

Rowdown Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131339
Local Authority	Croydon
Inspection number	341130
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

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	372
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rob Doe
Headteacher	Linda Shute
Date of previous school inspection	12 March 2007
School address	Calley Down Crescent Croydon CR0 0EG
Telephone number	01689 843367
Fax number	01689 843523
Email address	kay.lewthwaite@rowdown.croydon.sch.uk

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	28–29 June 2010
Inspection number	341130

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It rates council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2010

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 29 lessons taught by 15 different teachers and talked to members of the governing body, staff, parents and carers, and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked in particular at its self-evaluation and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered the responses in the 60 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the achievement of pupils in English and mathematics, and the progress made by girls and by more-able pupils □□
- the effectiveness of actions taken by the school to raise attendance
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers in ensuring consistency in the quality of teaching and learning
- the ambition and drive of leaders and managers and their effectiveness in promoting school improvement.

Information about the school

This school is larger than the average primary. A higher-than-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost a third of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds, mainly White European. A higher than average proportion of pupils have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Of these, pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties form the largest group. The school manages a daily breakfast club. An external provider manages an after-school club and a pre-school nursery on the premises.

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?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

Pupils leave school with attainment in English and mathematics that is considerably below average for 11-year-olds. This means that they are not adequately prepared for the next stage of schooling. School data indicate that pupils currently in Year 6 are unlikely to master the basic skills any better than their predecessors over the last three years. Children make satisfactory progress in the Nursery and Reception classes and this continues in Years 1 to 6, reflecting satisfactory teaching and learning. However, pupils are not making the secure and rapid progress necessary to overcome the significant gaps in their skills and understanding, and consequently their overall achievement remains unsatisfactory.

Pupils show a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle by making sensible eating choices and taking part in sports activities with great enjoyment. They make a good contribution to the school and to the wider community, and this enables them to grow in confidence and speak up for themselves. Attendance is too low. The school has made considerable efforts to raise attendance. However, the persistent absenteeism of a small minority of pupils remains a stubborn problem and contributes to low attainment.

Some examples of good teaching were seen during the inspection, and pupils' enjoyment was greatest when the level of challenge was stimulating and the pace brisk. However, the quality of teaching varies from class to class. The management of teaching and learning sometimes lacks rigour and is not always focused sufficiently on the quality of pupils' learning. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of clubs and additional activities, but the core curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of all pupils. There is too little challenging work to raise the attainment of more-able pupils. Underperformance by girls is insufficiently addressed.

Potentially vulnerable children are looked after well, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given sound support which enables them to make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. The occasional instances of bullying and the very rare allegations of racist behaviour are not always dealt with effectively by the school.

Leaders, managers and the governing body have a broadly accurate understanding of

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

the areas where the school needs to develop. Their plans for the future cover the right priorities. However, they have not adequately met the recommendations from the last inspection. Attainment, for example, remains low and the governing body still does not adequately hold the school to account for pupils' poor performance. The headteacher has been leading the school largely without the support of an established leadership team. As a result, the underperformance of significant groups, such as girls and the more-able has not been adequately addressed. These factors show that the school has an inadequate capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - increasing the level of challenge and accelerating the pace of learning in all lessons
 - ensuring that the curriculum offers regular, planned opportunities for girls and the more-able pupils to do as well as they can.
- Raise the quality and effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - Take more robust action to improve the attendance of pupils overall and particularly of the minority of persistent absentees.
 - urgently pressing ahead with plans to establish an effective senior leadership team
 - ensuring that the governing body plays a full part in school improvement, particularly by challenging its performance
 - bringing the quality of all teaching up to the level of the best through rigorous classroom monitoring with a sharper focus on how well pupils are learning.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**4**

Pupils' enjoyment of school and their overall achievement are inadequate. Pupils' attainment in English and mathematics was significantly below average in 2007 and 2009. Attainment was broadly average overall in 2008, though below average in mathematics. Information provided by the school and confirmed by a scrutiny of pupils' books shows that their current attainment is still too low in English and mathematics, and their limited basic skills were evident also in science and topic books. In some lessons seen, pupils made faster progress, especially when the level of challenge was stimulating and more was expected of them. For example, in one energetic Year 5 science lesson, pupils were set the task of finding out how warm-blooded and cold-blooded creatures keep themselves warm. Pupils very much enjoyed the demonstration by one pupil of how he cooled down by sweating and panting after running on the spot. Pupils made good use of information they had learnt on a visit to a sea-life centre to explore how cold-blooded sea creatures stay alive in cold conditions, and this good level of challenge made the lesson come alive for them. However, too often, the level of challenge in lessons is not high enough, and pupils are held back

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

when they are keen to move forward and learn more quickly.

