

Ravenscroft Primary School

Carson Road, London E16 4BD

Inspection dates 11–12 June 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Progress is good in reading and writing because of the good quality teaching of these skills over time.
- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in developing reading skills.
- Pupils who are making slower progress than others catch up through well-planned help within lessons. This is helping to close the gap in achievement seen between pupils supported by the pupil premium and other pupils.
- Teachers build pupils' confidence by warmly appreciating their work. At the same time, they give clear feedback to pupils on how to improve.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils adopt the school's values of respect and equality. They get on well with each other and feel very safe at school.
- The school is well led. As well as making improvements to the quality of its own work, the school demonstrates its capacity to help other schools to improve.
- The governing body has undertaken training and is now well organised, making a good contribution to further improvement of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Attainment in mathematics is below average and progress in this subject is not improving as rapidly as in other key skills.
- At times, when pupils are set tasks that require them to find things out for themselves, they are not clear enough about what is expected of them.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 24 lessons, three of them jointly with senior leaders.
- They looked at work and marking in pupils' books to gather evidence of their progress.
- Inspectors listened to a sample of pupils reading aloud and discussed their reading habits with them.
- Some small group and individual tuition sessions were visited.
- Inspectors met with staff, a sample group of pupils, some governors, representatives of the local authority, an external consultant and the headteacher leading the Teaching Alliance.
- There were not enough responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) to provide evidence on the opinions of parents and carers. Inspectors took account of 41 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The inspection team took into account a number of documents, including information about safeguarding, information on the progress and attainment of students, the school's checks on how well it is doing and records of monitoring in relation to teaching, students' behaviour and attendance.

Inspection team

Anthony Byrne, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Clementina Aina

Additional Inspector

Bimla Thakur

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Ravenscroft is much larger than the average-size primary school.
- About three-quarters of pupils are from ethnic minority groups, with a high proportion (about two-thirds) speaking English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs, is also below average. The most frequently identified need is related to speech, language and communication difficulties.
- The proportion supported through the pupil premium, which is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families, is well above average.
- The proportion joining or leaving the school at other than normal times is higher than average.
- From time to time, a few pupils with behaviour difficulties have access, part-time, to a specialist centre.
- The school is a founder member of a local Teaching Alliance, a partnership of schools dedicated to supporting other schools in improving.
- The school arranges a breakfast club before school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement in mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' confidence and ability to analyse, discuss and solve mathematical problems
- Ensure that all teachers establish a clear understanding of what pupils need to do when finding things out for themselves by:
 - setting out clear guidance on steps to success in the task, particularly for the most able pupils
 - spending enough time demonstrating how to approach the task so that all pupils know exactly what is expected of them.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Overall, progress is good. It is stronger in reading and writing than in mathematics because the school implements consistent strategies to support these skills. Attainment in mathematics is below average, but is average in writing and improving rapidly towards average in reading. The school is taking appropriate action to improve achievement in mathematics but it is too early to see the full impact of this action on pupils' progress.
- Reading develops well from the very start. From starting points that are generally well below typical expectations, children make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage. Parents are invited to sessions of teaching phonics (recognising the sounds letters and combinations of letters make) so that they can help their children at home. Packs have been developed for use at home, showing parents how to be involved, for example helping children recognise printed words on everyday objects.
- From Year 1, for as long as needed, pupils who are not making good progress in reading follow personalised programmes of learning any sounds they have difficulty recognising. Pupils read aloud confidently and it was evident in lessons that they are familiar with a wide range of texts.
- Writing skills also develop consistently well. There is an emphasis on speaking and listening in lessons. This develops pupils' vocabulary and sentence structure and transfers to their writing. From Key Stage 1 onwards, pupils learn how to write with clarity, structure and impact, so that by the end of Year 6, writing is consistently the skill in which pupils attain highest.
- To improve progress in mathematics, alongside regular practice in learning mathematical processes, pupils are learning to think and talk about mathematical problems and to understand which mathematical processes will help them to solve the problems. This is engaging their interest and deepening their insight.
- The school checks the progress of all pupils very carefully. A particularly good initiative is supporting pupils who fall behind and make slower progress than others. Support plans are developed with the class teacher working alongside the senior manager responsible for inclusion. Recent checks on this group of pupils show all are making improved progress. With fewer of these pupils being taken out of class for special needs support, pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs receive intensive help and make good progress.
- Because the school keeps such careful checks on progress and takes appropriate action, pupils from different ethnic groups, those who join school at other than normal times and pupils who speak English as an additional language usually make good progress. The gap in attainment between those supported by the pupil premium and others has fluctuated. They achieved less well than others at the end of Year 6 last year, but the year before progressed better and attained higher than other pupils. Their achievement has improved this year and they are rarely more than a term behind other pupils in English and mathematics. More than half of the group being entered this year for higher level tests in Year 6 are supported by pupil premium funding.

