

Ravensbury Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	105449
Local Authority	Manchester
Inspection number	308857
Inspection dates	21–22 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Clarice Nelson-Rowe

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	334
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mike Carmody
Headteacher	Mrs Linda Shaw
Date of previous school inspection	5 July 2004
School address	Tartan Street Clayton Manchester M11 4EG
Telephone number	0161 223 0370
Fax number	0161 223 9571

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Ravensbury Community School is situated in Clayton on the east side of Manchester. It is larger than most primary schools and serves a community which has above average levels of social disadvantage. The proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, those with English as an additional language, however, is below the national average though increasing. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also above the national average. In 2007 the school achieved the Activemark and Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Ravensbury is a caring and happy school that provides both a satisfactory standard of education and adequate value for money. Classrooms are well ordered, and displays stimulate and support learning. Displays also celebrate the achievement of everyone, such as books published by pupils and parents. Pupils are courteous, inquisitive and welcoming to visitors. Parents are 'very happy to send their children here'.

Children join the school with skills that are low compared with the expected levels for their age. Although academic progress is satisfactory overall as pupils move through school, it is uneven. Progress can slow as the result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Consequently, by the time pupils leave Year 6 standards remain well below average.

The curriculum is satisfactory with some notable features, particularly in enrichment activities. The emphasis on creativity and enjoyment is engaging pupils' interest and encouraging them to learn. The promotion of a good reading culture has improved since the last inspection. Pupils now have mini libraries in their classes and shared areas, as well as access to three reading clubs which take place every week. The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Pupils' ideas have greatly enhanced the ambience of the dining hall, and this is promoting good social skills and table manners. Pupils work together well in groups and show good interpersonal skills. They also enjoy learning about the beliefs of different religious and cultural groups. Pupils say they feel safe and most disagreements are dealt with quickly. They take on responsibilities that actively contribute to the school and wider community, including environmental projects.

Leadership and management are satisfactory, and the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. It has elected to join the local authority intensive programme of support and has developed detailed systems for using assessment data to track pupils' progress. As a result, the impact of these initiatives is having the desired effect. For example, progress data and pupils' work show clearly that most pupils are making at least satisfactory progress and are set to achieve demanding targets this year. The school recognises, however, that its work is not yet finished, as standards are not yet high enough across the school, particularly in reading and writing. Leaders do not, however, monitor the quality of teaching and learning with enough rigour to ensure that it is of a consistently good quality across the school. The quality of teachers' marking does not provide pupils with enough guidance about how to improve their work. Nor do all teachers provide pupils with work that is well matched to their abilities in order to accelerate their progress. The school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Provision in the Foundation Stage is good as a result of good leadership and management. Arrangements for induction, as well as for children's care, health and safety are good. Children join the school in Nursery and staff carry out home visits and encourage families to participate in play visits to school and the Sure Start crŠche. Children's skills vary on entry to Nursery, but overall they are low compared with the national expectations for their age, particularly in reading and writing. Although standards remain well below average when children are ready

to start Year 1, they have made good progress in relation to their low starting points. One reason for this achievement is the high quality phonics lessons provided. Children display positive attitudes and are engaged in their learning, using the opportunities given to them for child-initiated learning.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards across the school, particularly in reading and writing.
- Provide work that is well matched to pupils' needs to accelerate their progress.
- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of how well they are doing in their learning and that marking informs them of how to improve.
- Ensure that leaders monitor teaching more rigorously to improve the quality and consistency of learning across school so that it is a least good.

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

Progress between Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory overall, although uneven across year groups. Pupils join Year 1 with standards typically well below the national average and leave Year 6 well below the national average. In 2007 a high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities impacted on the end of Year 2 assessments. In Years 3 to 6 there is a rising trend of improvement in standards over the past three years, but they are still significantly below average. Performance in English is weaker than in Mathematics. The standards and progress observed by inspectors in Year 2 and Year 6, however, indicate improvement on the results in 2007, and continuation of the rising trend. In Years 5 and 6, progress is good and standards in the current Year 6, in particular, are showing marked improvement on previous years. Pupils learning English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are also making satisfactory progress. However, the school realises that there is more to do and is increasingly using challenging targets to raise standards and achievement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils enjoy good relationships with each other and their teachers and respect people's different backgrounds. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are well motivated by school and class rules. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, better when lessons are more engaging. Pupils' enjoyment of their education is satisfactory overall. They have a good understanding of safe and healthy living and have opportunities to take part in physical activities, which they enjoy. Pupils contribute well to the school community in support and monitoring roles, such as the 'Pals Scheme'. Pupils work closely with the park wardens to improve both the local and school community. Pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils are prepared satisfactorily for their future economic well-being in the development of basic skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

