



Rushy Meadow Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102989
LEA Sutton LEA
Inspection number 276803
Inspection dates 27 June 2006 to 28 June 2006
Reporting inspector Christopher Gray AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rushy Meadow Lane
School category	Community		Fellowes Road
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Carshalton SM5 2SG
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	020 8669 7588
Number on roll	439	Fax number	020 8669 4335
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr J Porter
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2000	Headteacher	Miss K Rhodes

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large primary school serving a disadvantaged area of the borough. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is similar to that found in most schools and few pupils are at the early stages of learning English. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average, as is the proportion with statements of special educational need. The school has a 16 place unit for pupils with hearing impairment (The Opportunity Base), all of whom have a statement of special educational need. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. However, this is clearly a school which is well on the way to being better and there are many signs of improvement.

Pupils' personal development is good because they enjoy school, work hard in their lessons and show consideration for others. Children from The Opportunity Base are well integrated into the school. The quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils is good. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and the rate of their progress is improving. This is because the school has concentrated its whole effort for the last year on raising standards in English and mathematics. The provisional results of the 2006 National Curriculum tests show that this drive has been very successful. The impact of this work testifies to the good leadership and management that have guided the school so clearly and single-mindedly. Good use of outside advice and support has also contributed to this work. Value for money is good because of the big strides forward that the school has made in a short time. This is also evidence of its good capacity to make further improvements. One of these is to achieve greater consistency between classes in the quality of teaching, something the school is still working on.

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress towards the goals expected of them, though quite a number do not reach all the goals by the time they enter Year 1. There are a few occasions when a greater number of adults in the classroom would benefit children's learning.

The rapid improvement in results in English and mathematics is echoed in all year groups, because of effective systems of assessment in those subjects. Plans to extend them to other subjects are in hand and the school recognises the importance of doing so. The curriculum provided for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is well planned because it links all subjects together to add interest to pupils' learning. The school's plans to use this model of planning for Years 3 to 6 are well founded.

What the school should do to improve further

- use the best practice among teachers to improve the quality of teaching across the school
- extend to other subjects the thorough assessment systems used in English and mathematics
- improve the links between subjects in Years 3 to 6

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, though there are clear signs of an improving position. Children start in the Nursery with skills that are below average and leave Year 6 with standards in English, mathematics and science that are broadly average. In 2005, many pupils in Year 6 did not reach the levels expected of them, and this made the

school review the whole of its practice. The outcome of this has been to produce a very marked increase in the proportion of pupils reaching both average and higher levels in all three subjects, as is shown by the provisional results of the 2006 tests. The targets set for this year represent a very ambitious challenge and, though narrowly missed in a couple of respects, were broadly met overall. All groups of pupils achieve at similar rates, including those from The Opportunity Base. These pupils receive expert support and join in many activities with pupils of the same age.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils are proud of their school and enjoy their lessons. Most behave well and develop good relationships. A very small number of pupils occasionally find good behaviour difficult. The school is helping them to improve their self-control, and also uses exclusion appropriately on a few occasions. Attendance is below average, often because of illness.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They show respect for each other and insight into other cultures and beliefs. A recent visit to the National Gallery was memorable; one pupil wrote, 'I could not believe my eyes - the pictures were gigantic'.

Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that any bullying will be speedily dealt with. They know about healthy eating and practise it in school. Pupils enjoy exercise and understand why it is important.

The school council is an active force. They planned improvements to play areas and then successfully raised funds to buy new play equipment. Pupils enjoy taking responsibilities and they are developing the basic skills necessary to prepare them for later life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. An effective feature in pupils' learning in English and mathematics is the use of the 'working wall', where pupils can follow the trail of what they have learnt across the week and see where they might get to by the end. This helps pupils learn well in these lessons. The strongest feature of teaching is the use of regular assessment in English and mathematics to give help quickly where it is most needed. The school has raised teachers' expectations of how much pupils can achieve and has worked effectively to ensure that expectations are being met. A valuable tool in this is each teacher's development plan, showing how and where help is to be targeted. Planning is evaluated on a daily basis and subsequent lessons altered where necessary. The use of these important techniques is not as strong in all classes. In a few cases, planning to meet individual needs is not sufficiently sharp, leading to

