

Rushmore Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number130302Local AuthorityHackneyInspection number360124

Inspection dates 19–20 January 2011

Reporting inspector Gordon Ewing

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

Type of school Primary

School category Community

Age range of pupils 3-11

Gender of pupils Mixed

Number of pupils on the school roll 477

Appropriate authority The governing body

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They visited 26 lessons, observing 19 teachers. Meetings were held with the headteacher, other senior leaders, members of the governing body, members of the Parent? Teachers' Association, members of staff and groups of pupils. Informal discussions were conducted with some parents, carers and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work, including the systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, pupils' work in their exercise books and teachers' planning and marking. Inspectors took account of separate questionnaires completed by 149 parents and carers and 48 older pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The steps taken since the last inspection to improve day-to-day assessment practice in the Early Years Foundation Stage in order to evaluate the accuracy of the school's tracking of children's progress over time.
- The relative rates of progress through the school of all pupils in English and mathematics but especially boys, those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.
- How effectively leaders at all levels monitor the quality of teaching and ensure that assessment information is used effectively so that all pupils achieve as well as they can. The impact of the strategies, recently introduced, to improve the quality of teaching and to secure consistent rates of learning so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- How effectively the governing body is ensuring that the school's actions are having clear impact on outcomes for pupils, in the light of the recent staff turnover, especially at leadership level.

Information about the school

Rushmore Primary School is larger than the average-sized primary school. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well above average. The largest group of pupils (27.5%) is of White British heritage. A very large proportion of pupils are learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is similar to that found nationally. Predominantly, these pupils have behavioural, social and emotional difficulties or speech, language and communication difficulties. The governing body manages out-of-hours provision in the form of a breakfast club for up to 20 pupils and an after-school club for up to 60 pupils. In recent times there has been significant staff turnover, especially at leadership level.

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

Rushmore Primary is a satisfactory school where pupils participate in a cohesive and harmonious community. One pupil, mirroring the views of many, commented, 'We are one big happy family.' Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in their above-average attendance and their positive attitudes to learning. They feel happy and safe at school, even though the behaviour of some pupils is rather boisterous at break times. Most parents and carers are happy with their child's experience at school but a minority are dissatisfied with the degree to which the school takes account of their suggestions and concerns. The school's leadership acknowledges that communication between home and school has yet to meet the realistic expectations of parents and carers.

Children get off to a sound start in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress thereafter to achieve average levels of attainment by the end of Year 6. The school recognised that some boys, as well as pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, were underachieving and initiated a programme of intervention support that is now closing the gap. Consequently, these pupils are now making similar progress to that of their peers. Pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and good progress in reading. Attainment and rates of progress in writing are too variable across the school. Recently introduced initiatives, to address underachievement in writing, are yet to have sustained impact.

The quality of teaching, though satisfactory overall, is erratic across the school. Relationships between adults and pupils are good and classrooms are calm and well organised. However, in some lessons expectations are not high enough and too much time is wasted on unproductive tasks. Some teachers talk for too long and this limits the time for pupils to get to grips with their learning activities. Consequently, the pace of learning is not as high as it could be. Assessment data are used to good effect in identifying underachievement and targeting intervention and support so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as well as those who speak English as an additional language, experience activities that boost their learning effectively. The majority of teachers, however, do not use assessment data consistently in every lesson to plan activities, so other pupils' day-to-day learning needs are not always fully met. In particular, opportunities are missed to ensure more able pupils are always adequately challenged. Teachers' marking is regular and positive but does not consistently provide pupils with the necessary guidance for them to take the next step in their learning with confidence.

With the support of the Learning Trust, the new senior leadership team has quickly grasped the nettle of improving teaching. Leaders at all levels have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have a precise grasp of the school's strengths and

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weaknesses. The effective governing body has played a key role, at a time of significant staff turnover, in ensuring that the focus on sustained improvement has been maintained. It shows determination in challenging and supporting the school in tackling systemic weaknesses, especially in teaching. Taking into account the determined drive of senior leaders, a realistic approach to self-evaluation and the continuing effective support of the Learning Trust, the school demonstrates a satisfactory capacity to sustain further improvement.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By April 2011, improve the quality of teaching, especially in writing, so that 60% of lessons are good or better and, by July 2011, 80% of lessons are good or better, by:
 - giving targeted support to teachers through additional coaching so that they confidently understand the components of a good lesson
 - continuing links with external trainers to increase inter-school observations to model and develop good practice
 - maintaining rigorous approaches to monitoring to gauge the impact of coaching and to share effective practice across the school.
- By July 2011, improve the use of assessment to support learning and, as a result, improve attainment and levels of progress for pupils of all abilities, by:
 - providing further training so teachers understand how to make rigorous use of assessment information to plan work that is better tuned to pupils' day-to-day learning needs
 - involving pupils in the setting of learning targets, to develop their skills in checking their own and others' progress and increase their independence
 - monitoring the impact of the marking policy systematically, scrutinising pupils' work and improving teachers' marking and feedback so that pupils are better prepared for the next step in their learning.
- By July 2011, improve parental engagement so that feedback from questionnaires shows that at least 90% of parents and carers are satisfied with communications between home and school, by:
 - increasing the range of workshops for parents and carers and improving online information so that they are better informed about the school's work
 - ensuring that teachers are able to share with parents and carers specific information about pupils' academic progress at consultation meetings
 - providing opportunities for parents and carers to share their views and concerns on a one-to-one basis
 - publishing feedback, through a range of media, from parents and carers and reporting on actions taken by the school.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