In lessons relationships are of good quality and teachers use praise and a range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to illustrate ideas to pupils. Learning moves on at a good pace when activities are interesting and well matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities. On such occasions, pupils are highly motivated, fully focused and thoroughly enjoy their learning. However, this is not always the case and pupils do not learn at a fast enough pace when insufficient attention is paid to matching lesson activities to their needs. Although learning aims are shared with pupils at the onset of lessons, these are not always revisited to establish how well pupils are progressing. Marking is often cursory and is rarely helpful in showing pupils how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Enrichment activities and extra-curricular clubs extend the curriculum well. There is a wide range of activities, which include athletics, football clubs, reading, choir, and playing of musical instruments. Pupils also benefit from a choral teacher. As part of the school's vision, pupils have access to at least one visit or visitor every half term to enhance their learning. Pupils enjoy increased access to computers, which are used well in lessons. However, the school curriculum is satisfactory in the provision for literacy and numeracy lessons. Currently, the tasks are not always well matched to pupils' abilities and the lack of a clear focus on learning results in satisfactory achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

There are strengths in pastoral care and support for pupils and their families. The school works extremely well with external agencies to help pupils in their learning and support their individual needs. Safeguarding procedures and child protection arrangements meet current requirements. Pupils feel safe in school and know there is always someone to turn to with any worries. The school's transition arrangements are effective as well as efforts to promote good attendance, resulting in improving levels. Assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory. The systems to track the progress of pupils who speak English as an additional language and to support their individual needs are developing as the number of pupils joining the school is increasing. Pupils are set targets but not all are aware of them, or how well they are progressing towards them.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher is providing the school with a clear focus on raising standards and achievement. All staff understand the vision and are working effectively as a team. Links with other providers are good and are supporting pupils' learning well. The promotion of good community cohesion is seen in the reaching out to parents to help improve attendance and to enable them to support their children's learning. Governors are fully informed about the school's work and are supportive. Self-evaluation is satisfactory. There is a cycle of monitoring but the school is not yet evaluating

the impact of its provision well enough, particularly when judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. Through a programme of intensive support from the local authority, the school is now focusing more clearly on strategies to improve pupils' achievement in order to raise standards. The tracking system is now enabling the school to monitor pupils' progress more regularly and effectively.

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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?	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	2
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?	3
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	3
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	3
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

Inspection of Ravensbury Community School, Clayton, M11 4EG

Thank you so much for being polite and welcoming to your school during our recent inspection. We enjoyed watching you in lessons, in assemblies and at play. We really enjoyed talking to you and getting your views. It was a pleasure to hear how much you like your teachers and enjoy school. We think your school is providing you with a satisfactory education, and there are signs also of improvement. This means it does some things well, but other things need to be better.

I want to share with you some of the things what we think are good about your school.

- You know that exercise is important to keep yourselves fit and healthy and many of you take part in after-school sport.
- You know how to keep yourselves safe and are keen to take on responsibilities.
- You work well together and help each other.
- You are happy and the school provides you with many interesting things to do outside of lessons such as trips and clubs.
- The rooms you work in are bright, arranged well and help you to work.

Here are the things that need to be improved.

- We would like the teachers to make sure that the standards in your reading and writing improve.
- You should all be given challenging work so that you can learn well and quickly.
- Teachers should tell you in lessons, and on your work, how well you are doing and what you need to do to improve.
- We would also like the leaders to make sure that all lessons are as good as the best so that you can learn more.

You can be part of the school's efforts in raising achievement by working with your teachers, continuing to try hard in lessons and turning up every day and on time. I hope you will continue to work with enthusiasm and to make visitors so welcome.