a slower pace of learning in some lessons. The school is working to strengthen these skills where they are less effective.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum, with good features, that meets the needs of most pupils. The curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is good; teachers make strong links between subjects so that lessons reflect pupils' experience and interests. In Years 3 to 6, these links have not yet been made, with the result that pupils cannot so easily apply their skills from one subject to another. The school is currently working on this, to give pupils more opportunities to use their literacy, numeracy and computer skills throughout the curriculum.

Enrichment is good. Pupils' learning in information and communication technology, mathematics and physical education benefits from the school's effective links with local specialist secondary schools. Pupils take advantage of the many opportunities for sport and exercise and learn about healthy living and how to keep safe through the school's effective personal, social, health and citizenship programme. They participate enthusiastically in the wide range of clubs and sporting activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident that there is an adult to go to if they have a problem. The Opportunity Base provides a secure and happy environment in which pupils with hearing impairment prosper and which parents value. Good use is made of 'additional therapy' throughout the school - for example, the therapy group for pupils lacking in self-esteem. Procedures for child protection, for ensuring pupils' health and safety and for assessing risks are effective and conscientiously followed.

New strategies are used well to assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics and immediate action is taken to speed up progress where it is too slow. Assessment in other subjects takes place but is less rigorous. Pupils and their parents are kept well informed of children's progress and their targets for learning.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good and are enabling the school to emerge rapidly from a period of difficulty. The decision to suspend the school development plan and focus solely on raising standards in English and mathematics was a wise one and has borne fruit. The school has made the best use of its work with the local authority and the Intensifying Support Programme.

The headteacher provides committed, clear-sighted and very effective leadership which enthuses and unites the staff, leading to improvements in many areas. There is a clear

perception amongst staff that the headteacher leads by example; as one said, 'She doesn't tell us what to do, but teaches us what to do'. The senior leadership team gives full and effective support.

Self-evaluation is searching, accurate and is used well in planning for improvement. Good leadership and management in English and mathematics have led to the rigorous implementation of assessment and monitoring systems, which are having a clear impact on raising attainment. These improvements demonstrate good capacity to improve further.

The school involves parents well and provides them with good information. Additional professional support from a range of agencies is also used prudently to supplement the care provided by the school.

Governors are well informed, knowledgeable and work in a strong partnership with staff to bring about improvement. They have been searching in their scrutiny of new initiatives and have offered challenge and good support to the school. The careful management of the school budget has ensured that funding is available for essential developments, such as the professional development of staff.

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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?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	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

Pupils

We enjoyed talking to so many of you during our recent visit to your school. You were very friendly and polite and made our visit a pleasure - as when a small group of you came up to two of us to tell us about your trip to the London Zoo.

Most of you behave well in class and round the school. A few of you do not find this easy and you told us how the school is helping you to improve your behaviour. You told us how much you enjoy school and we could see this wherever we went. You know how to keep safe and healthy and you have lots of people to turn to if you have a problem. We can see that your school is getting better quickly. This is clear from the amount of progress that most of you have made since last summer, especially in English and mathematics. You told us that the 'working walls' and your targets have helped you in this. We can see how hard all your teachers and their assistants have worked. They look carefully at what you have achieved, before deciding what you should learn next. Some teachers are better at doing this than others, and we have asked the school to make sure that the teaching in every class is as good as possible. They will be helped in this by keeping the sort of check on your progress in all subjects that they already do in English and mathematics.

Your headteacher is good at her job and has made many sensible decisions about what to improve first. Her staff have supported her in every way. In Years 1 and 2, they have linked the subjects together so that you can make lots of use of your learning, such as computer skills. They are planning to do this for Years 3 to 6 and we agree that this is one of the things they should do soon. We hope you continue to enjoy your learning at Rushy Meadow.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Gray

Lead Inspector