

# Somerville Primary (NC) School

Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103256
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376862
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 January 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Mary Davis

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	790
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sami Razvi
<b>Headteacher</b>	Gillian Loxton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Somerville Road Small Heath Birmingham B10 9EN
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 6750956
<b>Fax number</b>	0121 6753890
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<b>Age group</b>	3–11
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<b>Inspection number</b>	376862



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Mary Davis	Additional inspector
Stuart Ransom	Additional inspector
Nicola Harwood	Additional inspector
Anna Smith	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 26 lessons and 26 teachers and spent 15 hours in classrooms. They held meetings with groups of pupils, members of the governing body, staff and groups of parents and carers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at: policies; development planning; data related to the tracking of pupils' progress; senior leaders' monitoring of teaching and learning; safeguarding documents; pupils' work and 138 questionnaires from parents and carers, together with those from pupils and staff.

## Information about the school

Somerville Primary is much larger than the average-sized primary school. All of the pupils are from minority ethnic heritages with the largest group being Pakistani. Most pupils speak English as an additional language and enter the school at a very early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs is above average. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than double that found nationally. All the pupils are Muslim and the daily act of worship is Islamic. The school meets the current floor standard (national minimum academic standard).

The school holds a number of awards including: National Healthy Schools status, the bronze Eco-Awareness award, Basic Skills Quality Mark and Investors in People. Pupils have won the Birmingham Business and Enterprise Challenge three times over the last three years and the school has been recognised for its work to promote children's rights.

**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

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>1</b>

## Key findings

- Somerville Primary is a good school at the heart of its local community.
- Although attainment on entry to the Nursery and Reception classes is exceptionally below age-related expectations, pupils make good and, often, outstanding progress, reaching average levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2. All groups of pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, achieve equally well.
- The headteacher, supported by a strong team, is relentless in her efforts to ensure that every child is cared for and able to achieve well. In particular, leaders have ensured that all adults consistently focus on the development of pupils’ language and literacy skills. Adults working in the Early Years Foundation Stage are particularly effective in this.
- The curriculum is outstanding, providing memorable experiences to inspire learning.
- Pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also outstanding; adults lead by example and there is a strong ethos of mutual respect.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. There are a few inconsistencies in the way some teachers provide appropriate challenge and support to meet pupils’ individual needs, particularly the higher attainers. The quality of marking is not fully consistent and pupils are not always provided with clear advice about how to improve their work.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school and have a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance has improved significantly and is broadly average.
- Leaders’ rigorous tracking of pupils’ progress results in rapid action being taken to address any underachievement. Pupils are closely involved in the setting of their individual targets. Opportunities are currently being missed to extend this further to promote pupils’ independence as learners by providing them with more precise information about their next steps in learning.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the drive to enhance teaching makes all practice at least good with most teaching outstanding by September 2012 by:
  - ensuring that all groups of pupils are appropriately challenged and supported in lessons, particularly those of higher ability
  - ensuring that marking of pupils' work consistently provides clear advice about how to improve.
- Enhance target-setting procedures to promote pupils' independence as learners, by providing them with precise information about their next steps in learning and enabling them to take more responsibility for evaluating their own progress towards their targets.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

Children make rapid progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage, particularly in their acquisition of language. Most enter the school at an early stage of learning English and make particularly good progress as a result of a whole-school focus on the development of language. Inspectors observed children in the Nursery classes who required considerable support to communicate verbally, but in Reception and Year 1 lessons, children chat to each other confidently, relate well to each other and to adults and show excitement and curiosity about their learning. Levels of attainment are still below those found nationally by the end of Key Stage 1. Over recent years, there has been a steady rise in attainment by the end of Key Stage 1, although remaining below average, including in reading. During the inspection, however, pupils by the end of Key Stage 1 showed that they were able to read confidently and with expression and lower-attaining readers were able to sound out words effectively. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils enjoyed developing complex vocabulary to describe pirates and used a fun, active method to learn punctuation. As a result they were able to construct sentences and paragraphs using the skills and vocabulary they had practised.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils reach average levels of attainment overall and read well. This indicates outstanding progress in this key stage from their low age-related starting points on entry to the school. Pupils are keen to learn in lessons and particularly enjoy the variety of activities provided for them, speaking with excitement about their learning. They make good progress when provided with tasks that enable them to build on their prior learning and that provide a variety of exciting activities. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, the main task was interspersed with such instructions as "Quick! Find 10 different ways of saying 'run'." This created an atmosphere of fun and excitement.

