

Richard Alibon Primary School with ARP for Cognitive and Learning Difficulties : SEN Base

Alibon Road, Dagenham, RM10 8DF

Inspection dates 17–18 September 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires Improvement	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Early years provision		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The early years provision is a strength of the school. A high proportion of children reach a good level of development and are well-prepared for Year 1.
- Pupils' achievement is good. The majority of pupils make at least expected progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils make similar progress to their peers. By the end of Year 6 any gap in attainment has closed.
- Teachers use information about pupils' progress to adapt their practice, ensuring that individual needs are met.
- Pupils feel safe in school. The school follows up any safeguarding concerns rigorously.
- Pupils placed in the additional resourced provision make very good progress as a result of good teaching and consistent management of behaviour.
- Senior leaders are committed to the development of the staff team. The school develops the skills of its teachers and leaders well.
- Governors are committed to the school, and are knowledgeable about the school's strengths and areas for improvement. They are rigorous in holding leaders to account.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. The number of pupils who are persistently absent has reduced considerably.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- The way that phonics (the sounds that letters make) sessions are organised does not enable pupils to make rapid progress.
- Some teaching does not provide sufficient challenge for pupils of all abilities.
- The quality of marking and feedback to pupils is too variable. In some classes it does not have enough impact on their progress.
- The school does not communicate with all groups of parents and carers as effectively as it could.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors carried out observations of teaching and learning in 25 lessons. Nine of these were joint observations with members of the school leadership team.
- Inspectors undertook short visits to classrooms to observe the teaching of small groups. They also observed the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).
- During observations in lessons, inspectors looked at pupils' work, and talked to pupils about their learning. The role of additional adults was considered.
- Discussions were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, newly qualified teachers, governors, the manager of The Acorns alternative provision and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of some pupils' literacy and numeracy books.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read, and asked them about their views of the school. They also observed playtimes and lunchtimes.
- A range of school documentation was considered, including the school improvement plan, information about pupils' progress and minutes from governing body meetings.
- Inspectors met with groups of parents and carers at the start of the school day. They also considered 42 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View, and those collated through the school's most recent questionnaire for parents and carers. Inspectors considered 31 responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Gaynor Roberts, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Janet Tomkins	Additional Inspector
Maura Docherty	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Richard Alibon Primary School is much larger than the average-sized primary school. The school is expanding and has three classes in most year groups. At the request of the local authority the school opened a fourth class in Year 1 in October 2013.
- Around half of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups. This is well above average. Pupils come from mainly White British, Black African or Other White backgrounds. Just over a third of the pupils speak English as an additional language. Some are at the very early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, pupils from service families and those in local authority care) is well above average.
- The school offers additional resourced provision for up to 24 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Currently, many of these pupils have more significant and complex conditions.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above average.
- Currently, one pupil is placed in alternative provision at The Acorns unit.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard, which sets the minimum expectation for pupils' attainment and progress.
- A higher than average proportion of pupils join or leave the school other than at the expected times. This proportion was particularly high among Key Stage 1 pupils last year.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement at Key Stage 1 by ensuring that the organisation of phonics lessons accelerates progress for all pupils, moving them on to the next stage as soon as they are ready.
- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that the school policy for marking and feedback to pupils is applied consistently throughout the school and has an impact on pupils' progress
 - ensuring that pupils of all abilities are set tasks which consistently challenge them to extend their learning.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that parental engagement is raised further through effective communication with families.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Senior leaders work as an effective team to ensure that pupils and staff are all able to achieve well. Middle leaders have been supported to develop their skills in leading aspects of the school's work, and checking the impact of their work on pupils' achievement.
- The school's curriculum aims to promote British values through comparison with other cultures to ensure pupils are 'culturally literate and sensitive to others'. The curriculum is broad and balanced. The school has adapted its approach to encompass requirements of the new curriculum from September 2014. The school's work to support spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strongly threaded through the curriculum.
- Leaders gather a range of evidence to inform their judgment of the quality of teaching. They make sound judgments based on secure evidence, and set challenging targets for teachers as a result.
- Targets relate to pupil outcomes and are used to evaluate teacher performance. Senior leaders set high expectations of staff, but offer equally high levels of support enabling them to develop their skills effectively. One newly qualified teacher has been encouraged to develop her interest in religious education with a view to taking on leadership in this area.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements. All staff receive regular training in child protection issues and there are robust policies and structures in place.
- Management of the additional resourced provision is good. Leaders facilitate effective team-working between the wider school staff team, parents and carers and other professionals to ensure that pupils' needs are met. They rigorously monitor small steps of progress made by pupils, and adapt teaching accordingly. As a result, pupils make at least good progress, and many exceed expectations.
- Leaders communicate regularly with parents and carers through newsletters, events and partnership working. A small number of parents and carers, however, express dissatisfaction with the school's communication and lack confidence in its leaders.
- The school allocates additional funding for disadvantaged pupils carefully. They have recruited additional teachers in order to ensure that those who fall behind catch up rapidly. As a result, these pupils attained similar levels to their peers in 2014. Primary school sport funding has been used effectively to increase the number of pupils involved in after-school clubs, including disabled pupils and those with special educational needs. Funding has also been used to increase the frequency of physical education lessons.
- The local authority has provided effective support and challenge for school leaders. Local authority officers have worked alongside school leaders to develop the school's self-evaluation document, and participated in a book scrutiny with the leadership team. They have been involved in the moderation of judgments made about pupils' attainment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is good. Changes to the governing body have enabled the school to move forward more quickly. Governors have attended training to develop their understanding of information about pupils' progress. As a result, they ask probing questions of leaders, holding them to account for pupils' achievement. Governors have detailed knowledge about the strengths of the school, and areas which need further development. They have ensured that leadership capacity is sustained. For example, they appointed an experienced senior leader to cover the maternity leave of an assistant headteacher. Governors receive clear information about the management of teachers' performance and the way this links to pay increases.
 - Governors are not complacent. They have commissioned an external review of governance and implemented changes recommended in order to further improve their practice. Governors have a secure knowledge of the quality of teaching and have been robust in eliminating weak teaching. They have supported improvements through a high level of investment in professional development for teachers and leaders.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good because adults have consistently high expectations. Pupils are polite and courteous towards both adults and peers. Pupils are keen to learn, and remain on task for prolonged periods when not directly supervised.