Pupils are friendly, confident and polite to visitors. Pupils adopt good healthy practices. They understand the importance of a healthy diet, and report that they enjoy a wide range of physical activities including dance, rugby and athletics. By and large, pupils feel safe in school, but a few report that occasional instances of bullying result in them feeling unsafe from time to time. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, reflecting pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take on positions of responsibility which make a difference to the school environment, and take part in wider community activities such as local musical events.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

One parent commented, 'I have always found the staff at Rowdown to be friendly, helpful and ready to listen to anything I have to say.' Pupils, too, like their teachers because, as one commented, 'Teachers are helpful and explain what we have to do.'

Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. Together with the teaching assistants, they ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those

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

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

with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties, are encouraged to contribute. However, the pace of learning is typically too slow, and in such cases, pupils become fidgety, especially if they are kept on the carpet for too long or not given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning.

□ Teachers plan lessons carefully, so that pupils know from the start of the lesson what they are going to learn and at the end have the opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt. In the best lessons, teachers expect a great deal from the pupils, and this helps all, but particularly the more-able, to benefit from the extra challenge. For example, in one fast-paced Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils studied the story of the harpies in the Greek myth of Jason and the Argonauts. Their apprehension of danger was enhanced by the teacher playing music from Hitchcock's film *Psycho* to demonstrate the horror of the sudden attack by the harpies, and the pupils were enthralled by the story and produced good-quality work. When pupils have the opportunity to take control of their own learning, they become engrossed in the task and think and work at a higher level. In one Year 4 English lesson, for example, pupils read the whole of Conan Doyle's story *The Red-Headed League* and analysed it to understand how character is built up in literature. Pupils enjoyed the difficulty of the task, and one pupil described the story as 'awesome'. However, these are exceptions. All too often, teachers expect too little, and this limits pupils' opportunities to think for themselves and forge ahead at a faster pace.

□ The curriculum has a number of strengths in enrichment. Pupils value the opportunities they have to join the exciting range of clubs, including music, drama, gardening and craft-making. French is a good feature of the curriculum, and pupils enjoy answering the register in French and singing French songs in assembly. However, the curriculum does not adequately equip pupils with the key skills they need for the next stage of schooling. Moreover, it does not provide pupils with sufficiently challenging tasks to enable all groups, but particularly the more-able pupils, to do as well as possible. The school has not identified girls' underachievement with sufficient clarity, and consequently does not provide girls with enough activities that are specifically focused on raising their attainment.

□ The care and support given to pupils are sound, and there are particular strengths in the care of potentially vulnerable children. Those with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties value the safety and support of specialist counselling in the Place-2-Be. The breakfast club provides healthy breakfasts and an interesting range of activities that ensure the pupils concerned have a settled start to the day. The school works in sound partnership with external agencies to support pupils with a range of needs. However, comments from pupils and parents and carers suggested that there are pockets of bullying and some infrequent allegations of racist behaviour, mainly among younger pupils. The school's systems for dealing with these incidents are not sufficiently vigorous to prevent a few pupils from continuing to make hurtful remarks.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The school has undergone a period of change in governance and in senior management. The headteacher has been without a senior management team since September 2009, though plans are in hand for a new team to operate from September 2010. The headteacher has been a stable presence in the school since 2003, but the recent period of uncertainty in the leadership has hindered necessary improvements. The school's tracking of pupils' progress is accurate and the resulting information is used to put in place support which is especially beneficial to pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the school does not sufficiently track the progress of other groups of pupils such as boys and girls, or more able pupils. As a result, leaders and managers are failing to promote equal opportunity and tackle discrimination actively and effectively. The governing body is at an early stage of developing its role. As yet, it does not hold the school sufficiently to account or question the overall low attainment of pupils. Leaders and the governing body manage the budget well enough to ensure that the school is not in deficit. However, resources are not producing adequate outcomes for pupils, and the school offers poor value for money. These factors indicate that the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' ambition and drive for improvement is inadequate.

