

Ranelagh Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102732
Local Authority	Newham
Inspection number	286475
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Martin Beale

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 on roll	
School	392
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Shirley Morgan
Headteacher	Ms Angela Tapscott
Date of previous school inspection	11 June 2001
School address	Corporation Street Stratford London E15 3DN
Telephone number	020 8534 4364
Fax number	020 8555 3246

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ranelagh is a large school with a part-time Nursery. It is in an area where many families experience considerable social and economic disadvantage. Free school meal eligibility is high, as is pupil mobility. A very high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds and over half are at an early stage of learning English. A high and rising proportion of the pupils have learning difficulties and disabilities. Attainment on entry to the school is much lower than expected of three-year-olds and further affected by later entrants who often speak little or no English.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The inspection endorses the view of staff and governors that this is a good and improving school. It has some outstanding features, serves its culturally diverse community well and provides good value for money. Parents largely support all that the school does for their children. One parent said, 'I feel that the school has improved and this is because the headteacher and her staff have brought to the school whole new levels of aspiration to our children'. Pupils from a wide range of backgrounds work and play happily together, helping to make the school a harmonious place in which to learn and develop. The pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They help newcomers settle smoothly on arrival and care for anyone who is unhappy. They develop into mature young people who fulfil their responsibilities with pride.

A major reason for the school's success is the headteacher's high expectations of the pupils. They are set challenging targets and given every support to achieve them. Teachers bring out the best in the pupils, who respond by trying hard in lessons. Their progress is closely tracked and steps quickly taken if they start to fall behind. This means that the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties can be quickly identified and carefully focused support provided. Their progress is good. The school provides well for those who enter with limited English. As a result they also make good progress and, once reasonably fluent, are amongst the highest achievers in the school. Outstanding care, support and guidance mean that pupils not only feel safe, but also know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

The pupils' learning and personal development benefit from a rich and varied range of activities in lessons and beyond the school day. Music and performance play a central part in school life and add much enjoyment to the pupils' experiences. The outstanding curriculum meets their needs and interests well. This, along with effective teaching and learning leads to good achievement and rising standards. The youngest children have a good start in the Nursery, but this is not built on effectively in Reception so that their progress while in the Foundation Stage is only satisfactory. Teachers in Reception do not focus sufficiently on developing the children's language or make the best use of the outdoors. Standards by Year 6 are broadly average, and many pupils reach nationally expected levels in English, mathematics and science. This helps to prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

The headteacher also has high expectations of her staff and works with drive and determination to improve their performance. She is very ably supported by a strong team of senior staff and an effective governing body. This good leadership and management have helped the school to tackle its challenges well in recent years. Budget difficulties have been dealt with while maintaining a well resourced school. Self evaluation is accurately based on thorough monitoring of the work of staff and the performance of pupils. Action is taken quickly and effectively where weaknesses are identified, such as in Year 6 mathematics results. By developing strong staff teams who learn from each other and work towards a common goal, the school has built firm foundations that give it good capacity to improve further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop more effective provision in the Reception classes by improving the quality of teaching, making better use of the outdoor area and fostering the children's speaking and the enrichment of their language skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage but many do not reach expected goals by the end of Reception. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 make good progress while at the school from whenever they join. There is no significant difference in the progress of groups of pupils. Any variation in standards from one year to the next is largely due to differences in the make-up of each year group. Year 2 results fell in 2006 in part because this group had a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Writing and mathematics results were average, but reading results were well below average. Because of action taken to remedy identified weaknesses, the indications are that this fall has been reversed. Test results for Year 6 pupils have improved and were close to the national average in 2006, although lower in mathematics than English and science because brighter pupils did not do as well. These results represented outstanding progress in English and science, but only satisfactory progress in mathematics. School assessment data shows that the subsequent action taken to tackle shortcomings in mathematics has met with success and standards are rising. Writing has also received concerted attention, with evidence of success including improvements in the pupils' presentation and handwriting.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school and participate enthusiastically in all that it offers. Attendance is satisfactory and improving. The pupils' behaviour is good, although they can become restless in lessons where the teaching does not grab their attention. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils develop respect for cultural diversity and reflect on how their actions affect others. As one child said 'respect other people as you would respect yourself'. They become involved in community activities including regular and high quality musical performances. Pupils enjoy healthy food options, and eagerly participate in a wide range of physical activities, including lunchtime and after-school clubs. The school council is active and the pupils are proud of their contribution to improving lunchtime play equipment and leading class assemblies. They hold many other responsibilities that help the smooth running of the school. Making and selling 'smoothies' at playtime is one of the pupils' highly successful and popular initiatives. This has made a powerful contribution to their economic understanding. Pupils' improving basic skills and responsible attitudes prepare them well for the next stages of their education.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior staff continually strive to improve teaching and its impact on pupils' learning. Many lessons are taught well, some with outstanding features but there are times when teaching does not enthuse and challenge pupils sufficiently. Teachers use the thorough and accurate assessment of pupil progress to tailor lessons carefully to meet the learning needs of individuals. They skilfully engage the pupils in a variety of interesting activities so that classrooms are calm and orderly. Drama, role-play and group work along with the judicious use of 'talk partners' particularly help the pupils' language development. This is one feature missing in lessons in Reception, where teachers and other staff do not give sufficient opportunities for