The quality of pupils' achievement and learning is satisfactory overall. It is stronger in Years 3 to 6 because teaching is more consistent. Pupils make good progress when the teaching is challenging and activities are well matched to their needs. In an outstanding Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils compared the appropriateness of informal and formal writing when composing a letter of complaint to a restaurant. The teacher's high-order questioning and the use of pupil 'experts' to challenge, coordinate and evaluate the work of small groups ensured high levels of concentration and enthusiastic participation. Their subsequent writing was well structured and used impressive vocabulary including 'atrocious', 'inedible' and 'disastrous'. The teaching assistant worked very effectively with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they made confident progress. More generally, pupils who receive focused intervention, especially those who speak English as an additional language, are generally well supported by teaching assistants and, consequently, they make similar progress to their peers.

Pupils feel confident that any concerns are swiftly addressed by adults and report that bullying and racism are rare. Peer mediators talk with evident pride of their role in supporting other pupils who have worries or friendship difficulties. The school council plays a sound role in shaping aspects of school life and are clearly keen to do much more. Pupils have a good understanding of the components of a healthy lifestyle and are keen participants in sport and music. At times, their personal development is hindered by being overloaded with targets, having limited opportunities to develop independent learning skills or by assessing their own work and that of their peers. By developing a satisfactory level of basic skills, the school prepares pupils adequately for their future adult lives. Pupils have a sound understanding of different religions and cultures and demonstrate tolerant and appreciative attitudes of other communities. Their spiritual development is no more than satisfactory as they are infrequently exposed to inspirational teaching or activities that encourage them to reflect more deeply about the wider world.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance 1	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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

How effective is the provision?

All adults establish good relationships with pupils, which have a positive impact on attitudes to learning and pupils' behaviour in lessons. While the majority of teaching is satisfactory or better, there is some that is inadequate. In a good Year 4 numeracy lesson, pupils used a range of calculation methods to solve problems of subtraction. The activities were closely matched to pupils' needs, for example more-able pupils were successfully tackling problems involving decimals while a pupil who spoke very little English was developing a good understanding of number bonds to 20 using an abacus. The subtraction problems were closely linked to real life, bringing greater purpose to the learning. The pace and challenge in other lessons are more inconsistent as pupils spend too much time on the carpet or are not provided with opportunities to develop key skills such as using a dictionary or thesaurus. When talk partners are used effectively pupils engage in meaningful discussion about their work and, consequently, consolidate and accelerate their learning. This effective practice is not a common enough feature across the school.

The curriculum is appropriately personalised, especially for those pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and those pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is broad and benefits from a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, which are well attended. In particular, physical education and music are key strengths. However, there is insufficient promotion of writing across other subjects and not always enough time is given to some foundation subjects. Too much time is wasted in

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activities such as tidying up. Pupils who attend the breakfast and after-school clubs are well cared for and participate in an adequate range of activities that help develop social skills and healthy lifestyle habits in a homely atmosphere.

The pastoral support provided to pupils and their families is satisfactory. The school swiftly identifies vulnerable pupils and has secure systems in place to track their progress and the impact of intervention activities to promote their personal development and learning. Sound liaison with external agencies has ensured that most targeted pupils make satisfactory progress. Support for vulnerable pupils as they transfer to secondary school is a strength. However, the strategies to prepare children for the move from Reception to Year 1 are of variable quality.

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	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher is thoroughly assisted by her new senior leadership team. With the support of the Learning Trust and an effective governing body they have set out a clear vision and path of improvement. Although there are signs of early impact, for example in some improvements in teaching, they recognise that there is still a long way to go. Monitoring of teaching and learning is rigorous and robust and outcomes are used to target support to teachers through effective coaching and mentoring. New approaches to using assessment to track progress and inform lesson planning are beginning to bear fruit, especially for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. Leaders show a sound commitment to tackling discrimination and promoting equal opportunities. However, issues that remain over lack of challenge in some lessons place more-able pupils at a disadvantage. Safeguarding procedures are robust and thorough, ensuring that staff and pupils are safe. The parental questionnaire showed varying degrees of satisfaction with some aspects of the school's work, especially with how the school responds to parents' and carers' concerns and views. The school has plans in place to improve home-school communication and for reporting on pupils' progress. Community cohesion is soundly promoted and links with other communities, nationally and globally, are currently being established.

