

Roxeth Nursery, First and Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102185
Local Authority	Harrow
Inspection number	307921
Inspection dates	30 June –1 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Michael Merchant

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

Type of school	Middle deemed primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	2–12
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	460
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Tim Brown
Headteacher	Mrs Carole Tobin
Date of previous school inspection	2 November 2004
School address	Brickfields Byron Hill Road Harrow HA2 0JA
Telephone number	020 8422 1344
Fax number	020 8423 9947

Age group	2-12
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is larger than average and has slightly more boys than girls. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The vast majority of pupils come from a variety of minority ethnic groups. Of these, 53% speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having learning difficulties, mainly speech and language difficulties, is lower than average, as is the proportion of pupils with a statement of educational need. There has been a very high turnover of teachers in recent years and a new headteacher was appointed 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: 2

Roxeth is a good school. Parents are supportive of its work and have great confidence in the school. One parent said, 'My children are very happy at the school and are doing very well there.' The outstanding leadership of the new headteacher and the strong support she receives from her deputy have done much to set the school on an even keel after a period of some uncertainty. In the recent past, the school has had several headteachers and a high proportion of teachers had left, many mid-way through the year, interrupting pupils' learning.

There is now a full and stable teaching staff energised by the new headteacher. She inspires and supports staff and pupils to get the best out of themselves and others so there is a very real sense of working together as a team. Teaching is carefully and accurately monitored, pupils' progress is systematically checked and teachers are enthusiastic and plan exciting lessons. The result is that standards are now above average, an improvement over previous years. All groups of pupils are making good progress, including those with speech and language difficulties. There is outstanding liaison with a range of outside agencies, such as social services and the Children's Centre, to ensure the needs of all are fully met.

Pupils get on well with each other and the adults who work with them. Pastoral care for pupils is outstanding. The school focuses on developing and nurturing every single child as an individual. Behaviour is good and pupils feel safe and valued. They develop positive attitudes to learning and greatly enjoy what is on offer. Pupils show a good idea of what is needed to eat healthily and their knowledge of different cultures in the diverse society that we live in is strong. Attendance is average, but many parents take their children away for extended holidays in term time, and this holds back their learning. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community, both within the school and through links with local charities. By the time they leave Roxeth, pupils' good personal skills mean they are equipped well for the next phase of their education and beyond.

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are knowledgeable and they use the links established in the curriculum well to enable pupils to practise their writing skills in other subjects. They mark books diligently and take time to write informative and helpful comments on pupils' work. Pupils say that this enables them to make improvements. Teachers and teaching assistants develop good relationships with the pupils. As a result, attitudes to learning are good.

Governors involve themselves well in the life of the school and are supportive as well as critical when they need to be. Curriculum leaders are developing into their roles, but do not as yet monitor teaching in their subjects as fully as they should. The school has good capacity for further improvement, as improvement since the previous inspection has been good and the school accurately assesses and evaluates its work.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children get off to a good start because good teaching and the stimulating environment builds firm foundations for their learning. The teaching areas are well defined and resources thoughtfully organised to aid independence and promote children's confidence and self-esteem. The good leadership and management of the Foundation Stage ensure that there is a good balance of teacher-directed activities and those that children choose for themselves. Children enjoy the wide range of imaginative activities, which are well matched to their needs and

interests. The staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and track their progress very carefully. As a result, children settle well and make good progress in relation to their starting points of below average attainment on entry, particularly in their language skills. Teachers' planning includes focused activities where speaking and listening are encouraged well, especially through role-play and skilful teaching to improve children's knowledge of the letter sounds.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that middle managers take more of a lead in monitoring teaching and learning in their areas of responsibility.
- Improve pupils' attendance rate by building on the work to reduce the number of term-time holidays that families take.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards in the assessments at the end of Year 2 in 2007 were below average. They have dipped over the last three years, reflecting the growing numbers of pupils whose first language is other than English and the high turnover of staff. Standards attained in national tests in Year 6 in 2007 were average. Unvalidated results from the 2008 National Tests show that standards have improved considerably, particularly in science, and are above average. Standards of work seen in the current Year 7 are also higher than those expected for the age of the pupils. Achievement overall has been steadily improving over the last three years and is good given the low standards many pupils have when starting school.

The stable teaching force that the school has now established is improving this rate of progress further. Evidence from the school's tracking of pupils' work, observations of pupils' written work by inspectors and unvalidated 2008 national test results show that currently standards reached by the end of Year 6 are above average. This represents good progress from the low starting point many children have when they begin Nursery. There is little difference in the progress made by different groups of pupils and those with speech and language difficulties make similar progress to the others.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well being are good and makes a significant contribution to the progress pupils make. Pupils from a range of cultures work and play together well, enjoy their education and are happy and proud members of the school community. They know about healthy eating and gain great enjoyment from the friendship that they find amongst their peers. 'I enjoy having fun and learning, especially in English and mathematics,' said one pupil. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good and reflects pupils' good moral and social development. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development are outstanding. The school's rich cultural mix is visibly celebrated.

