

Ravenor Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101885
Local Authority	Ealing
Inspection number	307835
Inspection dates	31 January –1 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Nicola Davies

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	465
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Stephen McKenzie
Headteacher	Ms Ros Hancell
Date of previous school inspection	13 December 2006
School address	Greenway Gardens Greenford UB6 9TT
Telephone number	020 8578 1654
Fax number	020 8747 7968

Age group	3-11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large multilingual and multi-ethnic primary school with a nursery. Half of its pupils speak a language in addition to English and almost three quarters of pupils are of minority ethnic heritage. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is much higher than average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school other than at normal times is also well above average.

At its previous inspection the school was found to require significant improvement and was given a notice to improve. The new headteacher took up her post in September 2007.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. The school has taken the recommendations of the previous inspection to heart and the hard work of staff has paid off as they have worked together to secure significant improvements. Although it is early days for the impact of all these improvements to be felt, particularly in the academic results of pupils, the overall effectiveness of the school is now satisfactory and it is an improving school.

At the time of the previous inspection, teachers' planning did not cater well for the different abilities of pupils. As a result, although teaching was satisfactory, too little of it was good. This has changed. Although teaching is still satisfactory overall, more of it is now good. This is due to successful teamwork as staff have worked together to improve planning and teaching across the school. Working in their teams, staff have made sure that everyone knows what makes good teaching and learning. Their next task is to ensure that this happens consistently in lessons by extending opportunities to observe and share their good practice. Effective teamwork has highlighted other issues. For example, staff now realise that they need not only to think about pupils' abilities but also their gender. Boy friendly approaches, aimed at raising the achievement of boys across the school, as well as a focus on a more creative curriculum, are beginning to improve the work provided for all pupils. The curriculum is satisfactory and it engages the pupils, who find it interesting and motivational. However, teachers are not yet giving enough consideration to the academic English skills of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Inspection evidence indicates that while standards remain below average, current pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and achievement is satisfactory in relation to the pupils' starting points.

Parents and pupils have welcomed the changes they have seen in recent months. For example, one parent commented on the improved environment of the school including the 'brilliant' new signs. Bright displays of pupils' achievements and activities greet the visitor. The school's good care and satisfactory guidance mean that pupils' personal development and well being remains good. Pupils feel safe, secure and increasingly able to do well.

Leadership and management is now satisfactory. The school is well led by the new headteacher who is enthusiastically supported by staff and by the strengthened governing body. She has shown determination in establishing and sharing key values, including making learning a very positive experience for all pupils. 'Special, secure, supported, successful' is the vision for the school that children and adults have just written together. The new team has the satisfactory capacity to further improve the school and make this vision a reality for all its pupils.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 3

Children thrive in the friendly and welcoming nursery. They quickly get used to the daily routine, for example, helping themselves to healthy fruit. They become aware of the needs of others, for example, offering to help each other with getting on their coats to explore activities in the outdoor area. They choose many of their tasks, selecting from a range of well-planned indoor and outdoor activities. This good planning continues in the Reception classes. However, opportunities for children to become independent in their learning are not yet consistent.

Children enter the Nursery with skills that are below those generally expected for their age and make good progress in some areas. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, most are working securely within the early learning goals although communication, language and literacy is a weaker area. Many children's skills in English are less developed than their skills in their first languages. Staff are beginning to plan for these bilingual children but, in practice, there are not always enough good opportunities to develop their spoken English.

What the school should do to improve further

- Accelerate progress and improve standards by ensuring that activities in lessons are consistently well matched to pupils' interests and needs.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good or better by providing more opportunities for observing and sharing best practice.
- Ensure that bilingual pupils have good opportunities across the curriculum to develop the academic English skills they need to support later learning.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next Section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

The standards which pupils reach in assessments at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. However, inspection evidence indicates a marked improvement in the standards of current pupils. This is particularly noticeable in Year 2 where pupils have less catching up to do. For example, some Year 2 pupils are already attaining at above expected levels for their age, in contrast to 2007 national tests when no pupils did so. Standards for older pupils are still below average, but the school's careful tracking indicates that most are making satisfactory or better progress in relation to their starting points. Part of the reason for this is that staff now track the progress of individual pupils carefully and quickly identify pupils who may not be reaching their potential. Well organised support in small groups helps pupils who find reading, writing or mathematics difficult make at least satisfactory progress. The tracking of different groups of pupils is not as well established. However, the school is beginning to identify and take action when, on occasions, boys, bilingual pupils or pupils from particular ethnic backgrounds do not achieve as well as others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy coming to school and conduct themselves in a confident and self-assured way. Behaviour and attendance are satisfactory. A small minority of parents and pupils expressed concerns about the behaviour of pupils, particularly on the playground. The school has worked hard to address this and behaviour is carefully monitored during the staggered playtimes. In addition, the school council has recently purchased new playtime equipment to keep pupils busy and active. A consistent approach to rewarding pupils for their achievements in class is working well and is improving pupils' self-esteem. Pupils feel valued, safe and confident that the school will quickly sort out any concerns they may have. Some, for example, use the new 'I am Worried' box to tell teachers about their problems. Pupils continue to show a good understanding of healthy living and participate well in physical activities.

