

Ray Lodge Primary School

Snakes Lane East, Woodford Green, Redbridge, London IG8 7JQ

Inspection dates

7–8 June 2016

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Early years provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- The inspirational headteacher has embedded an ambitious culture of aspiration for pupils and staff alike. She has developed a strong team of leaders at all levels who share her vision and goals.
- Governors are committed to the school and its further improvement. They know the school well and use a range of evidence to check its effectiveness.
- The curriculum offers a broad range of subjects which are taught effectively by class teachers and specialist teachers. The provision for artistic development is particularly strong.
- The early years provision is outstanding. An exciting and interesting environment motivates children to explore and develop their skills. As a result, they make outstanding progress.
- Pupils make excellent progress because the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is consistently good. All groups of pupils are taught well regardless of disadvantage, cultural background or individual need.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. Fundamental British values are promoted consistently throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to consider philosophical questions such as 'Where do thoughts come from?'
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are outstanding. Those who join the school later make friends quickly and soon start to make accelerated progress. Pupils leave the school as confident and self-assured learners.
- Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. They pay attention very well in lessons, and are polite and courteous. Many pupils join the school at different times in the school year and their behaviour sometimes requires adult intervention. However, once these pupils settle in to the school, their behaviour improves rapidly.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that pupils' conduct, particularly on the playground and corridors, is of a consistently high standard.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher, supported by her two deputies, has driven forward improvements in the school and embedded a culture of high aspiration for all. There is a strong team ethic among members of staff who are overwhelmingly positive about their work to improve outcomes for pupils within their care.
- Leaders' self-evaluation of the school's strengths and areas for development is extremely accurate. They know precisely what they need to do in order to continue the rapid rate of improvement that has been evident since the last inspection.
- Middle leaders are highly motivated and passionate about their roles in improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Their contributions are valued by senior staff and this is demonstrated by the time they are given to fulfil their responsibilities and the investment made in their professional development. Consequently, they are highly effective in working alongside teachers to improve the outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders at all levels have a detailed knowledge about the strengths and areas for development for groups of pupils within the school. They pinpoint their efforts precisely where they can have most impact, making sure that all groups of pupils make outstanding progress. For example, leaders noticed that, in 2015, pupils' progress in mathematics was not as strong as that in reading and writing. They took swift, incisive action to make sure that teachers received training and support to improve their teaching of mathematics. As a result, pupils in most year groups are now making rapid gains in this subject.
- Rigorous systems for the performance management of teachers and other adults improve provision further. This is because there are close links between whole-school priorities, targets set for teachers and other adults in the classroom, and outcomes for pupils. Those who are new to teaching receive excellent support through mentoring from more experienced colleagues and wider training opportunities.
- The curriculum is rich in opportunities for pupils to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is supported by specialist teaching in some subjects, such as art. During the inspection, a mixed-age group of gifted and talented artists were starting a project on 'Pop Art'. These pupils were introduced to technical language such as 'screen print' and 'contrast' and invited to give their opinions on various pieces of art work. By the end of the half-day session, they had completed an initial piece of work. They explained to an inspector what the strengths of their work were, and what they needed to improve. They demonstrated immense satisfaction with their work.
- Similarly, school assemblies and extra-curricular activities prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. An inspector attended an assembly which provided a rich context for learning about Islamic traditions and beliefs. Pupil 'experts' confidently and proudly shared their culture with the school. The teacher leading the assembly drew on parallels with other religions, promoting community cohesion and mutual respect.
