

Roding Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101230
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	307619
Inspection date	30 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Nick Butt

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	390
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	54
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr R Wright
Headteacher	Mr B Fox
Date of previous school inspection	1 March 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Hewett Road Dagenham RM8 2XS
Telephone number	020 8270 6640
Fax number	020 8270 6638

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. They evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues.

- The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS).
- How well curriculum enrichment contributes to pupils' personal development and enjoyment of school.
- How well governors hold the school to account.

The inspectors gathered evidence from lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work and parents' questionnaires. Discussions with staff, a governor and pupils also contributed to the judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This larger than average school has a 26 place Nursery as part of its EYFS provision. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average. More pupils than usual join and leave the school outside normal times. Just under two fifths of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic backgrounds, the largest group being Black African. Around a quarter of the pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is below average. These include mainly moderate learning difficulties. The school provides training for large numbers of post-graduate students. It has the Healthy School Award. The headteacher is on part-time secondment and shares the running of the school with the deputy headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Roding Primary is a good school. There are some outstanding elements to its provision. In particular, the outstanding leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher drive forward improvement and ensure that pupils achieve well. They have put in place excellent systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the school, and this means that they have a very clear idea about what the school does well and where it could do better. Outstanding pastoral care meets the wide range of pupils' needs exceptionally well and helps them to overcome the difficulties they face. The school's friendly atmosphere makes pupils and their parents welcome, and creates a climate in which all are valued as individuals.

Standards by the end of Year 6 are broadly average, and have risen faster than the national trend in recent years. The school is successful at enabling the great majority of its pupils to reach nationally expected levels of attainment. Given their starting points all groups of pupils achieve well. This includes those with moderate learning difficulties, who are supported effectively by teaching assistants in meeting targets on their individual education plans. Fewer pupils attain the higher levels in English and science because teaching does not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently. By the end of Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics and this has been the case for several years, but this constitutes good progress for these pupils. There is room for improvement, especially in attaining the higher levels. Assessment does not always set precise enough targets for these pupils to reach their full potential.

Teaching develops pupils' basic skills well, with a structured approach to learning that suits most pupils. Relationships are good and lessons usually run at a brisk pace, which keeps pupils involved and interested. There are many opportunities for pupils to discuss their learning both as a class and in smaller groups. Teachers use technology well to add variety to lessons and offer interactive games in mathematics that pupils can access at home. These are proving a popular way of reinforcing learning. There is some outstanding teaching, where pupils are fully engaged by the teacher's enthusiasm, and where the level of challenge is high. Booster groups once per week in Years 3 to 6 are proving effective at consolidating and extending pupils' understanding in literacy and numeracy skills. In everyday teaching, there is sometimes too much reliance on whole-class teaching, in which everybody tackles the same work. This does not provide sufficient challenge for the more able pupils and their progress slows.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their behaviour is excellent both in class and around the school. They are courteous and thoughtful and support one another well. They have a good understanding of living a healthy lifestyle and know how to keep safe. Pupils take plenty of exercise and enjoy the good range of sports available to them. They eagerly take part in tournaments with other schools. One pupil said, 'We get to compete with other children from around the borough and we get to socialise with children we don't know'. The school council has organised play equipment at lunchtimes to make them more active. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They respect one another's faiths and traditions and explain their beliefs. Pupils visit many different places of worship and gain a clear understanding of the diverse cultures that shape their community. They contribute positively to supporting the school and their wider community. Older pupils help the younger ones with their reading, and they entertain the elderly. Pupils raise funds for a range of good causes. The school's family atmosphere and the good variety of interesting activities mean pupils enjoy their education. Attendance has risen sharply since the last inspection so that it is now close

to average. Pupils leave Year 6 well-prepared for secondary school, not only in having the required skills, but also in their positive attitudes to learning. A pupil commented, 'I've noticed I've started to become more confident and I'm not afraid to try new things'.

