



# Rothersthorpe Church of England Primary School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 122014  
**LEA** Northamptonshire  
**Inspection number** 281155  
**Inspection dates** 8 March 2006 to 8 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mike Capper AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Church Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled		Rothesthorpe
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4 to 11		Northampton, Northamptonshire NN7 3HS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 830995
<b>Number on roll</b>	93	<b>Fax number</b>	01604 830995
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr J Considine
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 June 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs J E Battams

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This small rural primary school takes pupils from the local village as well as the nearby town of Northampton. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. There is an above average proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities, though these are not distributed evenly across the school. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception Class varies significantly from year-to-year but is broadly average in the current year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school with significant strengths in pupils' personal development and the quality of care and support. The school is at the heart of the local community and pupils enjoy school, work hard and behave well. Standards vary from year to year according to the number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities in each year group, but are broadly average overall by the end of Year 6. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, though progress is not even from class to class. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress throughout the school. In the Foundation Stage, where provision is good, pupils make good progress and in the current year, standards are above those found nationally. In Years 3 to 6 pupils make good progress in English and satisfactory progress in mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, there are weaknesses in teaching and work is not always matched well enough to pupils' need in literacy and numeracy lessons. Nevertheless, progress is satisfactory overall because pupils who are struggling with their work are identified and supported quickly, helping to ensure that they do not fall behind. The good curriculum is enhanced by an outstanding range of additional activities.

Members of staff work together well as a team. Senior managers have a realistic view of how well the school is doing. However, their evaluation of overall effectiveness is more generous than that of the inspectors because it does not reflect recent changes in teaching staff, which mean that pupils in Years 1 and 2 are doing less well than in the past. The enthusiastic and dedicated headteacher has a very heavy teaching commitment and this restricts the time she has available to support and develop teaching where weaknesses have been identified. Nevertheless, there is a strong commitment to raising standards and the school provides satisfactory value for money. The school has successfully dealt with the weaknesses from the last inspection, and has the capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase progress rates by improving the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2 and ensure that provision consistently meets the differing needs of pupils.
- Improve progress in mathematics to the same good level as in English in Years 3 to 6 by giving pupils greater opportunities to improve their mental mathematics.
- Reduce the teaching commitment and subject responsibilities of the headteacher so that she will have more time to deal with any weaknesses in teaching.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement from their differing starting points is satisfactory. Standards vary from year to year according to the capability of year groups, but are broadly average overall by the end of Year 6. In the Reception Year, standards are above those found nationally, and pupils make good progress. Pupils make particularly good progress in

personal, social and emotional development, showing good independence and high levels of confidence.

In Years 1 to 6, progress is satisfactory overall. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 and these were achieved in 2005, with attainment in reading being above average. In Years 1 and 2, standards are broadly average though teaching does not always build well enough on what pupils already know. Nevertheless, progress is satisfactory because of the effective way that the school supports those pupils who are in danger of falling behind as a result of any weaknesses in teaching. Progress accelerates in Years 3 to 6, because teaching is better. Pupils make good progress in English, especially in reading where parents support learning well, and satisfactory progress in mathematics, where some pupils lack confidence in mental mathematics.

The school makes good use of assessment information to identify pupils who have learning difficulties or disabilities. These pupils make good progress because they are given good support by teachers and teaching assistants.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are keen to learn and have good relationships with members of staff and each other. Pupils in the Reception classes are confident and take a genuine interest in what the teacher and their friends have to say. Pupils behave well throughout the day and rates of attendance are good.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop a good understanding of belonging to a community and take responsibilities seriously. For example, older pupils support Reception pupils when they first start school, and ensure that pupils behave sensibly when eating their lunch. Most pupils are kind to each other and feel safe at school. They have a good understanding of how they can improve their health by eating healthy foods and taking exercise. The well organised school council has sensibly recommended that some playground games be restricted to reduce accidents. Pupils make a good contribution towards the wider community by showing their appreciation for the needs of others, for example by supporting a school in Uganda. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing basic literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills to prepare them for the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All members of staff have good relationships with the pupils and include interesting, practical activities in their lessons. In the Reception class, where teaching is good, expectations of what pupils should achieve are consistently high, resulting in there being a good pace to learning.

