



Red Gates School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 101855
LEA Croydon LEA
Inspection number 276604
Inspection dates 6 December 2005 to 7 December 2005
Reporting inspector Jacque Cook AI

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

Type of school	Special	School address	489 Purley Way
School category	Community		Croydon
Age range of pupils	4 to 12		CR0 4RG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8688 1761
Number on roll	75	Fax number	020 8680 2167
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Ted Andrews
Date of previous inspection	20 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Sue Beaman

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Red Gates is a school for pupils with severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties. Twenty-eight pupils also have autistic spectrum disorder. There are only 18 girls. About two thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds with African and Asian as the largest groups. Twelve pupils speak English as an additional language. There is one asylum seeker and three looked after children.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

The school is too modest in its self evaluation. Red Gates is an outstanding school that is extremely effective. The headteacher, senior management team, staff and governors continue to seek ways to improve the school and raise standards. As a result, the pupils make extremely good progress and have excellent attitudes to their work. Children in the Foundation Stage make excellent progress because the provision is outstanding. The comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of all aspects has raised the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding in many of the lessons. New staff are being successfully supported to gain the relevant expertise they need to teach pupils with a range of very complex needs. The curriculum is extremely well planned with excellent strategies to ensure all pupils achieve very well. The care, welfare and guidance provided are of a very high quality and pupils feel safe in school. A major innovation is the very successful emphasis on inclusion: all classes have links with local mainstream schools and spend time working with their pupils. Due to the outstanding quality of the leadership and management of the school and the successful track record of improvement, the capacity to improve further is very good and value for money is excellent.

What the school should do to improve further

* Continue to work with new staff to ensure the quality of teaching and learning is all of an extremely high standard.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The achievement and progress of the pupils is outstanding. They make exceptionally good progress in reading and in speaking and listening in English because these areas have been a recent focus for improvement. Pupils also do particularly well in personal, social and health education. This is taught very effectively throughout the school day, as well as for older pupils in separate lessons. Pupils work very well towards challenging targets on their individual education plans with a high level of success. The school identified writing as a weaker area last year and already pupils are making good improvements due to specific teaching and the use of appropriate strategies. Pupils with autistic spectrum disorder make particularly good progress in improving their communication skills and learning to be part of a class. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve very well. They make very good progress in developing their communication skills, particularly using signs, symbols and the spoken word. This supports pupils speaking English as an additional language very well to begin to build their vocabulary. There is no measurable difference between the progress of boys and girls. The close monitoring of each pupil's progress ensures that those who are in the care of the local authority, those from minority ethnic groups and those speaking English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Any underachievement is quickly spotted, reasons sought and action taken to make improvements.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is excellent. They make extremely good progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As a result, their attitudes to their work are very good indeed, they build very strong relationships with their staff and thoroughly enjoy their schooling. They comment that they 'like the teachers very much'. Behaviour is good overall. Pupils with behaviour difficulties make good progress towards learning to conform to expectations in school. Pupils make good progress towards developing a healthy lifestyle. They feel safe in school and take on responsibilities that help them to learn how to contribute to the community extremely well. Pupils in Year 7, for example, prepare refreshments and entertain parents very successfully. Throughout their time in school, pupils learn to become more independent and to make choices. Many learn about the value of money and pupils go on shopping trips that contribute towards their developing economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Much of the teaching and learning is outstanding. A systematic and very high standard of monitoring and a well targeted induction and staff training programme are very effective in continuing to improve expertise. This is particularly valuable for new staff who previously taught in mainstream schools. The high level of support is increasing their understanding of the teaching methods that work best to help all the pupils in their classes to learn. The team work of the staff in classrooms is extremely good. They have very good knowledge of the needs of the pupils and give just the right amount of support to help them to achieve very well. Recent training has ensured that staff are skilled in using additional means of communication such as signing, symbols and technological aids such as recording devices operated by pupils using simple switches. Assessment procedures are very good with praise and encouragement used particularly well. Pupils work hard because they enjoy receiving awards such as 'stamps' and being told they have done something correctly. Clear strategies to manage and improve behaviour are effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is very good indeed. An innovative and extremely effective procedure is the teaching in broad ability bands in the mornings for English, mathematics, science, physical education and information and communication technology (ICT). This makes a major contribution to the outstanding progress of the pupils. The long term planning for this is very good. The detailed planning for subjects such as English and mathematics and for the Foundation Stage provides a wealth of activities and methods for staff to use effectively. There are many activities that enrich and broaden the curriculum.

Sessions of horse riding and regular lunchtime clubs including choir, dance and football contribute to pupils' growing confidence. Events including Africa Day and visits to local parks and markets and to productions such as Handa's Surprise increase their understanding of the diverse, multi-cultural world very well. The school is one of the very few that have gained the Inclusion Quality Mark. Inclusion is a major and exciting part of the school's work and every class links with a local mainstream school. For example, a class of pupils from a primary school join Year 7 pupils at Red Gates for lessons one afternoon each week and children in the Foundation Stage at Red Gates join a class of nursery children in their school one afternoon a week. Individual pupils also attend specific lessons in mainstream school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

There is a very high level of care, guidance and support. Arrangements for child protection and to ensure pupils are safe are effective. There are very good procedures to monitor the progress of vulnerable children and ensure they continue to make the progress they should. Individual behaviour plans are excellent and evaluated regularly to ensure good progress is being made. The school has excellent links with external agencies. Meetings such as the Red Gates Inter-Agency Group (RIG) ensure that expertise is shared to the benefit of the pupils. The staff work extremely well with parents who are very complimentary about the work of the school. Comprehensive induction arrangements help parents and children when they initially join the school. There are very good procedures for preparing pupils to move on to the secondary stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The leadership and management of the school are outstanding. The headteacher, staff and governors share a very clear vision for the future of the school and have successfully instigated a broad range of innovative practices to improve the education of the pupils. Inclusion is at the very centre of the school's work. The governing body carries out its role extremely well. Governors visit the school and monitor effectively. They are supportive and provide a high level of challenge. In a nut shell they are extremely effective 'critical friends'. Subject leaders have a very effective role. They keep track of the quality of the provision in their subjects very well and are skilled in supporting their colleagues to maintain high standards. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school is comprehensive and rigorous. Any weaknesses are identified and improved through appropriate action. All the issues from the last inspection have been tackled well. The headteacher and senior management team have clear roles and responsibilities with a strong focus on raising standards. As a result, the school has an excellent capacity to improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for making me feel welcome when I visited your school recently. I enjoyed seeing you working. I would like to give a big thank you to the pupils who told me about your school, which was very helpful.

This is what I liked about your school:* You work hard and are doing very well* Your teachers and support staff are excellent at helping you to learn* Teachers plan interesting and enjoyable things for you to learn* You work extremely well with your friends from mainstream schools* You are looked after very well at school* Your headteacher runs the school very well indeed.

This is what I have asked your school to do now:* Continue to improve the teaching so that it is all excellent.