- The school has a clear structure for the management of poor behaviour, which is implemented consistently by staff. Teachers keep a log of poor behaviour. This is monitored by senior leaders who identify any concerns and plan appropriate interventions before the situation escalates. Consistent behaviour management in the additional resourced provision enables pupils to participate fully in learning.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity well. Pupils of different abilities and cultures work and play alongside each other harmoniously. As a result, pupils develop respect and tolerance for others.
- Pupils are encouraged to take on roles of responsibility. The school appoints some older pupils as the 'Richard Alibon Playground Squad' (RAPS). Pupils apply for positions as 'RAPS' and attend training. When an inspector spoke to a young pupil with special educational needs, one of the 'RAPS' approached and asked if the younger pupil was alright.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. The school refers any safeguarding concerns swiftly to the appropriate agencies, and follows up referrals rigorously. Pupils say they feel safe and happy in school. They say that bullying and name-calling are rare, and are confident that staff will deal with any issues that are reported.
- The school ensures that pupils are aware of the need to be safe online. At the start of each school year, pupils are taught strategies for staying safe when online. The school also provides information to parents and carers regarding online safety.
- Most parents and carers consider the behaviour of pupils at the school to be good. A small but significant number of parents and carers feel that leaders do not always listen to their concerns about behaviour. As a result, their confidence in the school's ability to keep their child safe is eroded. Inspectors found behaviour to be good both in and out of lessons.
- In 2013, pupils' attendance at school declined. In particular, almost one in 10 pupils was regularly absent from school. The school worked alongside a consultant to engage these families and reduce barriers to attendance. As a result, by 2014 only one in 50 pupils was regularly absent. Overall attendance has also improved and is now broadly average.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils make good progress. The school works hard to develop the expertise of staff, and can demonstrate improvements in the skills of individual teachers over time.
- Teachers have high expectations and establish consistent routines in class. For example, all classes in a year group use identical routines for the transition from sitting on the carpet to working at tables. This means that the transition is managed quickly, with minimal disruption to learning.
- Teachers plan interesting activities that are consistent across each year group. They use identical key vocabulary to ensure equality of opportunity for all pupils. For example, in Year 2 literacy lessons all four teachers used the phrase 'painting a picture in the reader's head' to explain the purpose of descriptive language when writing.
- Teachers regularly assess pupils' attainment and use this information to inform their planning. They can describe how their use of this information has improved, and the positive impact this has had on their teaching.
- Teachers' marking and feedback to pupils conform to the school policy but are inconsistent in quality across the school. Where practice is strong, pupils receive clear, structured advice, and pupils enter into a dialogue with the teacher which promotes further learning. In other cases, marking is cursory and merely comments on whether the pupil has met their target for that lesson, providing few opportunities for extension of skills.
- As a result of strong teaching in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils are ready to move into Year 1. The standard of their writing, in particular, is high.
- Leaders work alongside teachers to identify groups of pupils who would benefit from additional support through small group sessions. These sessions are targeted at those who are at risk of falling behind others, or those who require an additional challenge. Sessions are planned carefully to meet individual needs and, as a result, pupils' progress is accelerated.
- Additional adults are well deployed to support learning. For example, a teaching assistant led a small group of pupils at the early stages of learning English in a literacy lesson. She skilfully used pictorial representations of adjectives and nouns to guide pupils in putting these together to make plausible phrases such as 'shiny fish'.
- Teachers usually match activities to the needs of groups of pupils in their class well. However, this is not