Attendance has improved as a result of the school's persistent attempts to resist requests for term-time leave. However, too many pupils miss school for extended holidays to visit families abroad during term time which interrupts their learning. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the community through their rigorous efforts to raise money for charities as well as their wonderful commitment to support members of the Roxeth school community, for instance as

articulate members of the school council and as playground mentors, helping younger pupils settle-in. The school choir, many fundraising activities and work with elderly people are highly thought of in the local community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Pupils respond well to the good teaching, and they make good progress in lessons. Skilful questioning is used by the most effective teachers to draw out ideas from pupils, This was well seen in an outstanding Year 7 lesson where pupils were captivated and excited about learning about adjectives because of the teacher's vivid explanation and use of colourful examples. In most lessons, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and their planning ensures that a good range of activities keeps pupils' interest. Teachers make clear exactly what they want pupils to learn and why it is important. These are reinforced effectively throughout lessons. Good partnerships in classrooms between teachers and teaching assistants lead to effective support for pupils who find learning challenging and those new to learning English. Key features of the best lessons include a good pace of learning that challenges pupils of all abilities well. In these lessons, pupils make very good progress. However, in some lessons, teachers talk for too long, pupils lose interest as a result, and their progress slows. Pupils are guided well to assess their own work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy learning and they are well-served by the curriculum. It is particularly effective in supporting pupils' personal development through Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL), and pupils get regular opportunities to reflect on how their attitudes and actions affect others. The provision of key skills in English, mathematics and science is well developed in providing for the specific needs of different abilities. The information and communication technology (ICT) curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good. For example, pupils were seen using the interactive whiteboard for answering questions and their laptops to research how the heart works. Extra curricular enrichment is very good both during and after school, and learning is enlivened by the wide range of visits, such as to the opera. The school's strengths in music and the arts enhances the life of the pupils as they sing, dance and play a whole host of different musical instruments.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good because of the high level of commitment from all staff, which ensures pupils well-being is promoted well. Arrangements for health and safety are excellent. Procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare are robust and regularly reviewed. Pastoral support is outstanding. Staff take extreme care and very high levels of professionalism are displayed. The school works extremely well with other agencies to help pupils overcome barriers to learning and has worked hard with parents to improve attendance. The school has made a great effort to try to overcome the difficulty created by pupils who travel abroad to visit families during term time.

Academic guidance is good. Vulnerable learners and those at risk of underachieving are identified early and highly effective strategies are put in place to support them. Careful monitoring enables these pupils to reach their challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The outstanding leadership of the new headteacher, very ably supported by her deputy, ensures that there is a keen focus on raising standards. The school has worked hard to overcome its staffing difficulties: the headteacher and governors have skilfully appointed and retained a knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff team and morale is strikingly high. The strong camaraderie at all levels contributes to the excellent relationships within the school. Staff have created an ethos of inclusion that has enabled all students to flourish and standards to rise.

Senior leaders increasingly monitor standards and progress effectively, and identify strategies to raise achievement in key subjects. They set challenging targets and place a strong emphasis on the achievement of all pupils. Subject leaders contribute well to raising achievement across the curriculum through the monitoring of progress towards targets and lesson planning. However, they do not monitor the quality of teaching in their areas. Governors hold the school to account well for its work. They support and encourage the school well and are beginning to analyse more deeply its performance. The school has an accurate view of its work.

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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?	2
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 effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

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	2
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 the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

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?	2
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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
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

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

14 July 2008

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Roxeth Nursery, First and Middle School, Harrow, HA2 0JA

Thank you all for the warm welcome you gave to your inspectors when we visited your school recently. What a lovely two days we had. We enjoyed meeting and talking to you. Roxeth is a good school and is getting even better. You told us many interesting things about your school and we know you are very proud of it.

Here are some of the good things about your school.

- You behave well and you get on well with your fellow pupils. Roxeth is a well ordered school and you are kind to one another.
- Teaching is good and sometimes excellent and your teachers are very concerned to make sure that you do as well as you can.
- By the time you are in Year 6, you reach standards that are a bit higher than those of other pupils in other schools and you make good progress in your lessons.
- You learn lots about keeping yourselves safe and leading a healthy lifestyle.
- Your headteacher and your teachers know exactly how to make Roxeth Nursery, First and Middle School an even better school.

We have asked your school to do these things to make it even better.

- Those teachers who are in charge of subjects should check on how well they are being taught by other teachers.
- Make sure that fewer of you miss school.

I hope that you all continue to work hard and do well at Roxeth Nursery, First and Middle School.

Yours sincerely

Michael Merchant

Lead Inspector