

Ripple Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101198
Local Authority	Barking and Dagenham
Inspection number	354958
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2010
Reporting inspector	John Horwood

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 of pupils on the school roll	734
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Luby
Headteacher	Roger Mitchell
Date of previous school inspection	21 September 2006
School address	Suffolk Road Barking IG11 7QS
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 24 lessons and saw 20 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of staff, governors and pupils. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at documentation including pupils' work, minutes of staff and governors' meetings, the school development plan, progress monitoring records and school policies. The responses to 131 parental questionnaires were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- Do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same good progress that is identified for other pupils and is this supported by an appropriate curriculum and effective classroom support?
- How effectively have leaders and managers worked during the first year of this newly amalgamated school to remove the past variations in provision identified in the school self-evaluation?

Information about the school

Ripple Primary School opened fully in September 2009 through the amalgamation of Ripple Junior School and Ripple Infant School. The headteacher is the former headteacher of the junior school. The school is in the process of increasing from three forms in each year group to five by expanding to an additional site a short distance away. This larger than average school serves a multi-ethnic community. Pupils come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than in most schools, although only a few of these are at the early stage of speaking English. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than in most schools. The school has an above-average proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities including many with speech, language and communication needs. Among the awards received by the school are the Silver Arts Mark Award and the Music for Youth Award.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Ripple Primary provides pupils with a good education. The quality of teaching and learning is good and pupils make good progress. Pastoral care is good and the school works very well with external agencies to provide additional support for pupils. Pupils say they feel safe. The overall outcomes for pupils are good, including their behaviour. Pupils' attendance is average and the school works hard with parents and pupils to bring about improvements to this.

While teaching overall is good there are variations across the school with examples of both satisfactory and outstanding teaching seen during the inspection. Leaders and managers use assessment systems well to monitor performance, but within the classroom the use of assessment data to aid planning appropriate activities is variable although improving. As a result, in some lessons the work is not sufficiently challenging for all pupils. The marking of pupils' work does not always ensure that pupils know how to improve. The good curriculum supports all aspects of pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and those who are at the early stages of speaking English, get good additional support. This enables these groups to make good progress, despite the support role of teaching assistants within lessons not being sufficiently planned and utilised throughout.

The headteacher's vision for the school is very well supported by a strong leadership team that is fully involved in all aspects of school improvement. They have successfully steered the school through a challenging period, uniting and motivating the whole school community. Leaders' self-evaluation is extremely accurate and identifies the strengths and areas for development in the school. Although there is still some variation in provision across the school, it has been significantly reduced during the last year through staff development and support. The effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage has been a focus of the leadership team because of the increase in size, changing staff and provision on two sites. The newly appointed coordinator is very experienced and knows what needs to be done to improve the effectiveness, including improving the outdoor learning environment for Reception to make it as good as that already provided for the Nursery. These different factors show that the school has a good capacity for sustained improvement.

The school is a very harmonious environment where very strong links have been developed with the local community. This has enabled the pupils to make an outstanding contribution to the school and the local community through taking significant roles in local events and helping to improve facilities. There is excellent involvement of the local community in school events and use of the buildings. Links are being developed with schools in other parts of England to give pupils the opportunities to share the experiences

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of others from different backgrounds. At a global level, community cohesion is very well addressed through events such as a cultural fortnight.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment and progress by:
 - improving the consistency of teaching by ensuring teaching assistants are used more effectively throughout all lessons to support groups of pupils
 - making consistent use of assessment systems within the classroom to ensure sufficient challenge for all pupils
 - developing the marking of pupils' work and the feedback they are given to ensure they understand the next steps to improve their learning.
- Improve the quality and use of the outdoor provision in Reception to match that of the Nursery.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good. When they join the Nursery or Reception classes children have lower than expected skills, but by the end of Year 6 attainment is broadly average in all key subjects. All pupils make good progress. Pupils say they enjoy their learning and this was abundantly evident in a Year 6 English lesson when the fire alarm sounded and one boy said, 'Why does it have to go off in such a wonderful lesson'. In this outstanding lesson pupils were inspired through the teacher's enthusiasm, supported by dance music and video clips, to make them concentrate throughout. The needs of all pupils were met with appropriate support. In many lessons, pupils were involved in demonstrating to the class, including during a Year 2 numeracy lesson where they created different shapes with a peg board and elastic bands. Their behaviour is good both in and out of lessons, ensuring that all pupils can learn and enjoy school. They say any bullying is dealt with effectively. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities enjoy learning because they are set appropriate work.

Pupils are well prepared for their future well-being because of their sound knowledge in all key subjects supported by good personal skills. They gain additional awareness for later life through such opportunities as the 'Splash' card which, like a cash card, enables them to build up points. It is also used to encourage healthy lifestyles by giving extra points for making healthy choices of food. Pupils eat healthy food and participate well in sport, including regular exercise sessions each day. They make a very good contribution to the school community through the school council and taking on roles such as 'prefects' and 'play leaders'. They interact well with the local community through sport and music activities and curriculum visits. The school's Samba drummers have been recognised by a Music for Youth Award, and will be playing at the Royal Albert Hall for the second year running in November. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The rich range of cultural diversity in the school helps pupils to know about different faiths and cultures. This is enhanced by the curriculum, including a cultural event which now extends over two weeks, and through visits within the local community.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Pupils benefit from good teaching supported by a good curriculum within a safe and caring environment. Teachers are enthusiastic and have good relationships with the pupils. The use of assessment data to ensure work matches pupils' abilities is good overall but variable across the school. Teachers provide a good variety of activities to engage pupils, who are motivated in most lessons. The use of success criteria is not fully developed to support ongoing assessment and to allow pupils themselves to consider how well they are doing. The deployment of teaching assistants is not always effective throughout the whole lesson.