fully consistent across the school. In some lessons, higher ability pupils are insufficiently challenged. In others, a group does not receive the support it needs in order to fully access learning. As a result, in both cases, progress is slowed.

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The achievement of pupils

is good

- Children join the school with skills that are generally below those expected for their age. They make very good progress in the early years provision and by the end of the Reception Year in 2014, three quarters had reached a good level of development.
- Results of tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2013 showed that pupils were attaining at or above the national average in writing and mathematics, but below average in reading. The school acted swiftly to promote reading through, for example, the involvement of a storyteller. As a result, in 2014, results improved significantly in reading to broadly average.
- In 2014, the proportion of pupils making expected progress or more than expected progress had increased from the 2013 figures. The proportion making expected or more than expected progress in writing and mathematics was above the 2013 national figures. The proportion making expected progress in reading was also above average.
- In 2013, the gap in attainment between disadvantaged pupils and all pupils nationally was two terms in mathematics, three terms in writing and four terms in reading. The gap between these pupils and others within the school was smaller at one term for mathematics, almost three terms for writing and three terms in reading. However, information from the 2014 tests shows the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school has closed as a result of carefully focused use of additional funding.
- School leaders identified that White British pupils, especially boys, were achieving less well than others. They developed strategies to address this such as teaching through motivating topics, 'Pirates' and 'Superheroes', for example. As a result, White British boys are catching up with their peers rapidly. Pupils who speak English as an additional language attain similar levels to their peers in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Attainment in Year 2 in 2013 was at or above national figures. In 2014 results were not as strong. However, those pupils who had remained on roll throughout the key stage attained well, with results slightly above average. A similar picture is evident in Year 1. Results from the phonics screening check in 2013 were below average. These results improved in 2014, but were still disappointing. The results for pupils who had been on roll for the whole of the academic year were stronger.
- During phonics lessons, pupils do not always make the progress of which they are capable. Some pupils are not moved on when they are ready to do so. A high staffing ratio during these sessions is not fully exploited, with support staff not always fully engaged in activities for the whole session.
- The school promotes reading widely, and all classrooms have a reading area with carefully chosen texts which appeal to pupils with a wide range of interests. Pupils say they enjoy reading, and can talk about books they read at home, as well as at school. Sessions led by a storyteller hold pupils spellbound and, as a result, pupils are keen to widen their reading experiences.
- Pupils in the additional resourced provision make at least good progress as a result of good teaching and a consistent approach. All pupils join their peers in the main school during some or all afternoon sessions. Disabled pupils or those with special educational needs placed in the main school also make good progress, though this is stronger in some year groups than others.

The early years provision

is good

- The quality of the early years provision is good because consistently good teaching results in children achieving well. As a result of improving teaching and strong leadership, the proportion of children reaching a good level of development has increased from just over a third in 2013, to three quarters in 2014.
- Disadvantaged children achieve as well as others, and in some areas outperform their peers.
- Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those expected for their age. They are quickly

immersed in a language-rich environment that promotes development of communication and literacy skills. Activities are planned to ensure that they are fully accessible to those learning English as an additional language.

- Skilfully planned teaching ensures that children develop curiosity. For example, a child watching a wheel turn when sand was poured onto it remarked that the wheel was moving on its own. The staff member started and stopped the flow of sand, encouraging the child to notice that it was the sand causing the wheel to turn.
- There are rigorous policies and protocols in place to keep children in the early years provision safe. Strict staffing ratios are adhered to. Children know what to do if, for example, there is a fire drill. Risk assessments are reviewed on a daily basis.
- Parents and carers of children in the early years provision are very happy with arrangements that have been made to support their child's transition to school. They provide examples of individualised programmes of integration for children who have additional needs and need longer to settle into the routines of the Nursery.
- Leadership in the early years provision is good. Assessment is used effectively to identify the next steps of learning for each child, and to provide support for the less confident.

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	130357
Local authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	442161

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community School
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	692
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Fatima Olujide
Headteacher	Andrew Fullagar
Date of previous school inspection	28–29 November 2012
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