The school's good curriculum is well-adapted to pupils' learning needs and increasingly involves pupils in creative activities. Staff review and plan together, making changes in the light of how things went. There is a good range of enrichment activities, including regular trips to places of educational interest such as the Imperial War Museum and Tower Bridge. Pupils take part in a wide variety of clubs such as gymnastics, needlework and choir. These opportunities contribute well to pupils' good personal development and add to their enjoyment of school. Some effective links are made across the curriculum, particularly in bringing history alive. For example, Year 6 pupils have been researching Britain at War and finding out what life was like in the 1940s. The purchase of laptop computers provides more opportunities for pupils to do independent research, although this is an area that the school is developing further. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good, enabling them to participate fully in the curriculum. The school meets all safeguarding requirements. Academic guidance is good, with helpful comments in books to support pupils' writing. Most pupils understand the next steps in their learning. However, there is some variability in the way that pupils know their targets for improvement and how much emphasis is placed, by teachers, on reaching these.

Parents are happy with the school and the progress their children make. One wrote, 'Children at Roding are well-prepared for all aspects of life'. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a very clear vision for developing the whole child and equipping pupils to overcome whatever barriers they may encounter. They are supported in this by excellent systems for monitoring and self-evaluation that look intensively at each subject in turn, and use both the staff's own expertise and outside specialists. This means strategic planning is of a high quality and has enabled the school to make good progress since its last inspection. The school is moving from a rather unwieldy paper-based tracking system to an electronic one. This is making data more widely available to staff and giving a better overview of how year groups of pupils are doing. Governors are better informed than they were at the time of the last inspection and ask more searching questions. The school's 'adopt a governor' scheme links governors to a class, so that they get to know the pupils and can find out about what they are learning. The school is used as a training centre by a local university for its post-graduate students, which gives staff opportunities to develop their leadership skills. The school is a thriving community, reaching out into its locality and beyond, and has a good capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children start Nursery with skills and abilities well below those usually found. They settle quickly because of the caring and stimulating learning environment staff create for them. Excellent provision is made for their welfare. The newly refurbished outside area gives good opportunities for development in each of the six areas of learning. The Nursery and Reception classes have adopted a carefully structured curriculum that encourages children's speech and concentration levels, two areas where they are often well behind other children. This is having a beneficial impact in preparing children for learning basic skills. The teaching is consistently good and there is a successful combination of adult-led and child-initiated learning. By the end of Reception children have made good progress, although many are not yet reaching the expected early learning goals. Staff have always gathered large quantities of information about the children, but they are beginning to organise this in more efficient ways, and presenting it to

children and their parents. Though at an early stage, this more rigorous approach to assessment is proving beneficial. The EYFS is well led and managed and the coordinator has time to work alongside colleagues and together, bring a mix of experience and skills to the planning of lessons. Increasingly, the views of children are informing planning, as when the serendipity of a spider in the sink led to an investigation into cobwebs.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2 by developing further the use of assessment to set clear targets for improvement.
- Increase the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in Years 3 to 6 by ensuring that all teaching sufficiently challenges the more able pupils.

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Annex A

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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	2
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

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/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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	2

The quality of provision

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

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

10 October 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roding Primary School, Dagenham, RM8 2XS

We enjoyed visiting your school and hearing what you like about it. We agree that it is a good school, and some things are outstanding. Here are the particular strengths.

- You make good progress to reach the expected standards by the end of Year 6.
- Your behaviour is excellent and you look after each other well.
- You find lessons interesting and work hard so that you make the most of your learning.
- You have plenty of opportunities to go on visits and take part in clubs.
- You have a good understanding of the different faiths and cultures that make up your community.
- The school cares for you particularly well, especially the younger children and any of you who are having problems.
- The headteacher and deputy headteacher are exceptional leaders.
- Staff know all about what works and what could be even better because they check very carefully how things are going.

We have asked staff to use what they know about your work to help you to make the best possible progress, so that standards will go up more by the end of Year 2. We think it is good that you have plenty of time to talk through your learning in class. We want those of you who find work easy to be challenged more so that you have to really think and can reach the higher levels in the tests.

Thank you once again for your help. Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nick Butt

Lead Inspector