Leaders and the governing body ensure that safeguarding procedures are sound, and that pupils have an adequate understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The classroom observations made by leaders and managers adequately identify the aspects of teaching which are satisfactory and those which are good. However, observations are not always sharply enough focused on how pupils learn, and are sometimes too tolerant of teaching which is merely adequate rather than stimulating. The school promotes community cohesion satisfactorily. Pupils have a good understanding of their own community. However, they do not always have sufficient opportunities to learn about other people's faiths and ways of life.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3

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

The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children quickly settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage because home visits are made to familiarise them and their families with the Nursery. They soon learn who their key person is and settle into their routines. The children enter the Nursery with skills and aptitudes which are varied but generally well below those expected nationally for their age. By the time they leave Reception, all have made satisfactory progress in acquiring new skills. The children are happy and confident and usually get on well with one another. Some children, however, find it difficult to share and take turns. The adults quickly sort out most problems, but a few children in Reception are not always kind to others. The children are safe and well cared for. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best activities, adults develop children's interest through questioning to promote higher-level thinking. In one activity, for example, children threw dice and placed the appropriate number of counters on to a drawing of an alien. They enjoyed using language involving concepts such as 'how many', 'more than' and 'fewer than'. Occasionally, however, adults do too much for the children and this inhibits their learning. The outdoor areas are safe and there are adequate opportunities for children to explore all six areas of learning outdoors as well as indoors. The children particularly enjoy digging in the raised beds and growing fruit and vegetables. However, the school recognises that as a whole the outdoor areas are insufficiently stimulating and plans are in hand to provide more equipment. Leaders and managers of the Early Years Foundation Stage plan the curriculum and manage the provision satisfactorily. At the end of the Reception Year, effective transition arrangements enable children to move confidently into Year 1.

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

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

Most parents and carers who responded to questionnaires or who spoke to inspectors agreed that the school keeps their children safe and that it helps them to lead a healthy life. A small minority did not agree that the school deals effectively with bad behaviour. Inspectors found that this to be true in a small number of cases, but that overall pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. A few parents felt that the school is not well led or managed and that their children are not making enough progress. Inspectors found that, though leaders and managers are committed to bringing about school improvement, their actions are not sufficiently effective to prepare pupils adequately for the next stage of schooling. Overall, most parents and carers are happy with their children's experience at the school.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Rowdown 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 60 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 372 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	53	21	35	4	7	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	28	47	26	43	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	27	45	25	42	5	8	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	26	43	23	38	2	3	6	10
The teaching is good at this school	24	40	27	45	4	7	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	21	35	30	50	5	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	32	36	60	3	5	1	2
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)	17	28	31	52	4	7	2	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	33	28	47	6	10	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	20	33	23	38	6	10	9	15
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	17	28	33	55	2	3	5	8
The school is led and managed effectively	23	38	25	42	5	8	5	8
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	37	30	50	6	10	1	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 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	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 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 pupil's 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.



30 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Rowdown Primary School, New Addington, CR0 0EG

Do you remember when three visitors came to your school recently to watch you learn and play? Thank you for making us so welcome, and telling us all about your own views. This is what we found:

- Your school is not giving you a good enough education, and many of you are not doing as well in your work as you should. We have put the school into 'special measures', which means that we have asked for the headteacher and governors to be given extra help to improve your learning.
- We want all of you to do much better in English and mathematics. We have asked those in charge to make sure that you are always given tasks that help you to do your best and really make you think. This will really help those of you who find the work too easy, to make faster progress. We also want your school to think of ways of helping girls in particular to make better progress.
- There is a great deal of work to do in the future and we have asked that your headteacher receives more help. You may soon see more adults helping your headteacher to run the school, and many of them will be visiting your lessons more often to make sure that all your lessons are good and that you learn well.
- Remember, you can only learn when you are actually at school. Too many of you are still not coming to school every day, and this lets you down as well as the school.
- Your school keeps you safe, and you have many chances to eat healthily and take exercise. All the adults take care of you, and are kind and fair to you. They show you that it is important to treat others as you want to be treated.
- You enjoy and make good use of the school clubs. The beds you have been cultivating have some mouth-watering fruit and vegetables growing in them!
- You can play your part in your school's improvement by working hard and by reminding your parents and carers to get you to school every single day, except when you are ill.

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power

Lead inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 08456 404045, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.