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for leadership and management

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
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

Children make satisfactory progress in Nursery and Reception from their starting points. They enjoy activities and eagerly participate in indoor and outdoor learning tasks. Parents and carers are confident that their children are safe and develop sound attitudes to health and hygiene. For example, children are aware of the importance of fruit in their diet and know that they must wash their hands before a snack. Time is not consistently used to good effect and, consequently, the pace of learning is variable. The quality of provision is stronger in the Nursery than in Reception because adults have a better understanding of children's developmental needs. Indoor areas have been improved for both the Nursery and Reception so that children are exposed to a stimulating learning environment. New approaches in using assessment to inform day-to-day planning are at an early stage of implementation. However, early indications are that they are beginning to have an impact, especially in the Nursery. Consequently, the tracking of all children's progress does not always accurately inform next steps for learning, though the needs of vulnerable children are planned for effectively. Leadership of the Early Years Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Weaknesses in planning and the teaching of the sounds that letters make, especially in Reception, have been identified accurately and plans are now in place to bring about the necessary improvements.

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		
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3	

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one third of parents and carers returned completed questionnaires. The responses of the very large majority were positive about their child's overall experience at school. A minority of parents and carers expressed concerns about:

- the effectiveness of the school's leadership and management
- the quality of information about pupils' progress
- the school's response to their suggestions and concerns.

With regard to the first point, inspectors judged that the school's leadership is responding to the considerable challenges of improving teaching and learning with purpose and vigour.

Second, inspection evidence indicates that new strategies to improve assessment procedures, as well as teachers' confidence in reporting on pupils' progress, are taking time to implement fully.

With regard to the third concern, in discussions with parents and carers at the start and the end of the day, inspectors heard mainly positive views about the school's response to their suggestions and concerns. Parents and carers reported that any issues brought to the attention of the school were generally dealt with promptly and effectively. The governing body also has plans in place to establish a parents' forum to improve the school's approach to consulting and listening to stakeholders' suggestions and concerns. The inspection team judges that this issue is being suitably addressed.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rushmore 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 149 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 477 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	55	60	40	5	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	71	48	71	48	4	3	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	40	27	81	54	18	12	7	5
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	32	75	50	12	8	7	5
The teaching is good at this school	50	34	69	46	15	10	4	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	42	28	75	50	18	12	6	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	49	33	83	56	8	5	5	3
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	26	72	48	9	6	11	7
The school meets my child's particular needs	41	28	75	50	19	13	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	53	36	69	46	11	7	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	30	20	74	50	23	15	12	8
The school is led and managed effectively	35	23	73	49	18	12	15	10
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	36	72	48	11	7	9	6

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 all 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)				
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate	
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3	
Primary schools	9	44	39	7	
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11	
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3	
Special schools	35	43	17	5	
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9	
All schools	13	43	37	8	

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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: 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.

■ 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 pupils' 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.



21 January 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rushmore Primary School, Hackney, E5 OLE

The inspection team enjoyed its recent visit to your school and seeing you at work. Thank you for welcoming us to your school and telling us about your learning.

You informed us that you enjoy school and that you all get on well together. The majority of your parents and carers are also happy with the school. These are some of the things that we found about your school.

- You make sound progress through the school, though we know you can do even better, especially in writing.
- You know how to lead a healthy lifestyle, for example in exercising regularly, and you are keen participants in the range of clubs and trips available.
- Most of you feel safe, enjoy your lessons and attend school regularly. Your behaviour in lessons is generally good though at break times some of you can be a little boisterous.
- You are keen to improve your school and you play your part by taking on responsibilities, such as being a school councillor or peer mediator.
- The staff take care of you and you are confident that they are always available to help if you have any worries.

Everyone at Rushmore Primary wants the school to be even better and to achieve this we have asked the staff and governors to improve these things:

- the quality of teaching and your learning across all subjects and, especially, in writing
- teachers' marking, assessment, target setting and advice to you so that you know what you have to do to improve your work
- the quality and frequency of communications between home and school so that your parents and carers are better informed about the progress you make, as well as improving the way the school responds to suggestions and concerns.

You can help by continuing to work as hard as you can. We wish you all every future success.

Yours sincerely

Gordon Ewing

Lead inspector

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