All groups of pupils make equally good progress during lessons, including those with

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disabilities and those with special educational needs, who are often taught in a separate class by an experienced teacher, providing a high level of support and challenge for this group. There is no difference between the achievement of pupils from Pakistani and other minority ethnic heritages. The many eligible for free school meals also achieve in line with other pupils. In a few lessons observed, potentially higher-attaining pupils were insufficiently challenged to achieve as well as they could. Most parents and carers expressed positive views about the progress made by their children.

### **Quality of teaching**

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, teachers are skilled in supporting children by using the variety of community languages in addition to English, to promote confidence. There is a common drive across the school in all subjects, to promote literacy skills and teachers consistently focus on pupils' ability to read and understand complex words and to use appropriate technical language when required. Most teachers provide success criteria for the tasks that are set, so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is required. Teachers generally use assessment of previous work effectively to identify gaps in learning and to address these in the lesson. In the few satisfactorily taught lessons observed, although teachers identified in lesson planning how they were going to challenge and support different ability groups in their classes, this was not effectively put into practice. This resulted in pupils losing focus, and unable to progress with the task until they received further direction.

Most teachers make activities relevant and meaningful by linking them with a cross-curricular theme or putting the task into familiar contexts. For example, a lesson on negative numbers in mathematics fully engaged pupils by linking to the teacher's journey to Alaska and the minus temperatures experienced in this part of the world. Pupils say they enjoy such experiences. Although pupils' work is regularly and thoroughly marked, the quality of advice on how to improve is inconsistent, so pupils do not always know what to do to improve. Opportunities are also missed to link marking to pupils' individual targets so these are not a key focus for pupils when undertaking a task. All teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to gain moral understanding and social skills, which they do exceptionally well, by, for example, working in pairs and groups to develop teamwork and cooperation. Parents and carers express positive views about the quality of teaching. One comment was that the school 'set tasks that stimulate and motivate' their daughter, resulting in her being happy and enjoying school.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Warm relationships between adults and pupils are evident throughout the school. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and toward adults and show good levels of engagement in lessons. Generally, lessons flow smoothly and disruptive incidents seldom occur. Pupils told inspectors that they respect their teachers and that they try always to behave well. Inspectors observed examples of excellent attitudes to learning, but these were not wholly consistent across the school. Pupils

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are calm, orderly and considerate when moving around the school and are polite and welcoming to visitors. Parents and carers express confidence that the school will keep their children safe and that behaviour is good. A small minority of pupils expressed concern about their safety on the playground, but said that adults take immediate action to support them and that bullying of all kinds and racial incidents are rare and effectively addressed. The school ensures that a wide variety of support strategies are available, including a 'worry box' which is frequently checked and concerns acted upon, and older pupils acting as 'buddies' and mentors. Pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Teachers are consistent in their management of behaviour and case-study evidence demonstrates marked improvement over time for pupils with behavioural difficulties. The school recognises that attendance remains a key focus for improvement. Levels of attendance have risen steadily over recent years and persistent absentees have fallen. Pupils speak with enthusiasm of the rewards they receive for 100% attendance, including 'attendance parties' to which their parents and carers are invited. This has resulted in a dramatic rise in the number of pupils attaining this goal.

### **Leadership and management**

Senior and middle leaders and governors have extremely high expectations and ambition for the school to improve achievement further for every learner. The impact of leadership is seen in the acceleration of pupils' progress throughout the school, particularly in their command of English, making their overall achievement outstanding in Key Stage 2. The school's track record is impressive, and issues raised by the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. There is very strong capacity to improve further, supported by well-focused action planning in response to accurate self-evaluation.

