

Ryhope Junior School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108787
Local Authority	Sunderland
Inspection number	324832
Inspection dates	27–28 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Moira Fitzpatrick

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	206
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Mary Fairclough
Headteacher	Mr David Miller
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2005
School address	Shaftesbury Avenue Ryhope Sunderland Tyne and Wear SR2 0RT
Telephone number	0191 5536275
Fax number	0191 5536277

Age group	7–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is an average size junior school set in an area of some socio-economic disadvantage. Nearly all pupils are from White British heritage. There are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above average, so too is the proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school holds an Activemark award and is preparing for the Healthy Schools accreditation.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Ryhope Junior is a very happy, successful school, which provides an excellent quality of education for its pupils. Standards are exceptionally high being consistently well above average and pupils' achievement is excellent. The school has sustained high performance in national tests for the last five years, with the exception of 2007 when standards dipped to average. Unvalidated results in 2008 national tests demonstrate the positive impact of the school's swift and effective response to this dip in performance. They were the school's best ever results in English, mathematics and science, with a very high proportion of pupils reaching both the expected and higher level.

Pupils of all abilities make excellent progress in their learning because teachers plan high quality lessons which are based on a very thorough knowledge of pupils' needs. They use questions very effectively to recap learning and to develop pupils' thinking. The school sets out to make learning fun and enjoyable and this is endorsed by pupils in Years 3 and 6 who enthuse about, 'great teachers ... make lessons interesting and always special'. The good curriculum makes a strong contribution to pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Community cohesion is good. While pupils develop a good understanding of the wider world they could have a better understanding of some aspects of British society.

Pupils are exceptionally well cared for. Parents agree that their children are well looked after and feel happy and safe in school. They are delighted with the progress they make. Excellent assessment of pupils' learning and good quality marking gives them clear pointers on how to improve their work so that they reach their targets. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds thrive in the school. Their personal development is excellent because their confidence is nurtured so well that they seize every opportunity to take responsibility and make a difference to the life of the school. Very high quality class assemblies are an excellent example of how well pupils develop the skills of citizenship, cooperation and teamwork. They take care of their own well-being by eating sensibly and taking plenty of exercise. They also look after each other through their excellent respect for school rules and family values. By the time they leave they are exceptionally well prepared for the future.

The leadership and management of the school are excellent because there is an unrelenting focus on raising standards and extending the opportunities for pupils. All staff are involved in school improvement and give their wholehearted support to developments. Governors are very supportive of the school. They manage resources very effectively to ensure the school provides exceptionally good value for money. The school is at the heart of its own community and promotes good links, locally and nationally. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection and the school is extremely well placed to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure pupils have a good understanding of the diversity of British society and life in other cultures.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Standards are exceptionally high and consistently well above average. Pupils achieve outstandingly well regardless of their starting points. Pupils join the school in Year 3 with

broadly average standards. School data and inspection evidence show that pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make excellent progress from when they start in Year 3 until they leave the school where their standards are well above average.

