



Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children and Young People

Robert Clack School and the Local Authority are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and a comprehensive screening process including verifying identification and qualifications will be undertaken on all applicants who are short listed for interview. In the event of a successful application for a post working with children you will be required to apply for an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau disclosure prior to commencement of employment.

Robert Clack School Information

History:

Robert Clack School has a long history in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham as a community school. It is a split-site school; the Lower School site buildings in Green Lane (previously known as Triptons) were opened in 1935, and the Upper School site buildings in Gosfield Road were opened in 1953. The Becontree Estate in which the school is located is one of the largest estates in England.

The school is rightly proud of being named after a man who became a local legend “Bob Clack.” He was Mayor of the Borough from 1940 to 1942 and brought to this post a determination to act in the interests of the individual. The ideals he held in public life transferred readily into the foundation principles of the school, and lives on after his untimely death in 1953.

Current Information:

School Location

Robert Clack is an 11-18, mixed school with approximately 2,000 pupils (including 400+ in the Sixth Form) taught across a split-site. It has become a highly successful, heavily oversubscribed Comprehensive School (after ‘a very serious period of decline’ Ofsted) on the basis of consistent and continual improvement. The school mainly serves two estates of local authority housing. The first part is the pre-war Becontree Heath estate and the remainder is the post-war Becontree Heath estate, which includes some high rise flats. Although the overwhelming majority of pupils come from what would be deemed to be white working class families there are, however, a growing number of ethnic minority pupils currently at over 20% of the school intake. Significantly the census continually reveals that the borough has the lowest proportion of adults with higher education qualifications in the whole of the country. The Free School Meals take up is nearly 40%.

The two school sites are approximately a quarter of a mile apart. The Lower School currently houses Years 7, 8 and nearly all of the Year 9 forms. The Upper School houses two Year 9 forms and Years 10 to 13. It is our stated aim to accommodate all Year 9 pupils on the Lower School site as soon as new facilities allow.

School Site Development Information

There have been major investments on both sites. Recent improvements on the Upper School site include a new Science block, a new Media block which caters for Drama, Music, Media Studies and a Beauty Therapy course at Key Stage 5, a new Sixth Form

block and ten classrooms for Humanities and Modern Foreign Languages. On the Lower School site we have a Technology and Science block with eight state of the art teaching rooms. We have also improved facilities in relation to Music provision on the Lower School site. A new City Learning Centre, funded through the Excellence in Cities scheme, opened alongside a modern Information Centre and dining hall in 2002.

There is an extensive grassed area for Physical Education and a brand new multi-purpose Sports Centre to enhance the existing indoor sports facilities on the Upper School site. The Centre was officially opened in July 2004 by Sir Clive Woodward O.B.E.

Results – August 2009

The school's motto of 'Excellence for all. Excellence from all. Forti Difficile Nihil – For the brave nothing is difficult,' has been realised through the development of school systems that support a relentless focus on all aspects of pupil achievement. There have been thirteen successive years of improvement at Key Stage 3, GCSE and A level which coincided with a change of management in the school:

- The percentage of pupils gaining 5 A*-C grades has risen almost five fold to 80% within thirteen years, which is well above the national standard;
- The underlying percentage of pupils gaining five A*-C grades including English and Maths is 50%, which is the third highest in the school's history and is again above national standards;
- The Contextual Value Added for KS2-KS4 is 1052.2 which places the school in the top 1% nationally;
- The Sixth Form is in the top 10% nationally (ALPS score 1.1, ALPS 2007).

School Achievements

- An excellent HMI Ofsted report in June 2004 designated Robert Clack as an 'outstanding school'. It was awarded a Grade 1 in all areas, confirming the continual progress being made at Robert Clack School;
- At the end of 2006 the PE department received a Grade 1 from HMI Ofsted as part of a national inspection of sport;
- In December 2007 the school achieved a second successive Grade 1 from HMI Ofsted and was designated once again as an 'outstanding school';
- The school achieved Science Specialist College status in June 2003; this was re-designated in September 2007;
- Robert Clack achieved a second specialism in Maths and Computing in December 2007 and a third specialism in Languages in February 2009;
- Robert Clack has been placed highly in the DCSF, and Specialist Schools and Academies Trust 100 Most Improved Schools and Value Added list for a number of years;
- The school received all three School Achievement Awards from the DCSF for its excellent academic performance whilst this scheme existed;
- The school is at the heart of the Local Enterprise Growth Initiative;
- Awarded Healthy School Status in 2006;
- In October 2007, Robert Clack won the Daily Telegraph and Norwich Union School Sport Matters Awards for State School of the Year;
- In December 2007 the school was awarded High Performing Specialist School status;
- Robert Clack School was awarded the International School Award in September 2008;

- Robert Clack School was designated as an 'Outstanding School' by Ofsted in December 2008 and featured in the Ofsted report entitled 'Twelve Outstanding Secondary Schools – Excelling against the Odds' in February 2009;
- In May 2009 the school was awarded the Evening Standard's 'Best State School of the Year' award;
- Winner of the Sunday Times Best Public Sector Company ranked first for Leadership, My Company and Personal Growth.