The quality of teaching is good

- A strong feature of teaching across the school is that teachers and other adults in the classrooms warmly communicate their enthusiasm for the subject and they appreciate and praise pupils' efforts. This builds pupils' confidence and motivates them to work towards high expectations.
- At the same time, teachers do not hold back in their comments and marking about improvements needed. They use assessment effectively to set ambitious but realistic targets for pupils. Marking is regular and very informative. Talking to pupils showed that they benefit from this and have a good understanding of their targets and how to reach them.
- Teachers frequently involve pupils in assessing each other's work so that their understanding of

how to succeed in a task is enhanced. Teachers make sure pupils actively listen and learn when others are explaining their work.

- Pupils are regularly reminded about previous learning of crucial skills, for example the importance of exemplifying and explaining points they wish to make in writing. Teachers are beginning to place a similar emphasis on thinking about and discussing mathematics, but this is less familiar and effective as yet.
- Teachers are keen for pupils to find out things for themselves, but occasionally, where teaching requires improvement, they do not give enough time to explaining clearly how pupils should go about the task or demonstrating what is expected. Those who do grasp what is required, including the most able, are not always given enough guidance on the steps they need to take to succeed in the time available. As a result, the pace of their progress is slower than it should be.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Pupils' behaviour is good in lessons and when playing together, when dining, or waiting at the breakfast club for school to begin. This is because pupils know what the school expects of them and they try to live up to those values, including treating people with respect. Older pupils are good role models for younger ones. Pupils from all backgrounds get on well together.
- Incidents of bullying, including any kind of disrespectful name-calling, are rare. Pupils say they feel very safe in school. Pupils understand about different types of bullying, but say that they are not worried that it will happen to them because the school is such a happy place to be.
- It is clear from the reading sessions that the school welcomes contact with parents should they have any concerns.
- The school makes occasional use of fixed-term exclusions and from time to time a very few pupils have attended part-time at a local centre for pupils with behavioural difficulties. Usually these pupils reintegrate well. There was no evidence that these pupils disrupt the learning of others, and their progress is supported with equal care.
- Attendance has improved and is now broadly average. The school checks attendance patterns carefully and works constructively with any families having difficulties.

The leadership and management are good

- Dedication to improving pupils' achievement, and a sensitive response to supporting their personal development, are such strong characteristics of senior leaders that they set the tone for the whole staff. Leaders think deeply about what is most likely to inspire and develop both pupils and staff, and take bold initiatives.
- They encourage teaching that requires pupils to think deeply. They develop pupils' capacity to be ready for challenging and demanding work by exploring philosophy as part of the curriculum and by participating in debating. Both features of the curriculum encourage pupils to formulate and express their ideas. The approach to improving progress in mathematics is similarly bold and imaginative, but is at an early stage of development.
- They develop the leadership potential of staff at all levels by distributing major responsibilities which are carried out well. For instance, several staff, including two support staff, have been involved in working out a strategic plan for improving reading, which is now showing good impact and is typical of the school's capacity to improve.
- Staff performance is managed well. Targets set relate clearly to improving pupils' progress and form a sound basis for setting levels of pay.
- Leaders focus lesson observations on improving aspects identified from regular checks on the quality of the school's work, including checks on pupils' progress. Teachers are encouraged to share their skills within school and with staff in other schools through the Teaching Alliance. This

approach develops their professional experience and confidence.

- Staff were united in the very positive views about the school in questionnaires they returned, demonstrating the good influence of senior leaders.
 - The curriculum is well organised. Classroom displays show the broad range of topics and the consistent emphasis on key skills such as literacy, numeracy and communication. The school extends pupils' horizons in many ways, from creating very good play spaces in the urban environment, to riding lessons for some. There is a high level of participation in music-making and in a 'chess in schools' initiative. The broad range of experiences supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.
 - Safeguarding arrangements are very thorough in meeting requirements.
 - The local authority agrees that this is a good school and values its capability in helping other schools to improve through the Teaching Alliance. The headteacher of the school that coordinates the Teaching Alliance initiative confirmed the positive impact the school is having.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body has undergone considerable renewal. There are some long-serving members and a number of new members have joined. A good deal of training has been undertaken and this has helped to refresh the approach of the governing body as a whole.
 - In meetings, governors receive detailed information on pupils' progress, including that of those supported by the pupil premium. The training governors have undertaken has developed their capacity to understand information on pupils' achievement and decide on how to challenge the school to continue to improve. They have identified crucial challenges and are about to nominate specific governors to check closely progress in mathematics and the impact of pupil premium funding.
 - Governors are well informed about finances, including relating to staffing. They are well placed to play their part in monitoring performance management and salary progression now that new arrangements for pay policy have been agreed within the local authority.
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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	102739
Local authority	Newham
Inspection number	412996

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	512
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rikus Louw
Headteacher	Alison Sharp
Date of previous school inspection	5 November 2008
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