There is a powerful and successful drive to improve teaching. Leaders are rigorous in their monitoring of teaching and provide a wide range of support and training to promote good practice. They give particularly close support to newly qualified and less-experienced teachers and share good practice, for example, with senior leaders modelling skills that promote good learning. Consequently, inexperienced teachers improve their practice rapidly. More experienced teachers provide a consistently at least good quality of teaching and much of their practice is outstanding. The success of leaders' skilled, relentless and highly effective efforts to improve teaching is confirmed by their frequent and accurate monitoring of practice which indicate that most teaching is at least good.

Leaders and managers at all levels ensure that assessment procedures are accurate and that there is effective analysis of the progress of different groups of pupils to ensure equal opportunity. There is no discrimination against any individual. Identified underachievement, such as a slight imbalance between the performance of boys and girls in one year group, was quickly addressed by providing single-gender lessons for writing. A high degree of common, effective practice is adopted across the school. For example, all adults follow a common approach in providing many opportunities

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for pupils to read out loud and enhance their speaking skills. Termly progress-tracking procedures culminate in one-to-one discussion with pupils in which challenging targets are set. However, opportunities are missed to develop this good practice further to enable pupils to take more responsibility for their own progress.

The outstanding curriculum provides memorable experiences, for example, the 'wow' days that inspire pupils' new topics, such as an alien landing or visits by professional artists. Pupils described their enjoyment of 'no pen days' and 'take over days' when pupils and teachers exchange roles. Cross-curricular topics provide a seamless connection with the promotion of literacy and numeracy, for example, by developing appropriate vocabulary to write about the Victorian era.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding and stimulated by curricular focus on the study of different cultures and beliefs, of which the pupils are able to talk knowledgeably. A wealth of opportunity is provided, particularly in assemblies, for reflection on moral issues and making decisions about the best way to solve a moral dilemma. Leaders plan learning activities to provide worthwhile experiences that the pupils would not normally encounter, and to meet their individual needs.

Leaders provide outstanding support for pupils and their families for whom circumstances may make them vulnerable. The school is a harmonious community of different ethnicities and backgrounds. Inclusion and achievement are high priorities and all safeguarding procedures are extremely robust. Leaders seek at all times to fully involve parents and carers in their children's learning and to ensure that its work supports the needs of the local community.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and 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 governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



19 January 2012

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Somerville Primary (NC) School, Birmingham, B10 9EN**

Thank you very much for the welcome you gave us when we visited your school for its recent inspection. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing all that you do. We particularly enjoyed seeing your art work and listening to the choir rehearse.

You go to a good school. You make good and sometimes outstanding progress from your starting points and your attainment is broadly in line with pupils nationally by the time you reach Year 6. You achieve well. Most teaching is at least good and it's often outstanding, but we have asked your school to ensure that you always experience teaching of the highest quality. Your teachers provide interesting and exciting tasks and you told us how much you enjoy your learning and all the activities that are provided for you, particularly the trips and 'wow' days. They support you well in lessons, although a few of you told us that, very occasionally, work is too easy for you. We have, therefore, asked your school to ensure that teachers always support and challenge you according to your individual needs. We have also asked that they give you more responsibility for checking you own progress against your targets and that they make it clear what you need to do to reach them.

You behave well and are confident that the school will keep you safe and you know how to keep yourselves safe. You told us how well teachers care for you. Your attendance is improving and you enjoy the rewards which your parents and carers are able to share when you attend every day.

We have judged the leaders of your school to be outstanding because of the way in which they promote your achievement and care for you. The curriculum you follow is excellent and enables you to show respect for those from cultures and beliefs different to your own. Leaders are working hard to make sure you continue to learn well and develop well as young people. You can all help them by attending regularly and continuing to work hard. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mary Davis  
Lead inspector

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