National Contribution

Progress at Robert Clack School has also been recognised in the TES, The Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Daily Telegraph, the Evening Standard and through invitations to Downing Street to meet the Prime Minister. The school was invited to No. 10 to witness the presentation of the Green Paper on Education by the Prime Minister in February 2001.

- In August 2004, in the Evening Standard, the following comments were made about Robert Clack School in the editorial entitled, 'A School Success': 'This newspaper has often been obliged to draw attention to the deficiencies of state schools in London. It is a real pleasure today, then, to applaud the extraordinary success of a school which has achieved remarkable results despite every possible social disadvantage.'
- In April 2006, the school was heavily featured in BBC TV's acclaimed series, 'The School's Lottery,' which included a visit to the school by singer/songwriter Sandie Shaw who was once a pupil at Robert Clack;
- In December 2006, the school was visited by Jim Knight, Minister for Schools and featured in a Keynote speech by him in January 2007. The Minister commented that Robert Clack had not only achieved huge improvements in GCSE results but also bucked the trend for achievement in white, working class boys. He said, 'Here, white working class boys aren't being left behind. They are matching girls' attainment and outperforming them in some subjects.' (Times Educational Supplement, 12th January 2007);
- Jim White, lead Sports Writer of The Daily Telegraph, in an article entitled, 'How Rugby Turned Bad Boys into Ambassadors' (3rd March 2007) highlighted the sporting and academic achievements of pupils at Robert Clack School, and the impending visit of Prince Charles. He wrote, 'If he is like me, the Prince of Wales will leave thinking this is a school to which he would have happily sent his own children.';
- On 8th March 2007, HRH The Prince of Wales made his historic visit to Robert Clack School. He became the very first member of the Royal family to visit a school in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham.

Lord Melvyn Bragg, Professor Niall Ferguson and Sir Clive Woodward O.B.E. have also visited the school in recent years.

Robert Clack School Partnerships

Robert Clack School has excellent links with:

- The Local Authority;
- The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust;
- The DCSF;
- NCSL;
- The British Council;
- The Prince's Teaching Institute;
- The Prince of Wales Summer School;
- Teach First;

- The Jack Petchey Foundation;
- The Worshipful Company of Chartered Surveyors;
- Business in the Community's Education Committee.

Good relations also exist with the Institute of Education, London Metropolitan University and Greenwich University with whom the school is associated for teacher training purposes.

The school has established strong partnerships with schools in Ireland, Sweden, Germany, Italy, New Zealand, South Africa, China, the USA and Canada. Robert Clack receives many visitors each year who are keen to observe good practice and learn more about the strategies which have led to the school's development and success.

The success story is set to continue with the target to maintain and extend national standards in all areas in the coming years. This is an exciting time in the school's development.

Curriculum:

Pupils are placed in three broad ability bands on entry to the school in Year 7. Decisions about banding are based on detailed discussions with staff in the Primary Schools and results from the Key Stage 2 tests. Within each band appropriate setting arrangements are available. There is regular monitoring of progress through a modular curriculum that tests pupils each half-term across all subjects. This enables the school to have the necessary flexibility in adjusting teaching groups, if and when this is deemed necessary. In Years 10 and 11 pupils are placed in two broad ability bands and have a wide choice of options given the constraints of compulsory subjects.

3% of students have statements of Special Educational Needs and we are determined as a school that they receive the appropriate additional support required.

Robert Clack School is a member of the North East Post-16 Consortium of Schools. This Consortium presently offers nearly thirty A Level courses and a range of vocational programmes at Foundation and Intermediate levels. Additional GCSEs and other courses leading to external accreditation are also available. The Sixth Form is currently made up of approximately 300 students with many Year 11 students choosing to progress to Year 12.

Against all the trends of the times, the school offers a very wide range of extra curricular activities, particularly in sports, with many representative teams throughout the school. The Rugby Union, Netball, Football, Swimming and Athletics teams regularly enjoy success at Borough and County level.