In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory overall, but pupils' differing needs are not met fully in some literacy and numeracy lessons. This slows the pace of learning. In Years 3 to 6, where there is more good teaching, there are good features in all lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to encourage pupils to think for themselves. In literacy and science lessons, teachers make learning purposeful and encourage pupils to explore their own ideas. However, in some mathematics lessons throughout the school work is comfortable rather than challenging and this hinders the pace at which pupils acquire new skills.

Well trained teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning, especially when working with pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. In some lessons, such as a numeracy lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher and teaching assistant work together especially well, teaching different groups of pupils at the same time, and helping to ensure that needs are being met.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good curriculum with some outstanding additional activities. Members of staff plan a wide range of practical and purposeful activities that engage the pupils' interest well. There is an exceptionally large number of clubs for a small school, and a very good range of visits and visitors to provide specialist interest and support. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are working with a teacher from the secondary school to learn to speak French. Creativity and various cultures are promoted well throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 have made some attractive, woven 'God's eyes' in the style used by South American Indians.

There are good opportunities for pupils to learn how to stay healthy and safe, and pupils benefit from an annual visit from the 'life-education' caravan. The provision for basic skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory overall. However, not enough use is made of ICT across the curriculum and this slows the pace at which skills can improve.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good quality care, guidance and support for its pupils. Members of staff monitor the progress of individual pupils carefully and provide good support for those with learning difficulties and those at risk of falling behind in their learning. Individual education plans for these pupils are detailed and support learning well. Target setting for all pupils is now well established, though the use of this to match work to need is not yet consistent across the school, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons in Years 1 and 2.

There are very good procedures for supporting pupils when they first start school in the Reception class. Consequently, pupils soon gain confidence and learn routines. A valuable induction week helps pupils to settle quickly when they move classes.

The school works well in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being. There are good arrangements for safeguarding the well-being and safety of all pupils. The school identifies and helps pupils at risk and has secure child protection procedures.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The very hard working headteacher has a clear vision for the sort of school she wants. There is a happy working atmosphere in school with a strong sense of teamwork. The family ethos that permeates all aspects of school life reflects the commitment of all members of staff to fostering good personal development and to welcoming and supporting pupils with a wide range of differing needs.

There are satisfactory procedures for evaluating the work of the school involving all members of staff and governors. Consequently, they have a realistic view of the school's strengths and weaknesses, though their evaluation of overall effectiveness has been too generous because of recent changes in staff, which have weakened the quality of teaching. Senior managers have accurately identified that more needs to be done to iron out inconsistencies in teaching in Years 1 and 2 and there is a continued drive to improve the school. However, the headteacher's very heavy teaching commitment means that the response to dealing with weaknesses in teaching has not been quick enough, although effective action has been taken to ensure that pupils do not fall behind. Strategic planning is thorough, though priorities are not always identified clearly enough in the school development plan. This makes it difficult for governors to monitor progress and to challenge the school about how well pupils are achieving.

Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is well managed. Good use is made of data about groups of pupils and individuals to identify those who need additional support and this is always given readily.

Most parents are very happy with the school and they contribute very well to their children's learning. There are very good procedures for involving parents and pupils in school self-evaluation. For example, there are regular parent surgeries for the sharing of views. The headteacher and governors are moving the school in the right direction. The school has successfully dealt with issues from the last inspection and is able to improve further.

**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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	NA

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for showing us your work. You were very polite and friendly.

What we liked most about your school:

- The fun activities in the Reception classes that help you to learn new things quickly
- Your teachers are very kind and caring and they look after you well. They provide lots of interesting activities and clubs for you to take part in
- The school is good at teaching you about the importance of staying safe and healthy and you are very aware of these things
- You enjoy school, behave well and work hard in lessons. Your well-organised school council helps you to contribute to school life
- Your headteacher and governors know that there are still things that could be improved and they are working hard to make the school even better
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- Make sure that in Years 1 and 2 teachers always give you work in English and mathematics that is not too easy or too hard, for you to speed up how you make progress
- Help you to learn even more quickly in mathematics
- Give your headteacher more time to sort out things that could be better.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn. We wish you all well for the future.