

Roger Ascham Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103056
Local Authority	Waltham Forest
Inspection number	323738
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2009
Reporting inspector	June Woolhouse

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)	448
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Bob Carey
Headteacher	Mr Matt Hanks
Date of previous school inspection	4 July 2006
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Wigton Road London E17 5HU
Telephone number	020 8527 3157
Fax number	020 8531 7227

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 larger than average primary school. Nearly two thirds of pupils are of minority ethnic background. About one third of pupils speak English as an additional language and several pupils are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Pupils mainly have moderate learning difficulties and/or disabilities, language and communication difficulties or social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A much higher than average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A few pupils are from Traveller families. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the customary times of the year is higher than is usually found. The school has achieved the Investors in People Award. It appeared in the national top 200 Schools' list for outstanding achievement in 2008. The school has provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage through one Nursery and two Reception classes. It provides wrap-around care between 08:00 and 17:30 for parents at the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Roger Ascham School provides an outstanding education for all its pupils. It achieves its aims to enable pupils to be the best they can be, enjoy and succeed in their schooling, become independent, reflective learners and take responsibility for themselves and each other. Pupils make exceptional progress in English, mathematics and science by the time they reach Year 6. What makes this achievement more special is the very good progress they also make in their personal, sporting, cultural and artistic development. A rich curriculum contributes significantly to their very good attitudes in lessons and the excellent behaviour and respect they have for each other and their teachers. Children get a very good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They make good progress from a level below that expected for their age.

High achievement is not negotiable in this school because the headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy headteacher and all the staff, has a passion and belief that 'it can happen', whoever you are. All the school's energy and thinking are directed at planning, establishing and maintaining excellent teaching and interesting, first-hand activities that all pupils can understand and enjoy. Success follows. As one parent commented, 'The school has a great understanding of how to maximise potential.'

The school's excellent systems to support and guide pupils is well established and consistent across the school. The regular monitoring of academic progress means no one falls behind. Extra support, tailored to specific needs, in particular for pupils whose first language is not English, arrests any slow-down and restores learning to the appropriate level. The very caring ethos is apparent from the confident way pupils conduct themselves in school, knowing that the adults will look after them. Pupils feel safe, know how to be fit and healthy and are exceptionally good at working in small groups and teams, developing important life skills for the future. This contributes to a calm and completely inclusive atmosphere where everyone gets along well, knows how to share but also how to argue their case and listen to others when opinions differ. This ability to reflect rather than react is the hallmark of a school where everyone, adults included, thinks about what they are doing, the impact it could have on other people and how to improve. Leadership and management at all levels are outstanding because the headteacher and deputy headteacher give time to staff to contribute explicitly to the aims of the school. Everyone understands that barriers to learning can be overcome by accurate assessment of needs, skilled teaching and high expectations. Governors are fully supportive of the school and are developing an understanding of pupil performance. Regular discussions about how successfully the school is addressing community cohesion and reaching further afield to understand other communities, nationally and globally, reinforces well what is happening already with the local community. Planned activities to extend the school's influence further afield to national and international projects are developing well. The school has made very rapid progress in the last three years following the outstanding contribution of the executive headteacher, who mentored the headteacher very effectively. The school's capacity to improve is outstanding.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

The Early Years Foundation Stage is good and children reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year from low starting points. Children make very good progress in the Nursery class. All learning goals are planned for very effectively and links between them are based on

real life situations. Children are very independent and become engrossed in their chosen activities. This expert planning and support for learning is not carried on as successfully in the Reception classes. Although children learn a great deal when they choose for themselves, adults do not always consolidate it by bringing them together to reinforce the learning through a short discussion. As a result, sometimes opportunities are missed to develop children's literacy skills and language structures at the end of a session. Children's personal development and well-being are good because their welfare is at the core of everyone's work. Safeguarding procedures are robust and children feel safe in the knowledge that the adults will take care of them and help them. Children's progress is routinely assessed and good records show their progress. Children enjoy selecting their own examples to put in individual records. Leadership and management across the Early Years Foundation Stage are good and all adults are actively focused on each child's learning, including those with individual needs or who are at an early stage of learning English. Parents and carers are fully involved and supported when their child starts school. The school works well with outside agencies to support children's development.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve practice in the Reception classes to match the outstanding outcomes and organisation in the Nursery class.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Standards in English, mathematics and science are broadly average in Year 6 and are improving steadily each year. This represents exceptional progress given pupils' well below average starting points. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 have improved and are now above national levels. The upward trend over the past four years has been sustained and indicates the effectiveness of the school's assessment and planning to target literacy and numeracy at an early stage and then consolidate these skills throughout Key Stage 2. There are no significant differences between how well boys and girls achieve. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those at an early stage of learning English also achieve very well. Their needs are rapidly diagnosed and well-targeted support from teaching assistants successfully keeps them abreast of their classmates. Pupils reach and sometimes exceed their challenging targets, an expectation in a school that expects the very best from all its pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' excellent moral development is reflected in their very good behaviour and understanding of justice and fairness. Pupils reflect on important values and ideas in assemblies and there is a strong sense of respect and care in the school. Pupils are committed to the school's values and they share its commitment to equality. Their cultural development benefits a great deal from the specialist teaching in the performing arts and the 'same difference week' when pupils and parents contribute to the understanding of the wide range of cultures represented in the school. Attendance is improving and persistent non-attendance has declined markedly this year. The school has vigorously employed strict routines with parents and carers to ensure children come to school regularly. Pupils' punctuality has improved since the last inspection. Specialist sports coaching contributes well to pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles. For example, all Key Stage 2 pupils have swimming lessons for two years. Pupils' excellent personal