Work in the subject areas of Art, Music and Drama is also outstanding. The Music and Drama Departments regularly collaborate in producing high quality performances and productions that involve large numbers of children; recently the school has performed the musical 'Grease', 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', 'Guys and Dolls' and High School Musical'. The Borough's Music Service provides additional music lessons for a number of students in the school.

P.E. has a very strong presence in the school curriculum alongside other 'life skill' subjects, which some schools increasingly sideline in the race to achieve higher academic results. There are major tours each year to Germany, Canada and the West Indies for both boys and girls in Football, Rugby Union and Netball.

There are regular European visits to Germany, Poland, France and Spain arranged by a number of departments; this year trips to Honduras, Indonesia, Boston and New York are being planned by various departments. Each year the Mathematics Department arranges a Computer Camp and many students have the opportunity to visit the Trewern Outdoor Education Centre on the Herefordshire/Wales border. There are numerous educational visits for the Gifted and Talented cohort.

Parental and Community Liaison:

It is our stated aim to work in close partnership with parents to provide an excellent education, which is based on sound discipline and high academic performance. From the very beginning our pupils are made aware of performance targets they have to reach at various stages of the school year. We expect high standards and school rules to be obeyed in regard to attendance, classroom behaviour, homework, punctuality and uniform. Pupils must also remember that they are ambassadors of the school and that their good behaviour, in and around the school environment, is essential in a successful school.

The celebration of achievement is at the heart of school values and at the end of the academic year we celebrate all of our pupil's successes at our Presentation Evenings.

There is a formal contact with parents each term either via a written report or a Parents Evening. There is an opportunity, in the autumn term, for parents of Year 7 pupils to have an individual interview with the Form Tutor. There are Option Evenings for parents of Year 9 pupils and opportunities to discuss Post-16 courses with the parents of students in Year 11. A number of evenings are held to advise parents on how best to help their children study for external examinations.

The Robert Clack Association raises money for the school through a range of activities including popular "Quiz Nights." They helped to raise £12,500 to support the school in its bid for Science Specialist Status. Another example of resources purchased by the Robert Clack Association includes a high-tech sound system for use in the Main Hall on the Upper School site.

The school has excellent links with a large number of Junior Schools and invites Year 5 pupils to spend a day at Robert Clack during each summer term. Pupils in Year 6 due to transfer in September; have an Induction Day at the end of the summer term to assist in this move.

There are excellent links between the school and local industry with students visiting local firms and taking part in work experience placements. Local business people are regularly invited into the school and play an important role in preparing the students for the world of work. Relations with the local Police Service are excellent and the school is proud of its reputation in the local community.

Staffing and Management:

The school employs approximately 280 staff (full-time and part-time). The Head Teacher, two Deputy Head Teachers, four Assistant Head Teachers and two Senior Learning Community Leaders form the Senior Leadership Team. The Pastoral Group consists of the Head Teacher, the Deputy Head Teachers, the Assistant Head Teachers, the Senior Learning Community Leaders, Learning Community Team Leaders, the SENCo and the Learning Mentors. The school is structured in departments; the Subject Leaders meeting is chaired by one of the Deputy Head Teachers with responsibility for the curriculum. In addition there are regular meetings for Form Tutors with Learning Community Team Leaders and Key Stage Subject Leaders meetings with senior staff.

There are fourteen office staff; this includes five Attendance Officers (one based in the Sixth Form) who telephone parents on the first day of a pupil's absence. This important strategy has led to improved levels of attendance in all year groups. A number of areas of the school are supported by Technicians who work in Science, Art, Design & Technology, Food Technology and the Information Centre. We also have reprographics facilities on each site.

The school employs a Site Manager who is resident on the Upper School site. The caretaker on Lower School is also resident and both work closely with their Assistant Caretakers to maintain the impressive fabric of the building and the surrounding grounds.

The school is proud of its Investor in People status which was re-confirmed in 2008. We are totally committed to extensive staff development that reinforces and sustains the ethos of our school.

The Governing Body and Finance:

The Governors have played a key role in the recent success of Robert Clack School. They are very committed to the school and work hard at meeting their responsibilities through a number of established sub-committees and regular visits to the school. 'Governors are active and highly supportive. They are important critical friends to senior managers and other staff.' (Ofsted Report, June 2004).

The school has a budget of over £10 million. The school's budget is managed very effectively by our School Bursar/Business Manger who also has overall responsibility for support staff and premises. The school's finances are audited every two years by Deloitte & Touche. The Governors Finance Sub-Committee and the Governors Curriculum Sub-Committee are very active and take their responsibilities extremely seriously.

Building Schools for the Future:

The Governing Body is currently working with the Local Authority in formulating a plan for renovating parts of the school. This is in line with government policy aimed at changing the nature of school buildings.