

# Rowdown Primary School

Calley Down Crescent, New Addington, CR0 0EG

**Inspection dates** 2–3 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because rates of pupils' progress from their starting points are not always swift enough.
- The quality of teaching is uneven between classes. Work in lessons is not always suitably difficult for the wide range of pupils' abilities in classes.
- The part additional adults play in supporting pupils' learning is not always planned in enough detail to ensure they help pupils to make better progress.
- Sometimes teachers' explanations of new learning are not clear enough to make sure that pupils can get on by themselves quickly.
- While most pupils behave well, a few sometimes lose focus in lessons and need reminders from staff about the behaviour that is expected.
- Although attendance rates have improved since the previous inspection they remain below average because some pupils are frequently absent.
- The checks leaders make on teaching sometimes focus more on what teachers are doing in lessons than on how successfully teaching raises pupils' achievement. As a result, they can miss things to improve.
- Improvement plans do not all have precise targets, particularly in English.

### The school has the following strengths:

- Faster progress in some classes is helping to raise attainment by the end of Year 6, particularly in mathematics.
- Greater rigour in the way leaders check the progress pupils make has helped them to be better informed about how well pupils are doing.
- Pupils say they feel safe in school.
- When teachers mark pupils' work they make clear how they can improve and encourage them to respond to their comments and suggestions.
- Leaders have secured improvements. Governors work closely with senior leaders, challenge the school to improve quickly and have ambition for the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in all year groups and undertook three joint observations with senior leaders. They observed 32 teaching sessions.
- Inspectors held discussions with groups of pupils, staff, members of the governing body and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors listened to groups of pupils reading. They looked at work in pupils' books and the school's information showing pupils' progress.
- The school's website, development plans and records relating to safeguarding were also checked.
- The inspection took account of the school's own analysis of a recent survey of parents' and carers' views and 25 responses to the staff questionnaire. There were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) for the inspection to take them into account.

## Inspection team

Madeleine Gerard, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Raymond Prentice	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Rowdown Primary is larger than the average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- An above average proportion of pupils are supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional government funding for looked after children, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and the children of service families) is above average. There are currently no looked after children nor any children of service families at the school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school organises and manages a breakfast club.
- The pre-school and the after-school club that share the school site are privately run and are not included in this inspection.
- There have been a high number of recent staff changes.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and better teaching in order to accelerate pupils' progress by making sure that:
  - teachers plan activities that are at the right level of difficulty for pupils' abilities to maintain high levels of concentration and motivation
  - teachers' explanations of new learning are made clearly so that pupils understand new concepts quickly and are confident to get on by themselves
  - teachers' planning is clear about the role additional adults should take in lessons in order to play a full part in supporting pupils' learning.
- Raise pupils' levels of attainment, particularly in English, by:
  - rigorously planning the work pupils do in English so they build up their skills systematically as they progress through the year groups.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaders and managers by making sure that:
  - development plans in English have precise targets which measure the impact of improvements against their effectiveness in raising achievement for pupils
  - evaluations of teaching quality focus on the extent to which it is securing rapid progress.
- Reduce the proportion of pupils who are frequently absent from school by making sure parents and carers are clear about the importance of pupils attending school very regularly.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Pupils' achievement requires improvement because their progress across the school is inconsistent. Pupils' attainment is below average because teaching quality is uneven.
- Rates of progress vary between subjects and year groups. English results have not improved as quickly as those in mathematics because the activities pupils are set to do in English lessons do not all give pupils opportunities to practise specific reading and writing skills and build up their literacy steadily as they progress through the school.
- Pupils generally make better progress in mathematics than in English. For example, younger pupils were observed enjoying using computers to complete mathematics calculations and older pupils were seen to be well motivated when they were challenged to think hard in order to complete demanding problems and solve equations. This is helping to raise pupils' attainment in mathematics.
- Despite working in small groups with additional adults within lessons, and in additional small-group and individual sessions outside the classroom, the progress made by disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs requires improvement. This is because they also make uneven progress through the school. Additional support for selected pupils helps them to take responsibility for managing their behaviour and settle to work.
- The achievement of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including pupils speaking English as an additional language, is also inconsistent and therefore requires improvement. The very few pupils at the early stages of learning English develop their knowledge of English vocabulary effectively through regular listening and speaking practice, for example using computers.
- In last summer's national tests, the attainment gap between Year 6 pupils who benefited from the pupil premium and other pupils narrowed so that the attainment of these pupils was slightly above the others in reading and writing and slightly below in mathematics. This is a better performance than that found nationally. Although the school makes sure discrimination is tackled, the achievement of pupils currently at the school and known to be eligible for the pupil premium requires improvement because their progress is variable.
- Children join the school with skills that are generally well below the levels expected for their age. Children are happy and they work and play well together. Their attainment is still below average by the time they leave the Reception classes.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- In too many lessons teachers do not set suitably difficult work and too few pupils reach the higher levels of attainment. Teachers' explanations are not always sufficiently clear to help pupils understand new learning quickly, or sometimes tasks are not well planned to promote pupils' assurance in using new concepts. In these lessons the pace of learning slows when pupils lack confidence in using key skills, or a few become restless.
- Improvements to the checks made on pupils' learning since the previous inspection help leaders and teachers to track the progress that pupils make over time in English and mathematics. The progress information is used to identify pupils who need additional support, but teachers are not all using the information systematically to set work that enables pupils to strengthen their learning quickly, particularly in English.
- Teachers' planning does not always make explicitly clear what additional adults should do in lessons to help pupils make good progress in their learning. When they focus more on pupils' behaviour than on their learning, their impact on achievement is not as good as it should be.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly. They often give feedback about how pupils might improve their work and set additional tasks and challenges for pupils to complete to help them to improve further. Pupils regularly take responsibility for responding to teachers' comments and following their suggestions.