The curriculum caters well for all pupils. It is well organised and provides pupils with many varied and interesting learning experiences, recognised in several awards, while developing their personal skills including behaviour and cultural awareness. It is well adjusted to meet the needs of different groups and the range of pupils in the school. Linking subjects across the curriculum is developing well and the planning for key skills is good. There are very good enrichment opportunities including well-attended clubs. Pupils really enjoy the regular residential trip to an adventure centre in the Wye Valley.

Pastoral care in the school is good, with all staff strongly committed to the concepts that Every Child Matters. Effective procedures are in place to encourage good behaviour and regular attendance. Transition arrangements with the secondary schools effectively support those pupils making this move. All requirements of health and safety are met.

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First aid provision is good and a comprehensive system of recording and reporting all accidents is in place. The support and provision for vulnerable pupils and their families are good. The school is diligent in following up any concerns to ensure the safety and well-being of its pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

All leaders and managers share the same vision and have ensured that the concept of ongoing improvement is fully embedded throughout the school. This is reflected in the impact they have had on improving teaching and learning throughout the school. The school's outstanding work in creating an inclusive community, which promotes equal opportunities and avoids discrimination by providing support to those who need additional help, ensures that overall there is no underachievement by any group of pupils. Nevertheless, some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and learning means that equality of opportunity is good rather than outstanding. Governors have a range of skills and experience. They understand what needs to be done in the school and have an enthusiastic approach to carrying out their role. Their impact on the school's performance is satisfactory at the present time because they are still developing into their new roles as an amalgamated governing body. They ensure that safeguarding procedures are all in place to meet requirements including the vetting of staff. The school has a very good approach to carrying out risk assessments for school trips and activities within the school. There are very good partnerships with support agencies and good child protection procedures are fully adhered to.

The effectiveness with which leaders promote community cohesion is outstanding. They know the community very well and much has been done to successfully promote good relationships with parents and the local community. The school community is extremely harmonious, with outstanding relationships clearly apparent. Links with the local community, including the more difficult parts to involve, are extremely good. There has been good progress on developing links with more distant communities including schools beyond the local community within the United Kingdom and global communities.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides a secure start for children. The coordinator has only been in post for a few weeks but is already ensuring improvements. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is below the level that could be expected for children starting in the Nursery or Reception. Children make satisfactory progress but are still below the goals expected of children at the end of the Reception year. They play and learn well together. Behaviour is good and children support each other.

The learning environment is stimulating and children make sensible choices about which of the activities to engage in and enjoy. They have a good understanding of keeping safe because of effective adult guidance. Children are well cared for and adults have good relationships with them. All welfare requirements are met and there is good support for children's well-being. Teachers use a good range of teaching methods and resources are adequate. However, support staff are not always fully utilised to support children during focused teaching sessions. The use and quality of the outdoor area to support learning is good in the Nursery but only satisfactory in Reception. Parents and carers are all very happy and satisfied with support for their children and the communication between them and the school. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in all aspects of their learning.

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These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3

Views of parents and carers

A small minority of parents and carers completed inspection questionnaires. The vast majority of these are satisfied with the school. The general feeling from written comments is that the children love school. A small minority had individual concerns which were considered as part of the inspection process, but were not substantiated by evidence available during the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Ripple Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 131 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 734 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	79	60	51	39	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	62	47	65	50	1	1	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	47	36	71	54	10	8	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	43	33	75	57	10	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	57	44	67	51	5	4	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	37	74	56	7	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	38	76	58	3	2	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	34	72	55	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	34	26	81	62	11	8	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	30	76	58	10	8	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	27	82	63	5	4	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	48	37	75	57	0	0	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	49	64	46	4	3	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Ripple Primary School, Barking, IG11 7QS

Thank you for welcoming us and helping us when we came to your school. We really enjoyed visiting you in your school and seeing you learning and playing so well together. Your school is giving you a good education.

There are many things we admire about your school and these are a few of them.

- Your school community is a happy one where you all get on well together.
- You make an excellent contribution to the school community by taking on responsibilities such as being prefects and play leaders.
- You do excellent work in the community to help improve the local area and to represent your school in musical and other events. Well done the Samba band!
- The school makes sure that you gain an excellent understanding of how other people live in different parts of the world.
- Good teaching ensures that you achieve well and enjoy your learning.
- Your behaviour and relationships are good and ensure the school is a very harmonious place to learn.

These are things we have asked the school to do to make it even better:

- give you more advice on how to improve your work
- provide more help for you from all adults in the classroom, especially during the part of the lesson when the teacher is talking to you
- make sure you always have work which is just right for each one of you, neither too easy nor too hard, so that you always make good progress
- improve the outdoor learning area for Reception.

You can help by carrying on working hard.

Yours sincerely

John Horwood

Lead Inspector

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