

# Robert Browning Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100809
<b>Local Authority</b>	Southwark
<b>Inspection number</b>	354896
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Joy Considine

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	317
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Marianne Breedon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Karen McBride
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 February 2008
<b>School address</b>	King and Queen Street London SE17 1DQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons taught by 12 teachers and held meetings with senior leaders, members of the governing body and groups of pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked at school development planning, pupils' assessment and tracking information, minutes from governing body meetings and other documentation related to the inspection including safeguarding pupils. Additionally, they analysed questionnaires received from 83 parents and carers, as well as those from staff and pupils.

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

- How effectively the school has raised attainment in English and mathematics.
- How well teachers use assessment information to ensure that all pupils make the best possible progress in English and mathematics.
- How well the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils. How robustly school leaders monitor the work of the school to identify areas for development.
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## Information about the school

The school is situated in an inner-city community and is much larger than most primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than usual. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is above average. The percentage of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. A higher- than-usual number of pupils join or leave the school throughout the school year.

The school has gained a number of awards, including Healthy School status and the Bronze Eco Award. There is a breakfast club and an after-school club for pupils, which are managed by the governing body. The school is currently undergoing a major building programme to provide additional accommodation for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and new office facilities.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

The school has improved significantly since the last inspection and it now provides a good quality of education for pupils. This is due largely to the outstanding leadership shown by the headteacher and her dedicated team of staff and governors. School leaders have an excellent understanding of the strengths of the school and a clear view of what more needs to be done. They have had a relentless focus on raising attainment by improving the quality of teaching so that it is now good, with some that is outstanding. Their track record of rapid improvements shows that they have excellent capacity to sustain improvement.

Children make an excellent start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where they make outstanding progress in developing the skills which prepare them well for their future. Although attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 has risen steadily over recent years and is now broadly average, the school recognises that more could be done to improve this further. Most pupils make good progress because teachers make good use of assessment information to plan lessons that are matched well to their needs. Any remaining gaps between different groups are rapidly closing. The success reflects the considerable effectiveness with which staff promote equal opportunity and tackle discrimination for all groups of pupils across all aspects of the school's work.

Pupils feel very safe in school because of the importance school leaders place on providing a safe, secure environment for pupils. One pupil said 'I feel safe and happy in school.' Procedures for safeguarding pupils are outstanding. The quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils is exemplary. The school makes excellent use of partnerships, for example with agencies from the local authority, to support its work with pupils, particularly those whose circumstances may make them more vulnerable. Relationships with parents and carers have improved during recent years and are now good. However, there remains a small minority of parents and carers who take their children out of school to attend family occasions and this affects the overall attainment of some pupils.

Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their school and the wider community. In addition to the school council, there are pupil committees for curriculum planning and for buildings and premises. Pupils agree strongly that their voice will be heard. One pupil said 'There is always someone to listen to your ideas.' This view was exemplified by the involvement of pupils in developing the curriculum so that they could learn more about Fair Trade.

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment in English and mathematics from satisfactory to good by:

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- providing pupils with more opportunities to respond to teachers' comments showing them how they can improve their work
  - reducing the number of photocopied resources to provide pupils with more opportunities to record their work independently
  - providing pupils with more guidance to improve their handwriting and presentation of their work.
- Work more closely with parents and carers to encourage them to make sure their children attend school more regularly.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Children start school with levels of skills that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in literacy. They work hard and subsequently make good and occasionally outstanding progress throughout the school, particularly in writing. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress because they receive targeted support, sometimes involving one-to-one tuition, to help them to overcome their difficulties. Pupils who are from minority ethnic groups, particularly African pupils, those who speak English as an additional language and join the school later than usual, achieve as well as other groups because staff use assessment information effectively to plan lessons that are matched well to their needs. In most lessons, pupils take an interest and are keen to respond to teachers' questions. For example, in one literacy lesson, pupils were able to provide some excellent descriptions of what it was like to be in a rainforest. One pupil wrote 'Vines swirling and twisting up into the sky.' Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that, although they are making good progress, many pupils have poor handwriting skills and their work is not presented as well as it could be.

Pupils behave well and get on well together. They are thoughtful and considerate and show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. They enjoy thoroughly the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities within the school. For example, the pupil buildings committee meets regularly with the architect and builders to monitor the progress of the building programme and then give feedback to classmates and parents and carers. Pupils have a good understanding of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle and this is reflected in the award of Healthy School status. They make a significant contribution to the wider community. For example, they initiate collections for charities and recently sold cakes and cushions at the local market to raise funds for children in Africa. Additionally, they have supported the local community by getting involved in cleaning up the area, which helped them to gain the bronze Eco Award.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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?

Throughout the school, teachers adopt imaginative methods and use resources which capture pupils' imaginations. Lessons are well planned, based on a thorough assessment of pupils' needs, allowing them to make good progress regardless of their background or ability. Teachers challenge pupils by asking probing questions to explore their understanding. For example, in one mathematics lesson, the teacher asked a pupil to explain how he had arrived at the answer to a complex problem. He responded confidently, showing an excellent understanding of computational skills. When marking pupils' work, teachers provide detailed comments telling them what they have done well and what they need to do to further improve their work. However, pupils are not given the opportunity to follow up these comments and this sometimes slows the progress they make.