development helps them learn rapidly. They listen well, often check their own work, sustain their concentration and know their personal targets for improvement.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are outstanding. Plans focus strongly on learning intentions and relevant assessments ensure that progress is being made. As a result, the teaching is very well matched to the needs and abilities of the pupils. There is outstanding teamwork between teachers and the support assistants which makes a strong contribution to the quality of individual support. Teachers plan very imaginatively, selecting relevant topics that will engage but also challenge pupils. Often they use information and communication technology (ICT) effectively to develop wider research and writing skills. Pupils are encouraged to learn by finding out for themselves and taking an active part in enjoyable activities. Pupils say that they have the confidence to ask questions. Teaching, learning and the quality of pupils' work are regularly monitored. There is an outstanding consistency and agreement among all staff about what constitutes good participation. Marking is regular and encouraging. Frequently, it gives pupils very good guidance on how to improve their work. Teachers assess pupils' progress accurately and use this extremely well to plan future steps in learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The broad curriculum provides work that is closely matched to pupils' learning needs and motivates them to learn so that their achievement is outstanding. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of clubs, visits, visitors and special activities. For example, all pupils visit an outdoor learning centre in Epping Forest. Very good links are made between subjects to create interesting topics which include questions for investigation that are provided by the pupils. The good range of visits includes the RAF and British Museums. Since the last inspection, very good improvements have been made to what is taught during Key Stage 1 and this has helped to raise pupils' standards, including those of pupils at an early stage of learning English. The wide range of clubs are attended by a large number of pupils. Together with teachers, pupils assess their own progress in social development using an excellent social record for each pupil. Teachers use this to ensure that personal, social and health education is closely matched to pupils' learning needs. Each Friday afternoon pupils study extension activities which run for five-week blocks. Pupils enjoy these activities immensely and they include ICT, especially independent use of laptops for personal research, dance and thinking skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. The school is strongly committed to the pastoral care of its pupils and carries out its duties very effectively. It is part of a cluster of primary schools and uses this partnership to share additional resources, as well as ensuring that pupils of all backgrounds are well known and feel secure. Parents understand that the school provides clear codes of conduct and has high expectations of all pupils. Procedures for safety and child protection are properly carried out and pupils know who to go to if they need help.

Staff are conscientious in guiding and supporting the academic progress of their pupils. Pupils talk candidly of their learning goals in literacy and numeracy. All staff give outstanding support to developing independence by learners and fostering relevant thinking skills in group and cooperative situations. Records and guidance are in manageable and useful forms so as to maximize the impact of evaluation. Monitoring ensures that the very best support is always given. The school is highly innovative and is developing a social record for pupils to go alongside their academic achievements, which are discussed regularly with them. This outstanding support is developing their personal understanding and social learning and prepares them well for the next stage of their school career.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school is exceptionally well led and managed by the headteacher. He is fully supported by his deputy headteacher and their complementary skills assure pupils make very good progress and develop into mature and responsible young people by the time they leave. The relentless focus on academic progress, as well as promoting pupils' well-being very effectively, underpins all the school's work and includes everyone who works with pupils. Subject and phase leaders are fully conversant with how pupil progress is tracked and the various ways to evaluate progress in teachers' planning and looking at pupils' books. This common understanding leads to everyone having similar, high expectations of what pupils should achieve. Teachers are well supported and are required to improve through further study and attending courses. The school rightly deserves its Investors in People Award; everyone's contribution is truly valued and encouraged. The school provides outstanding value for money and uses its resources and well-worn accommodation to maximum effect. Links with other agencies, including providing wrap-around care for pupils of working parents, enhances community cohesion and the well-being of 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?	1
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?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

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?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

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

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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	1
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 learners' needs?	1
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

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
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**

06 July 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roger Ascham Primary School, London, E17 5HU

Thank you so much for helping us when we inspected your school earlier this week. We appreciated very much watching all the interesting things that happen in the classrooms and outside and felt we were welcome to join in. We think it is a brilliant school and that is because you have a super headteacher and deputy headteacher who make sure the teachers and all the helpers give you the very best chance to succeed. Everyone works really hard to make school an interesting experience for you and you do your part by concentrating in lessons and producing very good work. That means you make excellent progress by the time you leave. We were very impressed by the way you get along together and help each other in your group work. That is so important when you move to another school and when you go on to get a job.

We thought the younger children needed a little bit more support when they have been organising their own learning. They play very well together, or sometimes just by themselves (that is what little children do), and practise writing, making things or drawing pictures in their lessons. If they are to get the most out of their experiences, they need their teachers to go over what they have been learning and to ask them to tell everyone at the end of the lesson. So we discussed this with your headteacher and asked him to make that a priority and he agrees with us.

We were pleased to hear your views about school and were impressed that you know such a lot about how to be healthy, stay safe and care about each other. The most important impression that we were left with was the extent to which you respect each other as individuals and how enormously important this is in making the school such a harmonious place to be. We hope those of you who leave this year will be happy at your next school and continue to work just as hard. You might be a little bit sad to go, but we know that you will always be welcome to return and tell the younger children and your teachers your latest news.

With best wishes to everyone.

Yours faithfully

Mrs June Woolhouse

Lead Inspector