- Relationships are supportive and encouraging. Social skills develop well when pupils have opportunities to work together in pairs and small groups during independent tasks.
- Personal and social skills are fostered well in the Early Years Foundation Stage because children play well together and share resources. They readily join in activities together. For example, children working with an adult in a Reception class took turns to read words and match them to pictures to practise their knowledge of phonics (letters and the sounds they make). Activities for children to choose for themselves are generally inviting but are not always as well planned to build on what children know and can do already so that they make swifter progress in their learning.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils**

### **require improvement**

- Some pupils do not always get on with independent work as quickly as they should or concentrate hard when activities do not capture their interest or encourage them to want to get on quickly. As a result, their attention dips.
- Most pupils cooperate well with their teachers and have positive attitudes to learning. In many lessons, pupils respond quickly to any reminders about the behaviour that is expected and adults manage behaviour well. Occasionally, when inappropriate behaviour occurs, a few adults do not apply the school's behaviour policy swiftly enough to help pupils settle quickly.
- Although attendance rates have risen, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school and therefore miss valuable learning is higher than the national average. Some parents and carers do not fully appreciate the importance of their children attending school regularly.
- Pupils are confident that incidents of bullying are rare and confirm that they feel safe in school. They know that staff will help them should any problems occur. Guidance about safe practices, including swimming lessons and road safety workshops, help pupils develop a clear awareness of unsafe situations and how to keep themselves safe from harm.
- Pupils benefit from regular reflection time in assemblies, lessons on philosophy to encourage thinking skills, opportunities to play musical instruments and whole-school singing events. Together with visits to local places of worship, charity fund raising and taking part in sporting competitions, the school fosters pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. All this, together with popular extra-curricular clubs and outings, promotes equality and positive relationships.
- The breakfast club gives pupils a sociable start to the day. They make friends and enjoy activities with pupils in other classes.

### **The leadership and management**

### **require improvement**

- Checks on teaching do not always measure its impact on pupils' learning. This limits leaders' ability to identify where exactly further improvements are needed and secure teaching that is consistently good in all classes.
- The school's view of its effectiveness is generally accurate. Pupils' long-term progress is carefully checked. Development planning identifies appropriate priorities for action. However in English, targets for the success of initiatives are not always sharply measured against their impact on improving pupils' achievement.
- Improvements to the curriculum for mathematics, including additional sessions for more-able pupils, help them to achieve higher levels and raise attainment. Leaders have successfully made sure teachers' approaches to marking pupils' work make the next steps in pupils' learning clear. The school has built effective partnerships with other local schools to support the development of teaching quality and the curriculum. Some other recent initiatives, such as the introduction of small groups for teaching phonics in Years 1 and 2, have not had time to prove their effectiveness.
- The school makes good provision to support pupils and their families who experience difficult

circumstances.

- The local authority works well with the school to provide additional support and guidance to help it to improve.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Following changes to the governing body, governors are keenly ambitious to secure rapid improvements in the school's effectiveness and raise achievement for all pupils. They know what the school does well and where it must do better. Governors are very clear about how well the school is performing compared to similar schools and sharply analyse information about how well pupils achieve. They are confident to ask searching questions and challenge the school to improve quickly. They take their role in managing performance seriously, check that targets are met in order for staff to receive salary increases and are introducing tighter links between salary increases, teaching quality and pupils' achievement. They know what the school is doing to tackle underperformance.
- Governors know the uses to which the pupil premium is put. They evaluate the impact of this money against the results these pupils achieve compared with other pupils' at the school. Governors attend appropriate training to keep them up to date with developments in education. They make sure that the school meets safeguarding requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131339
<b>Local authority</b>	Croydon
<b>Inspection number</b>	400139

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	331
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gary Coy
<b>Headteacher</b>	Linda Shute
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15–16 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01689 843347
<b>Fax number</b>	01689 843523
<b>Email address</b>	admin@rowdown.croydon.sch.uk

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