The curriculum has been planned imaginatively and it is enriched by a wide range of activities and resources and makes a significant contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. The curriculum is taught mostly through themes or texts such as 'The Iron Man'. In many cases, pupils are asked to explore more complicated ideas which make a good contribution to their spiritual and moral development. The quality of artwork is high, with some excellent displays of pupils' work showing their well-developed skills in painting, drawing and sculpture. However, the quality of work seen in pupils' topic books is not as good as it could be, owing to the number of photocopied resources used, which limits the

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pupils' ability to record their work independently. The curriculum is enriched by visits to local places of interest, such as the market and the Globe Theatre, and recently the choir joined other local schools singing at the Royal Festival Hall.

The school prides itself on the high quality of care and guidance provided for pupils and their families and will go out of its way to seek support for those in need. There are excellent arrangements for child protection and for ensuring that all pupils are safe, particularly during the building programme. The school has put in place a number of measures to encourage good attendance, but despite these, there remains a number of families who take their child out of school for family occasions. There are excellent induction arrangements in place for pupils who join the school other than at the usual time, as well as arrangements for pupils moving to the next stage of their education. The breakfast club provides a welcoming start for pupils at the beginning of the day, whilst the after-school club provides pupils with a range of activities at the end of the day.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, together with the senior leaders, provides outstanding leadership, drive and ambition to sustain an excellent capacity to improve. Staff are focused relentlessly on further improvement and work exceptionally well together, with a good balance of experience and skills. One member of staff wrote 'I really enjoy working at this school. It is always friendly and welcoming.' School leaders, together with pupils and the governing body, have established a set of core values which underpin all aspects of their work. Rigorous monitoring by senior leaders has led to a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and systems for performance management of all staff are used to drive further improvement.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school and receives high-quality information, which it uses to monitor and challenge school leaders. Attention is paid by staff at all levels to ensure the highest quality of safety and care for pupils. There are thorough procedures for ensuring the safeguarding of pupils through the checks made on all adults who work and visit the school. The school has the promotion of equal opportunities at the heart of all that it does. Staff achieve it extremely effectively for all pupils across all aspects of the school's work. Consequently, there is very little variation in the achievement between different groups of pupils and any unevenness is rapidly reducing. Discrimination of any type is not tolerated. The school makes a good contribution to community cohesion. Clear actions are in place to promote pupils'

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understanding from a local and global perspective, although the school is aware of the need to develop pupils' understanding of diverse parts of the United Kingdom.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide children with an excellent start to school. They have created a safe, secure and attractive environment in which children can learn and play indoors and outside. Staff are highly skilled in understanding the needs of young children and are able to provide a wide range of exciting activities to interest and engage them. There is a good balance of activities that are led by adults and those that are selected by children themselves. The balance has led to children making excellent progress in both the Nursery and Reception classes, particularly in their social skills and their literacy skills.

All staff make high-quality observations of children's learning and use this information to plan activities to challenge children and inspire them to use their skills across a range of contexts. For example, children in the Reception class were making their own books, whilst children in the Nursery were matching sounds to musical instruments. Other children were planting seeds or serving delicious meals in the role play caf. Teaching is outstanding, with all adults working together closely to promote children's development and welfare. Although the current building project has temporarily taken up some of the Early Years Foundation Stage space, staff have made the best possible use of what remains, to provide children with access to the outdoor area.

The leader of the setting is highly effective and has an excellent understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the Early Years Foundation Stage. He leads a skilled team of staff who work together exceptionally well to ensure that all children have equal access to all opportunities they provide.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	1
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

## Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires returned by parents and carers was broadly average. The overwhelming majority of these parents and carers were very happy with the school. They consider the school to be well led and managed and to have a dedicated team of staff. They agree that the school makes their children feel safe and that the school encourages their children to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The majority of parents and carers believe that their children are making good progress and that teaching is good across the school. Evidence from inspection supports the parents' and carers' very positive views.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Robert Browning 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 83 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 317 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	63	76	19	23	1	1	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	47	43	52	0	0	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	55	66	28	34	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	44	53	38	46	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	61	31	37	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	54	37	45	5	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	39	44	53	1	1	2	2
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)	36	43	37	45	5	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	39	44	53	1	1	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	34	41	45	54	2	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	35	45	54	4	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	41	49	40	48	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	53	64	29	35	0	0	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 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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:	<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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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 May 2011

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Robert Browning Primary School, London E17 1 DQ**

Thank you for making my colleagues and me so welcome when we visited your school. We, thoroughly, enjoyed meeting you all and hearing what you had to say about your school.

We found your school to be a good school. Your teachers and other adults care very much for you and they are planning lessons that are helping you all to make good progress. They are giving you plenty of opportunities to be involved in the school by working with the builders and by helping them to create the curriculum. We were also impressed by the number of visits you make to places such as the local market to sell cakes and cushions as well as to some of the famous buildings in London such as the Globe Theatre. Teachers mark your work very thoroughly and provide you with comments about what you need to learn next, but they do not always give you time to respond to these comments. We noted also that, although you attend school more regularly than before, some of you still take too much time off school and this means that you do not always do as well as you can in lessons.

To make your school even better we have asked your school leaders to:

- work closely with your parents and carers to make sure you all come to school regularly
- give you time to respond to the detailed comments they make about your work.

We are sure you will do all you can to help your school leaders to make your school even better and I wish you all every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Joy Considine

Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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