

Rush Green Junior School

Dagenham Road, Rush Green, Romford, RM7 0RL

Inspection dates

8–9 November 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- The quality of teaching in some classes is not yet good enough to ensure that all pupils achieve their full potential.
- Progress made by pupils is broadly in line with what is expected nationally, and not above the expected levels.
- In a number of lessons teachers spend too much time talking, so pupils are not actively involved in tasks that help them to learn. This slows their progress.
- Too many lessons are not planned well enough to deepen pupils' knowledge and to help them to think for themselves. However, most teachers are now using pupil activities such as 'talk partners' to encourage pupils to share ideas.
- When planning lessons, teachers do not focus enough on the specific abilities of their pupils to ensure that learning activities are well matched to their needs.
- Procedures for setting targets for teachers to help them improve their teaching and the progress of pupils are at early stages of development. Because of this, processes for checking and supporting teachers to improve have not had sufficient time to develop the quality of teaching.
- Leaders and managers are still in the process of putting together the school development plan which needs clearly defined targets with specified times for completion.

The school has the following strengths

- The governors are taking a strong lead in supporting the headteacher and his team to improve the work of the school.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's current position, and are providing all the support needed for it to improve further.
- School leaders consistently share their high expectations with staff, pupils and parents and carers, and are positively driving improvement across the school.
- The leadership team checks pupils' progress rigorously. As a result, it knows where to allocate resources to support underachieving pupils.
- Training has been used successfully to help teaching staff improve their work. For example, training on marking has resulted in pupils' books being marked well with useful guidance on next steps.
- Pupils' behaviour across the whole school is good. Pupils are positive and enjoy learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 21 lessons of which nine were jointly seen with the headteacher, and the assistant headteachers. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons to focus on specific aspects, such as behaviour and how well teachers check pupils' ongoing learning.
- Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the headteacher, senior and subject leaders and members of the governing body. A meeting was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the seven responses to the online questionnaire for parents and carers, Parent View, as well as 56 parent survey results collated by the school, in informing the inspection findings.
- The team observed the school's work and scrutinised a number of documents, including school improvement plans, data on pupils' current progress, pupils' written work, minutes of governing body meetings and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding. Inspectors listened to pupils read, and visited an assembly.

Inspection team

Janev Mehmet-Christofides, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Allan Barfoot	Additional Inspector
Juliet Ward	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average sized junior school.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is special additional funding from the government, is higher than average.
- The majority of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion whose first language is not English is above the national average.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs who are supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is low.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which is the government's minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The current headteacher has been in post since September 2012.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and raise progress rates by:
 - continuing to provide training for teachers so that they can improve their skills in using a variety of teaching activities and make sure that pupils of different abilities all improve their learning and make more progress
 - ensuring that teachers plan and deliver their lessons using specific knowledge about their pupils so that they can set work at the right level for all abilities
 - reducing the amount of teacher talk in lesson introductions to provide pupils with more opportunities for pupils to think, talk and evaluate their learning through a wider range of activities.
- Strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that the school development plan identifies expectations in terms of measurable, targets against time deadlines, so that all staff are able to understand their role in making progress continue
 - formalising the staff performance management programme and setting targets for improvement for teachers in line with the new appraisal policy.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment broadly in line with those expected for their age.
- Measured over time, almost all groups of pupils are making expected progress. By the time they leave the attainment of pupils is broadly in line with national averages. In some areas it is higher, for instance in reading in Year 6, particularly for boys. However, girls make less progress in mathematics compared to boys, which is the focus for the school's improvement programme.
- Pupils' progress in Year 5 has been better than expected. In particular, in their reading skills.
- Pupils who are disabled and those with special educational needs make good progress from their starting points because of the good quality additional support that they receive through intervention groups to improve their literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from the wide range of minority ethnic groups receive good support which enables them to be fully included in lessons and make the same progress as others in their classes.
- The pupils supported through the pupil premium funding are making similar progress to all pupils. As a result of the allocation for the 2011/12 pupil premium, pupils who were underachieving made progress in their reading, writing and mathematics skills. The improved progress they are making shows how well the school is promoting equal opportunities and tackling barriers to learning.
- Ninety per cent of pupils at risk of underachieving have made progress towards their targets as a direct result of interventions provided for reading, writing and mathematics.
- The majority of parents and carers who responded to the on-line inspection questionnaire, and from the school's own survey, consider that their children progress well.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- In lessons that require improvement, there is a lack of teacher activities which measure how well pupils are doing. In these lessons, pupils are not stimulated as a result of too much teacher talk, and lack of active tasks. Teachers do not plan effectively enough to cater for all pupils and their specific needs, nor do they provide the activities that would enable pupils to make the best progress.
- The teaching over time that is good or better demonstrates, through the pupils' work, the effective use of activities to engage and motivate pupils. The classroom environment is positive, pupils cooperate with each other, and teachers have high expectations.
- In lessons where the quality of teaching observed was good or better, pupils were motivated and took responsibility for their learning, and the pace in the teaching ensured that good progress took place.
- Teachers mark pupils' books regularly and comments provide clear guidance on how pupils can improve. However, teachers do not use enough techniques to check pupils' ongoing learning in their lessons.
- Learning support assistants are knowledgeable and used well in lessons and around the school. They are specifically trained to support pupils with their speech and language skills or their emotional development.
- Some teachers are making progress in enabling pupils to talk in pairs about their learning, and to focus on their writing skills. In Years 3 and 6 classes, inspectors observed pupils who were engaged and focused on their writing skills following the programme delivered by their teachers. Pupils worked collaboratively and were able to consolidate on learning from the week. However, this is inconsistent across the school and is an aspect for improvement, building on the good model that exists in some classes.

