



Pinfold Street Junior Mixed and Infant School

Inspection Report

Better
education
and care

Unique Reference Number 104176
Local Authority Walsall
Inspection number 286871
Inspection dates 14–15 November 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Cole

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Pinfold Street Extension
School category	Community		Darlaston
Age range of pupils	5–11		Wednesbury WS10 8PU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 5686366
Number on roll (school)	347	Fax number	0121 568 8926
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Alan Davies
		Headteacher	Ian Hankinson
Date of previous school inspection	1 February 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
5–11	14–15 November 2006	286871

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves an area with a significant level of deprivation. The great majority of pupils are White British. Boys significantly outnumber girls. Pupils start at the school with attainment which is well below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. The school's own cautious evaluation of itself as 'satisfactory' reflects its awareness of difficulties in staffing the school in recent years. However, these problems are now overcome. During this period of staffing difficulty, some pupils made less progress than they should, but pupils are now making good progress from the Foundation Stage right through to Year 6. The standards of the oldest pupils leaving the school most recently were below average but this represented good achievement in view of their low attainment on starting at the school. Present pupils are making good gains from year to year and are on track to reach higher standards than their predecessors. The better progress of pupils is the result of the good and much improved teaching. Good leadership and management have established in a largely new and now settled team of staff a shared, strong and effective determination to improve pupils' progress.

Pupils' good progress is also a consequence of their good personal development and sense of well-being. They enjoy school, have keen and responsible attitudes to learning, behave very well in lessons and grow considerably in self-confidence. This, together with their good progress in literacy and numeracy, is preparing pupils well to fend for themselves in later adult and working life. They are also responding well to guidance on how to stay safe and healthy. They join in enthusiastically in the very good range of opportunities for exercise the school offers within its extensive range of lively activities outside lessons and the classroom. Good care, guidance and support help pupils feel happy and safe, but some procedures for ensuring welfare are not reviewed and updated sufficiently often by governors and senior staff.

A strength of the good, lively teaching and the good curriculum, both at the Foundation Stage and thereafter, is the effective provision for the full range of pupils' abilities and needs so that they progress well. This is helped by very careful tracking of each pupil's progress to identify the help they need and the challenges that will take their learning forward. Pupils receive good support with learning and behaviour and very good guidance on what they have to do to make progress. In recent development of the curriculum, the school rightly emphasised literacy and numeracy as the areas where standards most needed to improve; provision in some other subjects, particularly art, history and geography, is correspondingly weaker and the school has recognised that it should be strengthened.

The good recent improvements, especially in teaching and the resulting progress of pupils, reflect the determined leadership of senior staff. The school is very willing to be self-critical about its performance and it understands well how to move further forward. There is a good capacity to make further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Strengthen the curriculum in art, geography and history.
- Ensure governors and senior staff review and update more frequently all procedures for promoting pupils' welfare.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are making good progress as they move from year to year through the school. Although pupils leave the school with below-average attainment, their progress is good since they start at the school with a low level of attainment. Boys and girls of all ability levels, including those who have learning difficulties or disabilities, are achieving well. Achievement has improved significantly during the last eighteen months. Before that, records show that in 2004 and 2005 a minority of pupils were making less progress than they should. Several classes experienced a lack of continuity in the teaching at this time owing to a high incidence of staff changes as teachers retired, were promoted to posts in other schools or took maternity leave. A much more settled team of teachers is now successfully promoting good progress. The standards of the oldest pupils rose in 2006, though a legacy of some slower progress in earlier years was still apparent in a few pupils' underachievement. The present Year 6 pupils' attainment points to more consistently good progress and rising standards.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils get off to a good start in the Reception year in developing good attitudes and behaviour. Throughout the school, good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is helping pupils enjoy school, take responsibility, make good relationships and acquire much self-confidence. All these qualities are preparing them well for the responsibilities of adult life. Pupils' enjoyment is evident in good attendance and keen participation in the many optional after-school activities. Behaviour is very good in lessons and within the school building, but occasionally a few older pupils with behavioural difficulties are too rough in the playground. Opportunities such as participating in the School Safety Patrol, where pupils take responsibility to look after others' welfare, prepare them well for active participation in their community. Members of the school council take their responsibilities seriously and stress that they can take an active role in 'making this school better'. They give examples such as insisting that parents do not smoke on the school premises, nor bring their dogs there. Pupils understand well how to stay safe and healthy and they take good advantage of plentiful opportunities to take exercise and to buy fruit and healthy snacks at playtime.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The teaching now provided by a well-established team of staff shows a consistency of good quality and practice. This reflects the senior staff's careful checks on, and thorough support for, the teaching. A largely new teaching staff has become a well-knit team committed to improved strategies the school has adopted. This has led to