pupils to develop their speaking skills in particular. Interactive whiteboards and other computer technology are used very creatively to engage the pupils' attention and to help put across difficult points more clearly. Close teamwork means that the deployment of support staff makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The outstanding curriculum is finely tuned to the pupils' needs and interests. It has a very strong focus on developing basic skills including information and communication technology (ICT). Links between subjects are very carefully planned. While planned opportunities are provided in the Nursery to link activities both inside and out of the classroom, this is not as effective in Reception where planning for the use of the outdoors does not give sufficient structure to the children's learning. A real strength is the very wide range of enrichment activities. As well as the extensive drama, arts and musical activities, there are many 'theme' weeks including sports and ICT based learning as well as an annual focus on citizenship. Visits and visitors are important features of school life as are the many extra-curricular clubs. High prominence is also given to the pupils' personal development, including helping them to lead safe and healthy lives, and contribute to the wider community. The school also places great emphasis on the pupils developing self-confidence, taking responsibility and learning to work both independently and in teams.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

All staff are fully committed to ensuring the welfare of the pupils and their health and safety. Requirements for safeguarding children meet requirements. Thorough systems are in place to monitor, support and promote the pupils' personal development. Pupils say they feel safe and secure and that there is always an adult to turn to if they have a problem because of the strong relationships and respect shown for everyone. Great care is also taken to help pupils settle into school, particularly if they arrive during the year. Pupils are set clear targets to guide their academic progress. Teachers provide sharply focused guidance so that pupils understand the steps needed to meet their targets. The school works hard to involve them in their children's education. Links with outside agencies are particularly effective in helping the school to foster the pupils' well-being particularly when they have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher and senior management form a very effective team. They give a strong sense of direction, purpose and drive to the school. Staff at all levels share a commitment to help all pupils do as well as possible and to prepare them for the future. Strong teamwork helps staff to support each other and to plan and implement changes that improve what they provide for the pupils. Systems for tracking individual pupils' progress are very thorough. They involve all staff in identifying what action is needed if pupils fall behind or look like not meeting their targets. The school's strengths are clearly understood. Any shortcomings are quickly identified, priorities established and concise plans for school improvement drawn up. Governors are well informed about its performance through regular visits to see the school at work. An accounting error in 2006 led to an overspend in the school's budget. The recovery plan to reduce this deficit

is rigorously monitored by governors while making sure it does not adversely effect the pupils' achievement.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 July 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ranelagh Primary School, London, E15 3DN

I am writing to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspectors when we visited your school. You were all very helpful. We enjoyed talking with you and your teachers, watching you learn and rehearsing for your show. There are many aspects of your school that we judged to be good. You, your parents and teachers are right in thinking that you go to a good and improving school.

You make good progress during your time at the school. You enjoy school, try hard, play happily together and mostly behave sensibly. Your teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities for you both in lessons and after school. You clearly enjoy the clubs, trips and visits provided for you. The care, support and guidance you receive are outstanding, particularly if you have difficulties with aspects of learning or you have recently arrived at the school. You are learning the importance of diet and exercise for a healthy lifestyle. You take your responsibilities very seriously and make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and the local community.

Your teachers and governors are trying hard to make the school even better. There is one main area where we think that improvements could be made. The good start the very youngest of you make in the Nursery is not built on well enough in Reception. Better use could be made of the outside area to help you to learn and teachers should give you more opportunities to develop your speaking skills.

You can all make the school an even better place by continuing to work hard, try to do your best and support each other. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Beale Lead inspector