enjoy taking part in the diverse programme of enrichment activities that the school provides for them, including a range of popular after-school clubs, including sports and artistic activities.

Parents value the good level of care, guidance and support the school provides for their children and comment about the 'happy and supportive' way in which the school looks after its pupils. They are confident their children will always be safe. The school works

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

effectively with outside professionals in order to offer a good level of care and support to vulnerable pupils, including those facing challenging circumstances.

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	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The changes to the make-up of the senior leadership team have had a positive impact on the effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school, This is most evident in the improvement in teaching and learning since the last inspection, when it was then judged inadequate but is now satisfactory. The headteacher and senior leadership team display a common commitment to school improvement and this is reflected in the quality and the attention to detail in school development planning. The governing body provides the school with a satisfactory level of support and challenge. However, a small number of dedicated governors do a majority of the work and some are not sufficiently involved in school life.

The school has put a lot of effort into building up good links with parents, who value initiatives such as 'parents' workshops' that are aimed at including parents more in their children's learning. They appreciate the effective way in which the school tackles discrimination and makes sure all pupils are given equal opportunities to succeed. This is a key factor in ensuring that pupils feel they are valued as individuals and enjoy learning. This was evident in pupils' questionnaire replies and also during discussions with both older and younger pupils. As one pupil in Year 6 stated, 'I enjoy coming to school every day. It's fun.'

Good partnerships with other bodies, for example the local authority, are used effectively to support pupils' learning and well-being. Resources are used effectively and good safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements. Staff and governors receive regular safeguarding and child protection training and are well aware of the importance of their roles in keeping pupils safe and free from harm.

The school's work in promoting community cohesion is satisfactory. Links with the local community and the nearby church are used well to develop pupils' understanding of people and also shared beliefs, and the international dimension is covered by, for example, links with a school in Uganda. However, pupils' appreciation of the diversity of cultures and beliefs in the wider national community is underdeveloped.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

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	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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

The words of one parent aptly sum up the good quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage: 'My daughter really likes coming to school every day and she's learning so much.' They comment positively about the approachability of staff and how there is a strong emphasis on promoting children's safety and welfare at all times.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are in the process of development and are presently satisfactory. The quality of teaching is good and caters well for the needs of all children. Children behave well and quickly settle into new routines. Most are able to work independently and display a keenness to succeed.

Lessons are lively and well paced, and children happily join in activities and are able to share and take turns. Teachers and learning support assistants keep a close check on how well individual children are progressing in order to ensure lessons are planned effectively. As a result, children make good progress across most areas of learning.

Regular visits to interesting places help build up children's understanding of the world in which they live. However, the Reception indoor and outdoor learning environments do not provide children with imaginative and stimulating learning opportunities across the curriculum. The outdoor environment in particular looks dull and drab and does not include a covered outdoor area. This limits opportunities for children to develop the skills associated with outdoor learning and play during inclement or hot weather.

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

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	3

Views of parents and carers

The large majority of the parents who returned the questionnaires or who were spoken to by inspectors held positive views about the school. A large proportion considered that the quality of teaching was good and that pupils made good progress. Several parents who responded agreed with all the statements on the questionnaire. Nearly all were happy with their children's experiences at the school. An overwhelming majority believed their children enjoyed school and several commented favourably about how safe they felt their children were. Few parents expressed any concerns, although some felt the school did not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour, and a small number felt the school was not led and managed effectively. Inspectors considered these comments and judged that the school deals with unacceptable behaviour effectively and that the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. They also judged that the quality of teaching was satisfactory and that pupils made satisfactory progress as a result.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rownhams St John's Church of England Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 107 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 292 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	65	61	40	37	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	54	50	51	48	2	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	48	45	53	50	6	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	45	46	43	11	10	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	41	38	56	52	9	8	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	44	41	57	53	4	4	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	48	51	48	5	5	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)	39	36	54	50	6	6	1	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	39	56	52	6	6	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	37	35	47	44	18	17	4	4
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	26	63	59	9	8	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	36	34	51	48	15	14	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	51	48	46	43	1	1	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 January 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rownhams St John's Church of England Primary School, Southampton
SO16 8AD

Thank you for welcoming the other two inspectors and me to your school. Everyone was very friendly and we enjoyed talking to you about what you like the most about school and seeing you all working hard in lessons. We also enjoyed listening to you singing during your nativity play.

We found yours to be a satisfactory and improving school.

Here are some of the highlights of your school.

- Children get off to a good start in the Reception class.
- Your school takes good care of you and makes sure that you are all safe and well looked after.
- Your spiritual development is outstanding.
- You behave well and you have good attitudes to learning.
- You have a very good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.
- You enjoy school and say that you like your teachers.
- Your headteacher, teachers and governors are working hard to make sure the school improves in the future.

We believe your headteacher and teachers can make your school even better. We have asked them to:

- make sure that when teachers give you work to complete, it is never too difficult or too easy
- help you to improve your knowledge of other cultures and to find out more about the customs and traditions of people in this country, including those from cultural backgrounds that are different from your own
- make the Reception classroom and outdoor area more interesting and exciting for children in their first year at the school.

Once again, thank you for making us feel so welcome in your school and remember you can help your school to get even better by continuing to work hard.

Yours sincerely

Michael Barron

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.