Pupils make a good contribution to school life and their spiritual moral, social and cultural development is good. Girls and boys of all different backgrounds get along well together and incidents of racism are rare. The active school council are proud of their achievements and talk readily about the contribution made to the wider community through their charity work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Overall teaching is satisfactory and much of the teaching seen in the inspection was good. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and enjoy learning. Teachers' planning has improved. For example, all teachers plan work for at least three levels. In most lessons, pupils are clear on what they are expected to learn and teachers use questions to evaluate and consolidate their progress. In the best lessons, pupils make a quick start on meaningful and challenging activities and teachers sometimes use competition to encourage their participation. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well to illustrate key points and to stimulate and interest their pupils. Where lessons are less successful, lengthy introductions mean pupils lose concentration or teaching does not take full account of their needs and interests.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Staff have worked successfully to improve the links between subjects and to make learning more relevant and enjoyable through the new creative curriculum. Work has begun on ensuring that the curriculum is well matched to the interests of specific groups. For example, boy friendly approaches are now in place across subjects although it is too soon to see the impact of these on the standards achieved by boys. However, the curriculum is not yet fully adapted to cater for the needs of bilingual pupils as they become more fluent in English as an additional language.

The school successfully develops pupils' interest in, and uptake of, healthy lifestyles. A well planned programme of visits and visitors adds extra enjoyment and makes a good contribution to pupils' moral and social development. For example, a residential trip to the Isle of Wight makes a significant contribution to pupils' maturity and independence.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Staff pay good attention to keeping children safe and well. Security is good and thorough checks are carried out on all adults at the school. The school works well with vulnerable pupils. One example is the successful approach to helping pupils manage their emotions. Liaison with specialist services is good. The school has recently doubled the number of staff it employs to support pupils who find aspects of reading, writing or mathematics more difficult. Good support in small groups helps these pupils to catch up. Support for the language development of pupils who join the school at early stages of learning English is thorough and well planned.

Staff set targets which are shared with pupils and parents. The school has yet to link individual targets closely to improvements in standards for the school as a whole. For example, staff do not yet use tracking information well to monitor gaps between the performance of different groups of pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The new headteacher has established a new and shared direction and vision for the school aimed at raising standards. Governors, staff and pupils have been strategically involved in this and staff teams are helping to ensure that this becomes a reality. Staff are rising well to this challenge. As a member of the mathematics team commented, 'Teaching is more fun since we started working as a team and agreeing on good practice'. Work in developing expertise in assessing pupils' progress is beginning to pay dividends and there are early signs of improvements in literacy and numeracy. Staff are involved well in evaluating and monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work although as yet, there are not enough opportunities for all staff to see good practice in action.

New appointments have strengthened the satisfactory governing body. Governors take their responsibility for holding the school to account, particularly for the standards achieved by pupils, very seriously.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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?	3
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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.

Annex A

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	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
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?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

13 February 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ravenor Primary School, Greenford, UB6 9TT

Thank you for showing us around and answering all our questions when we visited your school recently. We all really enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and sharing in some of your activities.

You may remember that the last time inspectors visited Ravenor they judged that some things were not as good as they should be. They asked your school to make significant improvements. We are delighted to tell you that everyone's hard work over the past year has paid off and your school is now satisfactory or better in all areas. Your teachers are keeping a very close watch on the progress that you make and are working really well in teams to keep making improvements. As a result, you are learning and enjoying your lessons more, which is beginning to show in the progress you are making. So well done to everyone.

There are, of course, still some things which could be better. Your teachers need to carry on helping you do well by thinking how each of you learns best in your lessons. They have some good ideas to share so we have asked the school to make time for them to watch each other's lessons just as we did. We have also asked them to think about how they plan for those of you who speak more than one language. They need to think about how you develop the English you need to do well in your academic studies.

Your teachers told us that your new vision for the school is making sure that everyone feels special, secure, supported and successful. This sounds a really good idea and we are sure that you and all the adults at the school will work hard to make sure this comes true.

Thank you for your helping us with the inspection and making us so welcome. Please pass on our thanks to your teachers too as they made us feel just as welcome as you did.

With best wishes for a successful future.

Nicola Davies

Lead Inspector