particularly good practice in using thorough assessments of pupils' progress to plan challenges, guidance and support for pupils that are well suited to their individual abilities and needs. Teaching is also successful in promoting pupils' willingness to behave well, concentrate on their work and try hard. Lessons are lively, often with an element of fun, and plenty of encouragement and support makes the pupils co-operative, well-behaved learners. Teaching assistants play an important and effective part in supporting pupils. There is a very brisk pace to lessons, which keeps pupils alert. Occasionally, though, teachers rush class discussions, leaving some pupils with too little time to think. Pupils are regularly encouraged to evaluate their own, and sometimes each other's, work and progress, a practice that is effectively developing pupils' responsible attitudes to learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Young learners' needs in the Reception year are met well, particularly in the areas of social and emotional development. In Years 1 to 6 a successful focus on literacy and numeracy has had a positive impact on raising standards in these basic skills. Good use of these skills in different subjects extends pupils' learning well. Pupils also make sound use of their information and communication technology skills in other subjects, especially mathematics. The recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy has led to a corresponding reduction in work in art, geography and history and the school recognises the need now to strengthen these subjects. The curriculum is adapted effectively to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities so that they make good progress. The teaching of Spanish enhances the curriculum for older pupils, broadening their cultural understanding. Physical education is a strength, contributing significantly to pupils' health and well-being. The school arranges a good range of visits out of school to support learning and organises many well-attended clubs and extra activities. These help to make school fun and contribute significantly to pupils' academic and personal development.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Arrangements for safeguarding pupils meet all current requirements and pupils feel safe and well cared for, but procedures to ensure pupils' welfare are not reviewed often enough. The school monitors closely all aspects of behaviour and pupils' individual needs. Some past problems caused by bullying or racism have been effectively dealt with by the adoption of new strategies. The school works well in partnership with parents and outside agencies and there is a very good link with the local policeman, who even joins in residential trips to Wales with pupils. Pupils with learning or emotional difficulties or disabilities are successfully supported, the learning mentor making a significant contribution here. All pupils receive very good guidance on their learning. Marking is particularly meaningful because it provides pointers for improvements, to which pupils make a positive response. The dialogue established results in pupils'

active involvement in their own learning. Pupils are very aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Determined leadership by senior staff has helped the school to emerge with new strength from a challenging period of high staff turnover which was made more difficult by problems the school experienced in attracting suitably qualified and experienced staff. Good staff teamwork has led to a high degree of consistency in the implementation of several major new strategies, for example, in assessing and guiding pupils, managing behaviour, and in teaching basic literacy. This effective consistency is the result of the thorough checks the school makes on almost all areas of its work, especially the teaching, and the good guidance and support given to staff in developing their skills. Consequently, new approaches are proving very successful in improving pupils' progress. Good use is made of external sources of support and expertise, including links with other schools and organizations, to improve the school. Probing and self-critical examination of school performance is well used to plan improvement. Governors give sound support to these processes but, along with senior staff, have paid too little attention to the regularity of checks on welfare arrangements.

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

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 behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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 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.

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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	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	3
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

The inspectors who visited your school recently would like to thank all of you for your very friendly welcome. We really enjoyed meeting and talking to you.

We were glad to see how much you enjoy school and how well you get on with your schoolwork. We thought your behaviour was good, especially in your lessons. In the playground, a few of you older pupils are sometimes too rough. Generally, though, you get on well with each other. You have a sensible attitude to learning and take notice of the good advice you get about being healthy.

The teachers and other staff are helping you to make good progress. The teachers give you good lessons and provide good work that helps you learn. All the staff look after you well, and give you lots of help. They also organise lots of interesting visits and activities like sport after lessons. You told us how much you enjoy these.

We have said that yours is a good school and that the adults in charge of it are doing a good job. However, we have suggested two improvements.

- 1.
- Now that you are making good progress in literacy and numeracy, we would like the teachers to give you more work in other subjects, like art, geography and history. 2.
- You told us you feel happy and safe at school. We would like to be sure that this continues and is always the case. We think the school should make more frequent checks on the ways it looks after your welfare.