

Raine's Foundation School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100979
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	307551
Inspection dates	24–25 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Asyia Kazmi HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	827
Sixth form	109
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Mark Taylor
Headteacher	Mr Gordon Clubb
Date of previous school inspection	15 November 2004
School address	Approach Road Bethnal Green London E2 9LY
Telephone number	020 8981 1231
Fax number	020 8983 0153

Age group	11–18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Raine's Foundation School is a Church of England, slightly smaller than average, school. It is a mixed school although there are more boys than girls. The school is based on two sites with Years 7 and 8 in one building and Years 9 to 13 in another.

Nearly 40% of the students are eligible for free school meals; this is well above average. Almost half, an above average proportion, of the students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Predominant groups are Black British or of African or Caribbean heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is above average.

The school has achieved the Healthy Schools status and the Sportsmark.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Raine's Foundation School is an improving school and provides a satisfactory standard of education to its students. It is highly regarded in the local community and is over-subscribed. The current leadership team is newly formed and has gained the support of the school staff who are positive about the changes that have been made. The headteacher, with the support of his senior leaders, are committed to improvement and provide a clear focus and direction to all staff.

Students' attainment on entry to the school is average. They make satisfactory progress through their time in the school to achieve standards that are average by the end of Year 9 and Year 11. The significant fall in standards in 2007 has been reversed and unvalidated 2008 examination data show substantial improvements have been made in some areas. Of particular note is the marked increase in the number of students who achieved five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics.

Improvements in standards have been due to a number of actions including the development of the role of senior and middle leaders so they are making better use of data to set more challenging targets for students. Senior leaders, through clear line management structures, hold middle leaders to account for students' progress. However, there are inconsistencies in the practice of middle leaders and not all are equally skilled in checking and improving work in their areas. Senior leaders have learnt from past experiences and have strengthened systems to ensure they intervene early in departments where results may fall due to weak practice. The actions senior leaders have taken and the systems they have put in place are having a positive impact on students' achievement and attendance and consequently give the school a good capacity to improve.

Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is some very good practice in the school, examples of this include teachers who through their own enthusiasm for their subjects and excellent subject knowledge motivate and engage students in learning. Particularly good examples of teaching were seen in lessons where teachers' high expectations of lower attaining students were realised because teachers structured their teaching very effectively to promote good progress. However, too much of the teaching is satisfactory and there is some that is inadequate. In these lessons teachers do not use data well enough to plan to meet the needs of all learners and not all teachers are skilled at managing behaviour which can disrupt learning. In addition, there is also a lack of focus across the curriculum in developing students' literacy skills.

A strength of the school is the harmonious school community. Students are very positive about how people from all groups get on together. They feel safe in the school and report very few occurrences of bullying which they are confident staff deal with effectively. On a few occasions students are not considerate about the impact of their actions on other people, for example, when moving around the school.

Students enjoy school and this is reflected in their good attendance. They participate enthusiastically in the many activities on offer, including activities during the holidays. However, in lessons where teaching is not challenging their enjoyment diminishes.

As was the case at the time of the last inspection, the school's curriculum, which is satisfactory overall, is hindered by the restriction placed on it by buildings which are not always fit for purpose.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The sixth form is satisfactory. Students enter the sixth form with below average attainment. A high proportion who embark on A-Level courses pass the examination but the number of students attaining the higher grades is below average. Students make satisfactory progress in most subjects. Where senior leaders have identified progress is not satisfactory, such as in government and politics, appropriate actions have been taken to address this.

The school provides a wide range of A-Level courses in the sixth form and students report they appreciate the effort the school makes to meet their requests. However, a few class sizes are too small. Students benefit from a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities offered by the school which contribute to their good personal development and well-being. They are given good advice when choosing courses and are supported well with their future plans. Academic guidance is developing.

Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory overall, with some examples of very good teaching. In one outstanding lesson students were seen to make excellent progress and develop analytical thinking as a result of skilful questioning on the part of the teacher. However, there are some lessons that are not challenging enough and teachers do not always use a variety of teaching and learning approaches.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring tasks challenge all students and teaching promotes good behaviour for learning.
- Make effective use of data at all levels to ensure students make good progress.
- Develop a coherent and consistent approach to literacy across the curriculum.
- Ensure leaders at all levels are rigorous and consistent in monitoring and evaluating the work of the school in order to promote improvement.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students enter the school with standards that are broadly average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 3 fell significantly in 2007 to below average in mathematics and science. Action has been taken to redress this, including closer monitoring of students' progress and more effective intervention, so standards have risen but remain broadly average.

The percentage of students who achieved five good GCSE passes in 2008 was the highest ever achieved in the school. Senior leaders acted swiftly to redress the decline in standards in GCSE English in 2007. These actions have had an impact and unvalidated data shows standards improved substantially. The proportion of students attaining five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics has improved significantly and is now average. Importantly, the actions taken by senior leaders has meant that gaps between the attainment of different groups in the school has closed so that all groups now attain similar standards. However, despite these marked improvements, there is inconsistency in the standards students attain and the progress they make across different subjects. Achievement is good in religious studies, art, Spanish and

citizenship however progress in design and technology and English literature, amongst others, remain areas of concern.

Students with moderate learning difficulties are supported well in lessons by learning support staff through good questioning skills but teachers' planning does not always ensure all are able to make good progress when this support is not available. Overall, students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. They feel safe and secure in school and know where to find help if they have a concern. Students regard staff as approachable and supportive. The cultural diversity of the school is a significant strength valued by all. They are clear 'it helps us to understand other people's perspectives'.

There are positive relationships between students and teachers and amongst students themselves. When given the opportunity students work co-operatively with each other although, on occasions, they are not always focussed on the tasks set in lessons. Senior leaders recognise that the number of students excluded is high and are taking appropriate actions in order to reduce this.

Students speak highly about the very enjoyable and wide-ranging activities available before and after the school day and as a result participation rates are high. Lunch menus are 'much improved'. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good. The school provides a strong moral framework and this is reinforced through the pastoral care that students receive. Although not systematic, opportunities for cultural and spiritual development within lessons are utilised.

Students have a growing range of opportunities to contribute to the school community for example through the school council and the recently introduced student conferences. At the request of sixth form students, a highly successful MOT health check day was recently introduced.

Students develop skills for future work and employment as a result of the successful Preparation for Adult Life programme. Careers education and guidance is a strength and students feel well supported as they make choices about their future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, learning objectives are clear and shared with students. Relationships between students and teachers are generally good. In the more effective lessons this is characterised by mutual respect and good humour. However, there are occasions when students are not attentive to their teachers.

In the best lessons, activities are engaging, good use is made of electronic whiteboards and teachers plan work that challenges students of all abilities. In these lessons students apply themselves for extended periods of time and demonstrate the ability to work independently. However, in too many lessons students make only satisfactory progress because tasks are not

matched well to their needs and the pace of learning is too slow. Introductions to some lessons are over long, which leaves less time for students to work independently. Higher ability students are sometimes given more challenging tasks, although this practice is inconsistent. There is good practice in some subjects, such as mathematics and history, as to how teachers check the progress students are making but this is not yet consistent across the school and the quality of marking is variable. Senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and learning through the process of departmental reviews and recognise the need to ensure greater consistency in its quality.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum. Senior leaders have made improvements to the curriculum in order to meet the needs of students and the range of courses available to students in Years 10 and 11 has been broadened. Sociology, for example, is a newly offered and popular subject. More students are now working towards a vocational qualification, for example, in physical education, and the school offers accredited courses for lower attaining students. All students going into Key Stage 4 now follow an accredited course in information and communication technology. However, provision for higher attaining students in science does not yet allow for them to study separate sciences in Key Stage 4.