- Leaders ensure that additional funding to support disadvantaged pupils, or to promote sport and physical education, is spent wisely. They check that their spending has the impact they intended and report this to governors and on the school's website.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are committed to the school, its pupils and the community they serve. They have recruited new governors with specific skills and expertise to support the school more effectively. As a result, governance has improved since the last inspection.
 - Governors make regular visits to the school to see its work for themselves. They receive information and presentations from a range of leaders. They refuse to take things at face value and ask increasingly probing questions of leaders to hold them to account for their work.
 - Governors have supported the headteacher in tackling weak performance, and recognise the impressive team spirit that now exists within the school. They provide an example of this being evident when the building needed considerable urgent maintenance during term-time. Pupils and staff were relocated to other parts of the site and local area to ensure that disruption was kept to a minimum.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Robust procedures are in place to ensure the safeguarding of pupils from a wide range of risks. All adults who come into contact with pupils are checked for their suitability, and records of checks made are up to date and kept securely. Any concerns referred to the relevant agencies are carefully noted and followed up in regular meetings. Staff are trained frequently and at different levels, as appropriate. Records of training have been kept for some years, demonstrating that this secure practice is embedded in the school's culture.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding because teachers share strong practice, deliver well-planned lessons and provide useful feedback so that pupils can improve their work further.
- Regular meetings between teachers and leaders identify any individuals or groups of pupils at risk of underperforming. Actions are taken to make sure that these pupils catch up quickly. If necessary, leaders support teachers in making sure that these actions are effective.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language, or have special educational needs or disability, are identified early. Their needs are accurately diagnosed, and effective strategies put in place to make sure that they make at least as much progress as their peers.
- Teachers and other adults use probing questions to deepen pupils' thinking, particularly in mathematics. For example, a teacher asked a pupil to 'explain how you would solve this problem', and a teaching assistant asked another pupil, 'Why did you split the cubes in this way?' Adults link pupils' learning to what they have studied previously to support the development of fluency in this subject. Practical resources support pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts. However, the most able pupils are not consistently stretched to extend their skills and do not make as much progress as those with less ability.
- Likewise, in literacy, teachers enable pupils to become fluent and confident readers. Pupils learn to use adventurous vocabulary and effective writing strategies to engage the reader's interest. Marking and feedback provide useful guidance which pupils use to improve their work further. However, as in mathematics, the level of challenge and amount of progress made across year groups, particularly for the most able pupils, is variable.
- Over time, there has been weaker teaching in some areas. When this happens, leaders have acted swiftly to support teachers through joint planning, coaching and shared teaching. This has ensured that pupils' rates of progress are sustained. When a teacher leaves the school, leaders often take over the full-time teaching of the class until a new teacher is recruited.
- A culture of high expectations with respect to homework is embedded throughout the school, starting in Reception. The vast majority of parents support their children in their endeavours, and appreciate the workshops held in school to advise them on how to support their children effectively.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Leaders and teachers know their pupils extremely well and make sure that any emerging concerns are quickly and effectively addressed. As a result, pupils leave the school as resilient and confident learners.
- The high proportion of pupils joining the school midyear are well looked after by adults and pupils alike. Other pupils act as 'buddies' and ensure that they are supported well to settle in and feel relaxed in their new school.
- Pupils of all ages are encouraged to take on responsibilities. Some are members of the school council, others are librarians or school 'bloggers'. Pupils experience democracy through the election process for school councillors, which includes the production of manifestos. Those elected then take on further autonomy by taking minutes of meetings which they then transfer to the computer for all members to access.
- The large building and playground have clear, effective signage which help pupils to locate help when they need it and reminds them of rules around safety. Examples include, 'Remember to say sorry if you accidentally bump into someone' and 'Don't give out personal details on the internet'. Pupils know about the different forms that bullying can take, but recognise that instances of behaviour such as name-calling are very rare.

