



Risley Avenue Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 131879
Local Authority Haringey
Inspection number 293872
Inspection dates 13–14 September 2006
Reporting inspector Kathryn Taylor

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	The Roundway
School category	Community		Tottenham
Age range of pupils	3–11		London N17 7AB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088080792
Number on roll (school)	683	Fax number	02088016434
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr C Plentie
		Headteacher	Mrs Georgina Couram (Acting)
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2001		

Age group 3–11	Inspection dates 13–14 September 2006	Inspection number 293872
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average. The intake is ethnically very diverse. White, Black Caribbean and Black African pupils are the largest groups. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities is above average.

The school also has a unit catering for up to ten pupils with severe behaviour difficulties. A much higher than average proportion of pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Fifty two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. Pupil mobility is fairly high. Many pupils joining the school late are new to this country and some stay only a short time.

The school has gained the Healthy Schools award and is part of the Creative Partnerships Project. At the time of the inspection the school had an acting headteacher and several of the senior leaders were new to their posts.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

Significant underachievement in English, mathematics and science means the school's effectiveness is inadequate. However, recent improvements to the school's monitoring procedures are enabling senior managers to have a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses, and the school now has a satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

The school has a very supportive family atmosphere. It works very well with parents, the community and external agencies and this contributes positively to pupils' personal development. Pastoral care is good. Provision for pupils who are at the early stages of learning English and pupils with behaviour or learning difficulties is good, enabling these pupils to make good progress. However, pupils' progress overall is unsatisfactory and standards at age seven and 11 are too low. This is a result of past weaknesses in leadership, teaching and the curriculum.

During the past few months senior leaders have taken firm action and put pupils' needs at the forefront of all that they do. They have improved the way they use data to track all pupils' progress, and also put stringent measures in place to improve teaching and learning, drawing on external support and good practice. There are now very rigorous systems for monitoring provision, but the evaluation of their precise impact is still not sharp enough. This is why the school's own evaluation still judges some aspects of the school too generously. There are still weaknesses in teaching, such as marking and some teachers' subject knowledge and delivery of lessons, but there have been demonstrable improvements. The school is therefore providing a satisfactory standard of education, and an increasing number of pupils are making the progress that is expected of them. Provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory.

Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, but inconsistent. The school has established strong links with external groups and has responded well to changes in its pupil intake. However, it has not given consistent attention to improving pupils' academic progress and the quality of teaching. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to pupils' achievements.

What the school should do to improve further

- * Build on recent improvements in the quality of teaching and learning to eliminate the underachievement in English, mathematics and science
- * Provide better guidance to pupils about how to improve their work, especially through marking
- * Improve the way the school assesses the impact of the measures it has put in place to bring about improvements

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Standards are exceptionally low in national tests at age seven and 11 and achievement is inadequate. Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress from a lower than average starting point. They make good progress in their social skills and physical development. Their standards remain below average when they enter Year 1, except in their personal, social and physical development, which are average.

Over the past three years standards at age seven have declined, while those at age 11 show a slight improvement. Throughout the school reading standards have improved, but those in writing and mathematics remain particularly low.

Although the school sets appropriately challenging targets for pupils, too few meet them.

Pupils at the early stage of learning English and those with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress. However, too few of both the middle ability group and the more able pupils make enough progress to ensure they attain the standards they are capable of reaching. Even taking into consideration pupils' below average starting points and an increase in the number of pupils joining the school who are at the early stages of learning English; it is clear that not all pupils are making sufficient progress.

The school has acted determinedly to improve pupils' achievements over the past few months, with some success. For example, the school's assessments in English and mathematics showed an increase in the number of pupils making the expected progress during the summer term. In addition a larger proportion of pupils than in previous years attained the higher Level 5 in the English, mathematics and science tests at age eleven in 2006.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of keeping safe, eating healthily and taking exercise. They regularly participate in the community and have some opportunities to work in teams. Weaknesses in provision and pupils' basic skills, however, mean that pupils' enjoyment of school and preparation for the next stage of their education are only satisfactory.

Pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is satisfactory. Most pupils are friendly and polite, form good relationships with their teachers and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour in class and around the school is satisfactory, and is good in lessons where teaching motivates and engages all of the pupils. Pupils' cultural development is good and racial harmony is very good. Pupils in Year 6 welcome opportunities to take responsibility around the school, for example by acting as Peer Mediators. In general pupils have too few opportunities to develop independence in learning.

