



Rossington Pheasant Bank Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 106688
Local Authority Doncaster
Inspection number 287587
Inspection dates 21–22 November 2006
Reporting inspector John Rutherford HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	West End Lane
School category	Community		Rossington, Doncaster
Age range of pupils	7–11		South Yorkshire DN11 0LP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01302 868252
Number on roll (school)	364	Fax number	01302 863843
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Jill Parsons
		Headteacher	Mr J Deans
Date of previous school inspection	19 November 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
7–11	21–22 November 2006	287587

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This larger-than-average junior school takes pupils from a socially and economically mixed area, with the balance being towards the disadvantaged. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is higher than average, as is the proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The majority of pupils are from a White British background.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

Pupils' standards in English and mathematics are unacceptable. They have been too low for a number of years: in the 2006 national tests less than half of the pupils reached the level expected for their age in English. This represents poor progress between Years 3 and 6 because the pupils come into school with attainment that is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils make poor progress because teaching does not consistently enable all pupils to do the best they can. Teachers with subject leadership responsibilities do not have a systematic approach to identifying where teaching needs to improve and ensuring appropriate support.

The headteacher has clearly identified these weaknesses and has recently requested support from the local authority and other external agencies. This is making a positive difference because teachers want to do better. However, the same weaknesses were identified by the last inspection in 2001 and the school made insufficient progress in the period since then, when it had no support. Because of this, and because the school's plans are inadequate in giving a clear direction for future development, the school has not demonstrated the capacity to bring about the required improvements on its own. The school provides unsatisfactory value for money.

Provision for the pupils' personal development and well-being is a strength of the school. Pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to learning. Their willingness to discuss their work with partners helps them to make progress in lessons and develop skills for later life. Attendance is below the national average, but the school is working very hard to improve. Pupils enjoy the range of art, music and sports activities that are provided during and after the school day. These are enriched by the school's partnerships with other agencies and participation in national award schemes. However, the school is not using the opportunities presented in other subjects as well as it might to develop pupils' skills in English and mathematics.

Pupils feel safe in school. For example, they know that any bullying is quickly dealt with. They also know that teachers go out of their way to help them. The school provides good care for vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to make satisfactory progress. Pupils have a good understanding of what it means to lead a healthy lifestyle. Parents express confidence in the school.

What the school should do to improve further

Raise standards in English and mathematics by:

- ensuring all teachers match pupils' work to their learning needs

- improving the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and standards by subject leaders
- planning future improvements to focus on actions aimed at raising pupils' achievement in English and mathematics and rigorously evaluate the outcomes of the actions to ensure that they are having the required impact on standards.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Pupils' achievement and standards are unsatisfactory. The school's results for English and mathematics in the national tests have been consistently below average for five years. In 2006 the results for English were particularly low, with less than half of the pupils reaching the expected standard for their age. This represents poor progress from Years 3 to 6 because pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with the national average in reading and mathematics. Attainment on entry is below average in writing, but it is still substantially below when pupils leave. Standards are especially low in handwriting and spelling throughout the school.

Results in the national tests for science have been consistently strong for a number of years. Since 2001 standards have been at least as good as those found in most other schools nationally. Pupils make very good progress in science. However, the school has not identified the strengths in this subject that might be applied to raising achievement in English and mathematics.

As a result of recent improvements there is now evidence in lessons that achievement in English and mathematics is improving. In a Year 4 lesson, for example, pupils confidently used different parts of speech when writing instructions and, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils showed a good breadth of knowledge when discussing methods for solving difficult mental calculations. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress because of effective support from teachers and teaching assistants.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are well behaved, welcoming to visitors and have good attitudes to work. They enjoy discussion with each other, developing new skills and taking part in all that the school provides. Pupils learn about how democracy works by electing a school council to take important decisions on their behalf, one recent example being the provision of a salad bar at lunchtimes. They also act responsibly when given authority: for example when voting for who should receive a 'golden award', they know that this should be done on the basis of merit rather than friendship. Pupils feel safe from bullying in school. They understand the importance of keeping safe and avoiding health risks such as drugs and smoking. Pupils develop good self-esteem because their achievements are publicly valued with rewards, such as 'golden time'. However, they are not well prepared for life after school because standards are too low in literacy