In 2008, provisional national tests results, at the end of Year 6, show that all pupils reached the expected level in science, while two thirds of the group gained the higher Level 5. A similar picture in English and mathematics showed over 90% reaching the expected level with nearly a half reaching the higher level. Some pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities made exceptional progress to reach the expected level for their age. Pupils now in Year 6 are on course to reach the targets set for the national tests in 2009, but these results are likely to be lower than in 2008, because of the lower ability of this year group. Very high standards can also be seen in pupils' work in art and design and this does much to enhance the vibrant environment the school provides.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their moral, social and spiritual development are excellent. Cultural development is good but could be developed further to give pupils a better knowledge of Britain's diverse society. Pupils are polite, confident, considerate and very keen to talk to visitors. Their behaviour is excellent and they respect their teachers to such an extent that they say they can approach any of them without exception, knowing that they will give support when necessary. Pupils seize the many opportunities to accept responsibility, for example, through the buddy system or running the fruit tuck shop, while younger pupils acknowledge the support given to them by Year 6. They feel very safe and say that this is 'definitely' a healthy school with balanced lunches and a good range of sporting activities. Pupils from Year 4 who visited a local Italian restaurant gave excellent examples of what constitutes a healthy meal. Pupils support charities, demonstrating their understanding of the needs of others. Attendance is above average and the sustained achievement in basic skills, places pupils in a very good position for their future lives and education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Teachers plan high quality lessons based on excellent knowledge of pupils' needs. This ensures that tasks are pitched at the right level for every pupil so they are able to work independently and at their own best rate. Teachers continually assess pupils' progress during lessons and remind pupils of their targets. This helps pupils to maintain a good pace to complete tasks in the given time. In the very best lessons, pupils are helped, through very good use of questions and small steps in lessons, to understand new ideas. Excellent relationships make pupils want to work hard to please and surprise their teachers. New systems for managing the learning of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have proved very effective in accelerating their learning. The role of the teaching assistants now encompasses working with pupils of all abilities so that all pupils have a good balance of teacher and teaching assistant support in lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good with some outstanding features. Provision for literacy and numeracy is very well adapted to meet the needs of all ability groups. Other subjects are planned in an innovative way so that learning is flexible and stimulates pupils' individual interests, while allowing them to make good use of their literacy, numeracy and computer skills. Themed study weeks, such as the American week provide superb examples of this. The personal, social and health education curriculum makes good provision for pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles and how to look after their personal safety. However, pupils do not have enough opportunity to gain a good understanding of the diversity of British society. The curriculum is well enriched through opportunities for educational visits and visitors. The good range of after-school clubs offers pupils opportunities to practise and develop their skills even further.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school has ensured that pupils are safeguarded and all relevant procedures are in place. Parents of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities welcome the well planned support given to them and their children. Excellent links with outside agencies provide further support for these pupils. The recent nurture training, for all staff, is influencing every area of school as staff confidently support and develop pupils' social skills. This is especially beneficial for the most vulnerable pupils. Guidance given to pupils to support their learning is excellent. It is based on regular, rigorous and accurate assessment of pupils' progress. Pupils know how to improve their work because they are very clear about their targets and are supported by a marking system which focuses on constant improvement. This is a very inclusive school where a recent audit of provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has resulted in a review of classroom practice. As a result, these pupils now make very good progress.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are excellent. The highly effective headteacher leads a very skilled team of senior managers who have a clear view of the school's strengths and where it needs to improve. Staff morale is high and all contribute to the development of the school. Together, staff create outstanding inclusion practices, which enable all pupils to achieve their best. The school has maintained very high academic standards since the last inspection and has improved progress, especially for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. School self-evaluation is accurate, if sometimes a little modest, and this ensures that the school sets the correct priorities for improvement. The school collects a wealth of data and uses highly effective tracking systems to set and meet the challenging targets it sets for itself. Governors are well informed about the school and give very good support to many aspects of its work.

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Annex A

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?	1
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	1

Achievement and standards

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

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	1
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?	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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**

1 December 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ryhope Junior School, Sunderland, SR2 0RT

Thank you all for the warm and friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. Please pass on our thanks to your families for the questionnaires they returned and tell them that we took their views into account.

We were very impressed by your kind and thoughtful behaviour and by the way you seem to take a lot of responsibility for running things in the school such as assemblies and the tuck shop. We agree with you that your school is outstanding and thought you'd like to know what makes it so special and successful.

- You all work very hard, make very good progress in your learning and reach very high standards in your work. Well done!
- You have excellent personal skills that prepare you very well for the future. These make you confident learners and prepare you to be very good citizens who care for others.
- Teaching in your school is of an exceptionally high standard because your teachers track how well you are learning and make sure you have the right level of support and challenge in all lessons. You also told us that your teachers make your learning a lot of fun. We agree – they certainly do!
- Your teachers know and care for you very well. They make good links with your families and give support to whoever needs it in school. This gives your school a very special feel and is why everyone feels safe and happy.

The headteacher, senior staff and governors know exactly how well the school is doing and how to improve it further. We have said that helping you to learn more about the different beliefs and traditions of all the people who live in Britain would make sure you have a good understanding of the world in which you live.

We know that you will make the most of any new learning, as you do now, which will be your contribution to making your school even better. All good wishes to all of you for the future and a big thank you for those two lovely assemblies we were lucky enough to attend.

Yours sincerely

Moira Fitzpatrick

Lead inspector