Attendance, although below average, is improving due to the school's effective strategies.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In recent months the school has implemented rigorous systems to improve all teachers' skills, and to tackle unsatisfactory teaching. Weaknesses, such as those in planning appropriate work for all groups of pupils and in some teachers' low expectations, have been addressed and this is improving pupils' learning. Additional staff have also been employed and this is ensuring that groups of pupils receive better support in lessons. Senior leaders are fully aware that key weaknesses and inconsistencies remain, such as the lack of challenge in some lessons and limitations in some teacher's subject knowledge and confidence in delivering lessons. They also recognise that although teaching and learning are consistently good in a few classes, too much of the teaching is still only satisfactory. Inspectors noted other important weaknesses in teaching, such as too few opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and to write at length. Marking in many classes does not point out pupils' mistakes, or identify what pupils' need to work on to improve. Nevertheless, strengths in teaching across the classes were also seen, such as teachers' relationships with pupils, effective behaviour management skills and good classroom organisation.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. Curricular enrichment is good. It provides many opportunities to promote pupils' personal development and to celebrate their diverse backgrounds. Pupils appreciate the good range of extra-curricular activities, visits, visitors to the school and the opportunities to participate in many in community events, such as the Turkish classes and the Tottenham Carnival. The wide range of clubs is well attended.

The Foundation Stage curriculum incorporates all areas of learning with a satisfactory mix of adult-led and independent activities. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 was reviewed recently, to ensure it reflects pupils' backgrounds and needs more closely, develops skills progressively, and makes better use of links between subjects. As yet these changes are too new to have had a significant impact on raising standards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Although personal support for pupils is strong, weaknesses in academic guidance mean that care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall.

Although senior managers have improved the way they use data to track all pupils' progress, teachers' day-to-day assessments and setting of individual targets for pupils are still inconsistent.

Children settle into the school well because induction arrangements are very good, including those for new arrivals. Good transfer arrangements also ensure that pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary school. Staff support pupils' personal needs very well. Pupils say they feel confident to approach an adult if they have a problem and that bullying is acted upon. The school has forged very good links with parents, carers and external agencies to support vulnerable pupils. The learning mentor and other key staff provide very good support for pupils at risk of disaffection. Arrangements for ensuring health and safety are good. The building is cleaned and maintained to a good standard.

Regular checks are made on premises, equipment and staff.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The acting headteacher has a very clear sense of direction for the school and has worked quickly to implement a number of key strategies to address pupil underachievement. The newly restructured leadership team is proactive. Members have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that improving teaching and achievement remains at the core of their work.

Although there has been insufficient time for the many different initiatives to become fully embedded, or for the impact to be fully seen, there is clear evidence of improvements to teaching and learning and pupils' achievements.

The school has established many new and rigorous systems for monitoring provision and tracking pupil progress, but the evaluation of the precise impact of these on pupils' learning, progress and standards is still not sharp enough.

The new strategic plan identifies clear priorities for improvement, but lacks a clear focus on how the impact of actions will be evaluated and how the success will be measured. The school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and finances are being managed well. In view of pupils' overall underachievement, however, the school cannot be said to be giving satisfactory value for money. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and function effectively as critical friends. The governing body carries out its functions as it should, beginning to challenge decisions and request explanations where they judge this to be necessary.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	4
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
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	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thankyou for making us welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you.

We found that although your school is improving, it is not making sure that all of you make enough progress in English, mathematics and science.

These are the things we especially liked about Risley Primary School:

- * Everyone who works in the school makes sure that you are safe and well cared for.
- * You are friendly and polite. You respect each other's backgrounds and get on well together.
- * The staff provide many interesting after school activities that help you enjoy school.
- * Some of you make good progress because of the extra help you receive.

These are the things that need to improve:

- * The teaching needs to be even better, so that you make more progress in English, mathematics and science.
- * Your teachers need to give you more information about what you need to do to improve your work.
- * We are pleased to see that the headteacher and teachers are making lots of changes, but we feel they need to do more to find out which of these are working best.

We would like to wish you lots of success in your future education.

With very best wishes,

Ms K Taylor

Lead inspector