- Pupils are encouraged to develop and maintain healthy lifestyles through healthy eating and the promotion of exercise. Those with medical needs are well looked after. Leaders make appropriate adjustments to provision for those with medical needs, such as providing access to a laptop computer for a pupil with a broken arm.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils are polite and respectful. They are pleasantly curious and eager to speak to visitors. Those who are new to the school soon settle in and say they make new friends quickly.
- Pupils' attendance has improved because leaders have emphasised the importance of coming to school in order to learn. Leaders support families who find it challenging to ensure that their children attend regularly. Any absence is followed up swiftly and rigorously. As a result, persistent absence has reduced, and overall attendance has improved to around the average figure for all schools.
- In lessons, pupils listen carefully and apply themselves well to their learning. They are keen to learn and work hard to extend their knowledge and skills. Pupils understand the school's clear systems for rewards and sanctions. Parents recognise that pupils' behaviour has improved significantly, and the school's records support this view.
- Between lessons and in the playground, however, pupils do not consistently conduct themselves well. This is particularly the case with pupils new to the school. There are some instances of play-fighting and boisterous behaviour which lead to disagreements and require adult intervention, particularly in key stage 2. One pupil explained this very succinctly, saying: 'Behaviour is not a problem, but it is always in the background.'

Outcomes for pupils

are outstanding

- Pupils currently in the school are making outstanding progress. In 2015, the amount of progress made in reading, writing and mathematics during key stage 2 by pupils in Year 6 was significantly above average. These pupils also attained standards that were significantly above average and were therefore very well prepared for secondary education.
- An extremely high proportion of pupils join the school at times other than those expected. For example, 30 of the 85 pupils in Year 6 in 2015 had joined the school during key stage 2. Most pupils enter with skills that are below those expected for their age. On joining the school, pupils settle quickly because there are established routines and an open, friendly culture. They soon start to make very good progress.
- Disadvantaged pupils achieve at least as well as their classmates. In some areas, particularly literacy, they outperform their peers. Similarly, those who speak English as an additional language are identified when they join the school. Leaders make sure that any pupils who need additional help to catch up with others receive this in a timely fashion. Support is tailored to the needs of each individual.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make exceptional progress. Leaders assess carefully exactly what their skills are. They then provide short bursts of intensive support which are precisely focused on each pupil's needs. Leaders measure the impact of the support they provide to make sure that it works.
- The overall attainment of pupils in Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was significantly above average in 2014 and 2015. Writing was a particular strength. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in phonics in Year 1, however, has remained below average for three years as a result of the lower performance of many pupils who join the school late. In 2015, two-thirds of the pupils who had been on roll for the whole year reached the expected standard. Just under half of those who joined during the year did so.
- Most-able pupils do not consistently make the same outstanding progress as other groups of pupils. In 2015, most-able pupils in Year 6 made broadly average progress in reading and mathematics, but did better in writing.

Early years provision

is outstanding

- The early years classrooms, both indoors and outdoors, are attractive, inviting and highly stimulating. Every opportunity is maximised to promote the development of literacy and numeracy skills within the learning environment. The learning environment is exceptionally well resourced and teachers plan activities which entice children to play together and enjoy new experiences across all the required areas of learning.
- Leaders have high aspirations for children. They provide focused high-quality support for teachers and other adults which ensures that teaching is of the highest standard. Leaders check that teachers make accurate and regular assessments of children's progress across all the areas of learning, and that these inform future planning. Consequently, activities are precisely focused on children's next steps in their learning, and they make rapid progress.
- Teachers and other adults work well together to support and promote effective learning. They intervene successfully to move children on to the next stage. For example, when a group of children were building sandcastles in the 'seaside' area, an adult asked, 'Which sandcastle takes up most space?' This promoted children's awareness of volume. Children who speak English as an additional language are given support to extend their vocabulary and make rapid progress in their language skills.
- The majority of children enter the early years provision with skills that are below those typical for their age. While some attend for both the Nursery and Reception Years, the majority join the school at the start of Reception or later in the year. They settle quickly and make excellent progress. By the end of Reception most are working at a typical level for their age, with some pupils exceeding this. Leaders expect three quarters of those in Reception to reach a good level of development this year. Evidence in books and learning journals supports this view.
- Children are very well prepared for Year 1 both academically and socially. Leaders are highly aware of the difficulties a few children may face in moving from the early years provision to the key stage 1 building and plan this change carefully. The early years leader also has responsibility for Year 1 and makes sure that individual children's needs are addressed during the period of transition.
- Parents are very positive about their children's experiences in the early years provision. They say they have positive relationships with members of staff, and receive excellent advice to help them support their children's learning at home. A variety of homework tasks set for Reception children are recorded in structured homework books which are well maintained.
- Children in the early years behave extremely well. They are able to attend for long periods of time because they are interested in the imaginative activities that adults provide. The school's robust stance with regard to safeguarding means that adults are highly vigilant and children are kept safe.

School details

Unique reference number	131305
Local authority	Redbridge
Inspection number	10008686

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	620
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jon Drane
Headteacher	Amanda Jennings
Telephone number	020 8504 7301
Website	www.raylodgeprimary.co.uk
Email address	admin.raylodge@redbridge.gov.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 March 2011

Information about this school

- Ray Lodge is a large primary school with three classes in all year groups except Year 5, where there are two. Nursery children come to school part time, attending in either the mornings or the afternoons.
- The headteacher took up post in September 2012. She has supported several local schools judged to require improvement as they seek to improve their provision.
- A very high proportion of pupils join the school at times other than those usually expected. In 2015, a third of Year 6 had joined the school during key stage 2. This high proportion is reflected throughout the school: for example, a third of the current Year 5 have joined the school since September 2015.
- Pupils in the school come from a very diverse range of cultural backgrounds. Around three quarters of pupils speak English as an additional language, and a third are eligible for free school meals. These proportions are above national averages. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is also above average.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' outcomes in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made visits to lessons in all year groups to observe teaching and learning. They spoke to pupils about their work and looked at their books while in lessons. Some of these observations were carried out alongside senior leaders. Inspectors also visited some small-group sessions led by teaching assistants.
- Pupils were observed on the playground, during lunch and as they moved between lessons. An inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors undertook a detailed scrutiny of books and records of progress for some pupils in the early years and key stage 2.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, teachers, a representative of the local authority, governors and two groups of pupils.
- A wide range of documentation was scrutinised including that relating to safeguarding, the quality of teaching, outcomes for pupils and leaders' self-evaluation of the school's effectiveness.
- Inspectors spoke to parents at the start of the school day and took into account 53 responses to the Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

Inspection team

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