and numeracy and there are few links with the world of work. Attendance is below the national average, but the school is working very hard to improve it using highly visible wall displays and a system of awards. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching is satisfactory overall and improving. Good and outstanding lessons were observed but the strengths of these are not yet consistently seen in all classes. In the best lessons, teachers make good use of their accurate assessments of pupils' levels of knowledge and understanding to set challenging targets. These are shared with pupils so that they are clear about how they can make good progress. In less effective lessons the work is not always matched closely enough to the pupils' needs so that for some pupils the work may be too easy, or, particularly for the less able, too hard. Some of the lessons do not have a clear purpose with the result that pupils are not aware of what they are meant to be learning and this restricts progress. Expectations for handwriting and spelling are not consistently high enough. Relationships between staff and pupils are good throughout the school and behaviour is managed well. Lessons are orderly: the pupils pay attention and work well together.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory, with good features in promoting personal development. All statutory requirements are met and pupils find most subjects interesting and enjoyable. Although lessons in literacy and numeracy are central to the curriculum, opportunities are missed for pupils to improve their basic skills of handwriting and spelling in other subjects. Specific provision is made to develop pupils' skills in solving problems although the time for this is not always used effectively. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are met well because teachers provide work appropriate to their needs and carefully monitor their progress. A good extra-curricular programme, including musical, artistic and physical activities, helps pupils to develop their individual talents. This is enhanced by partnerships with specialist bodies and participation in local competitions. The school has reached the highest level in national award schemes for sports and the arts. Staff ensure that pupils understand how to lead a healthy lifestyle, and school lunches provide a good model for a balanced diet.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Good pastoral care helps to ensure that pupils feel safe and are happy. There are good systems to secure health and safety and effective arrangements for ensuring that

adults in school are suitable for working with children. Close partnerships with infant and secondary schools aid smooth transitions between schools. The school provides good information for parents, most of whom express confidence in the school. However, a few parents feel that the school does not take sufficient account of their views. Support for pupils who are vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is well organised. Their progress is monitored carefully and support is provided in accordance with their needs. Systems for monitoring the academic progress of all other pupils are not sufficiently robust. They have recently started to improve but are not yet used consistently enough to ensure that all pupils understand their targets and what they must do to reach them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

The leadership of the school is inadequate. This is because, until very recently, school leaders have not taken sufficiently robust action to tackle the long-standing problem of low attainment in English and mathematics. The improvements required were recommended in the last inspection, five years ago, and as they are only taking place now with external support, this is unsatisfactory progress. The headteacher, the senior leadership team and the governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they express a determination to bring about the required improvements. However, the school's process for planning improvements and monitoring their impact is not sufficiently effective in raising standards in English and mathematics.

Subject leaders are not effective in monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and standards throughout the school in relation to their subject: this is a significant factor in the low achievement in some classes.

The headteacher has already identified the aspects of teaching and subject leadership that need to be more effective and he has requested support from the local authority and other external agencies to bring this about. As a result of this support, new approaches are now being implemented. However, poor progress since the previous inspection, inadequacies in improvement planning and ineffective subject leadership indicate that the school does not possess the capacity, on its own, to bring about the improvements that are necessary.

Leadership is strong in creating a climate where pupils can develop an enjoyment of school and an understanding of the benefits of good relationships. The school strives to improve the behaviour of the pupils who present a challenge, rather than excluding them. Vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included in all that the school offers, which helps them to make satisfactory progress in their personal and academic development.

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	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	4

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

¹ Grade 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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

As you know, I came to inspect your school recently with my colleagues, Andrew Clark and Derek Pattinson. I would be very grateful if you could give our thanks to all the pupils who we talked to during the inspection. We took careful note of what they said and it helped us to make our judgements. Please thank all the other pupils because they were very pleasant and polite to us. As representatives of the pupils, I would like you pass on to them what we found during our visit.

You enjoy school because many of the staff work really hard to keep you safe and help you to learn. As one of your friends said, 'Teachers don't give up on us here.' You especially enjoy the very interesting science lessons and these help you to achieve well in this subject. You help each other in lessons, especially by discussing problems very sensibly with partners. We were very impressed by the way you work hard and behave well. The school provides lots of interesting activities for you such as art, music and games. I was disappointed I did not have time to sample some of the things that were made in your cookery club. We learned a lot from our conversations with pupils while eating some lovely dinners and we were impressed to hear that it was the school council that had influenced the decision to set up the salad bar at lunchtime. This shows how much you have learnt about healthy living.

However, we feel that you should be making much more progress in English and mathematics. Standards in these very important subjects are too low. Mr Deans and the teachers are determined to help you achieve more and they have already begun to do so. To help, we have asked them to make sure that they give you work that stretches every one of you. The leaders of the school will check that all lessons are of good quality and make sure the school concentrates on raising standards in English and mathematics.

We have recommended that your school is made subject to 'special measures'. This means that your school will receive extra support and inspectors will return to make sure that everything is going to plan. Please tell all the pupils that they can help too, by continuing to work as hard as they are doing and to concentrate especially on their handwriting and spelling. I am sure that while these improvements are being made, you will continue to enjoy school as much as you do at the moment.