Alternative courses are being used to motivate and re-engage students at risk of exclusion. There is a wide range of opportunities for students to engage in extra-curricular activities. The school achieves considerable success in sporting activities despite the restrictions placed on it by a lack of space. The curriculum has been enhanced by additional support for those students who are at risk of underachieving, including summer school and after school classes which helps to raise their confidence and achievement. Links with schools in China and Peru add an international dimension to the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Staff are committed to providing a safe and secure environment and students feel well cared for. Government recommendations on child protection and safeguarding responsibilities are fully addressed. The school chaplain provides strong pastoral care to the whole school community.

The Learning Support Unit is a strength of the school's work. Provision of carefully planned and targeted support for vulnerable students as well as those at risk of exclusion is building students' self-esteem and willingness to engage in learning. Close partnerships exist between parents and the school and there is an increasing range of outside agencies involved in supporting and motivating students, for example, the Prince's Trust and the Aspire Project. The quality of information and support to students to make curriculum choices is good across all key stages.

Looked after children are well supported. Those students identified with moderate learning difficulties or those who are at an early stage of learning English have carefully planned support when provided by the specially trained staff. However, teachers' planning does not always ensure that these students are always fully supported in lessons.

Senior leaders have correctly identified the need to improve the way students are helped to make progress. Information about students' performance is increasingly available but it is not

yet used systematically across the school. An increasing number of students know their subject targets but too often they do not know what they need to do to improve their work in order to reach their targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The senior leadership team, under the direction of the headteacher, is relatively new. Within the short time it has been in place, important systems and structures have been established. Senior leaders provide the rest of the school with a clear direction and vision and staff speak positively about the changes that have been introduced. In particular, senior leaders have supported middle leaders in evaluating the areas they lead on and are now increasingly held to account for students' performance. However, the quality of evaluation is not always rigorous or consistent. More effective use is being made of data but there is not a sharp enough focus on the progress students are making; this has meant that there is sometimes a more generous evaluation of students' achievement than is warranted.

The systems that have been set up, including those for tracking students' progress across the school and the role of heads of learning, are new and need time to embed to ensure that leaders at all levels challenge their work and thereby improve it. The impact of these systems can already be seen in the increased focus on the progress students make and in enabling underachievement to be tackled.

Senior leaders, rightly see community cohesion as a strength of the school. There are strong links with parents and the local community. Representatives from different faith groups broaden students' knowledge of other religions. The school staff know their students well and actively instigate programmes that seek to address potential barriers to learning, such as promoting role models to address the issue of underachieving girls. There is a good citizenship curriculum which is further enhanced by the school's international links.

Governors are very supportive of the school and have high aspirations for students. However, they do not always sufficiently challenge the school, particularly in relation to the progress students are making as opposed to the standards they are reaching.

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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	16-19
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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?	3	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

Achievement and standards

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

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?	3	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	3	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	3	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
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?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	3

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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 October 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Raine's Foundation School, London, E2 9LY

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you for your welcome and the help you provided to us during the inspection. We valued the discussions we had with you and I would like to take this opportunity to share our findings with you.

Raine's Foundation is an improving school. It provides a satisfactory standard of education. You are rightly proud of the cultural mix in your school and how well all of you get on with each other. You told us about the many clubs, activities and sporting successes you achieve. We were pleased to see how much your attendance has improved. We agree with you that the school facilities need improvement.

The results achieved in 2008 in terms of five good GCSE passes were the best yet for your school. Some of the teaching you receive is very good but in other lessons your behaviour is not always as it should be and you are too readily distracted. The progress you make in your time in the school is satisfactory as is the teaching you receive. Your headteacher and senior leaders are strongly committed to improving even further and are taking the right actions in doing so. We have asked senior leaders to focus on the following areas to ensure you make good progress.

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring the work set for you challenges you and teaching promotes good behaviour for learning.
- Make sure everyone uses information about your learning to help you accelerate the progress you make.
- Develop your literacy skills across the curriculum.
- Ensure leaders check rigorously the work of all staff in their areas in order to promote your progress.

You can help by ensuring you are fully involved in your lessons, you maintain your good attendance and contribute to your school's improvement through the school council and the pupil conferences. I wish you and your school every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Asyia Kazmi

Her Majesty's Inspector