- Senior leaders and governors use the pupil premium funding to train teachers and learning support assistants to teach in smaller groups with clearly defined targets for pupils. This is having a positive effect on progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. It is managed consistently well by teachers and other adults through positive language and attitudes. Pupils are polite, respectful and confident. They were keen to talk to inspectors and confidently show them around their school.
- Pupils are happy in school, and believe that there is no bullying. They have a good understanding of how to keep safe from bullying particularly with e-safety.
- Pupils take part in local and national events with pride. For example, there is a choir group which performs in national competitions as well as visiting local homes for older people and hospitals to entertain members of the community.
- Pupils from different backgrounds get on well with each other and discrimination is minimal.
- Pupil attendance is above average and punctuality is good.
- The school council plays an active part in making decisions in school, such as choosing the authors for guided reading books, and raising money for playground equipment.
- Pupils are keen to take on roles of responsibility in school. For example Year 5 pupils opt to become 'Playground Pals' to support Years 3 and 4 pupils during break times.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- The headteacher's leadership has not had sufficient time to show secure positive impact. However, all staff are pleased that he has rapidly made a difference to the way the school is being led. For example, there is now a series of calendar events to check teaching, books and learning in classrooms to provide a clear structure for teachers.
- Senior leaders are clear about how much the school is improving and what they need to do to ensure there is more improvement. They involve all staff in planning and understanding of data, and there has been a lot of work done to perfect the systems for understanding exactly how much progress each pupil is making. Senior leaders regularly check how well teachers perform in their lessons.
- The school development plan is in the process of being finalised – as yet expected outcomes and completion dates of actions are not clearly defined. However, improvements to the quality of teaching and the consistency with which teachers implement new strategies such as the marking policy are testament to the shared determination of staff to do the best for pupils.
- Leaders and managers consistently communicate high expectations for learning and progress of all pupils. The drive for improvement is rigorous and has started to have a positive impact – all staff are keen to learn and to develop the school.
- Teachers and learning support assistants are provided with a range of good quality training which is already making a difference to pupils.
- The curriculum has been enhanced through guided reading, and numeracy programmes. Pupils enjoy reading, and literacy is celebrated through activities, displays and assemblies. Pupils learn about other cultures, religions and parts of the world. All pupils are taught French and enjoy taking part in many school trips and social events.
- Most parents and carers are happy with the drive and impact of the new headteacher and the recent developments. They believe their children are making progress.
- The local authority provides effective support for the teaching of mathematics and English which has improved the quality of teaching in these subjects.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body successfully ensures that school leaders are fulfilling their responsibilities. It works closely with the leadership team to ensure that they are clear about how good teaching and learning are, and is knowledgeable about school staff and their ability to teach and make progress. Discussions with the lead inspector verified governors' understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Governors routinely attend training in school with staff. The recent training on the use of data and tracking has enabled them to understand how to measure pupil levels, and the success of teachers in the classroom. Governors visit the school on a regular basis and liaise with key members of staff to share expertise. For example, the governor linked to mathematics is also a teacher in a secondary school, so she is working closely with the school to prepare Year 6 to understand what Year 7 mathematics learning will involve. The governing body manages the school budget well. The additional funding available through the pupil premium is used to reduce the size of some teaching groups and provide additional support to those pupils targeted by this funding. As a result, those pupils who are at risk of underachieving are making better progress. The governing body has ensured that safeguarding arrangements meet requirements and are effective.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101212
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	400459

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

Type of school	Junior
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	7–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	342
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Father Martin Howse
Headteacher	Mr T Hunter-Whitehouse
Date of previous school inspection	20–21 May 2010
Telephone number	020 82704933
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