

# Nelson Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103237
<b>Local Authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	355343
<b>Inspection dates</b>	8–9 December 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rodney Braithwaite

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>	184
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Navid Anjum
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael P Tromans
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	11 December 2007
<b>School address</b>	King Edward's Road Birmingham B1 2PJ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 15 lessons and observed nine teachers. They held meetings with pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and a representative of the local authority. They observed the school's work and looked at documentation relating to the attainment and assessment of pupils' progress, the provision for safeguarding, the school's self-evaluation, minutes of the governing body meetings and external evaluations of the school. They also looked at samples of pupils' work and the school development plan. They analysed 72 questionnaires from parents and carers and other responses from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The current attainment and progress of pupils, in particular more-able pupils, pupils in Years 4 and 5 and pupils who have been in school since starting in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The effectiveness of assessment strategies and the accuracy of teachers' monitoring and prediction of pupils' progress.
- The skills of children on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage, and how effectively provision and leadership and management are helping children to make progress.
- The effectiveness of the school in dealing with challenging behaviour and the problems posed by the high mobility of pupils in all year groups.

## Information about the school

Nelson is smaller than most primary schools. Children normally enter the school in the Nursery before moving to the Reception class. There are a large number of minority ethnic groups, the largest being of Black Caribbean heritage. Although a much higher-than-average proportion of pupils has English as an additional language, there are only a few pupils who are at the early stages of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, the largest group having moderate learning difficulties. The school has a small community room where parents and carers meet socially and receive information about the school. The school provides a breakfast club which was not inspected. There is a privately run after-school club on the school site daily which is inspected separately. Significantly more pupils join or leave the school at times other than the usual starting or leaving points. The school has the Enhanced Healthy Schools Award.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

Nelson is a good school. In the last two years the leaders of the school, led by a determined and passionate headteacher, have worked unceasingly and successfully to overcome the many difficulties and barriers to learning which face some of their pupils. As a result, the attainment and progress of pupils have risen, teaching has improved, attendance is improving and pupils' behaviour is good. All these developments are improvements on the past performance of the school and demonstrate the school's good capacity for sustaining improvement. In addition the school evaluates itself very accurately and robustly, so that it has a clear understanding of its strengths and areas in need of improvement. The school's over-riding characteristic is its excellent care, support and guidance for the welfare and development of all its pupils. This includes not only pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils in the early stages of learning English, but also the many pupils who enter the school at times other than the usual starting points. The school cares especially well for those pupils in the most vulnerable circumstances and has developed a very strong infra-structure of support and nurture. This is greatly appreciated by parents who have very positive views of the school, as for example the one who commented, 'Nelson is a great school. Since coming here my child has progressed tremendously.' These views are shared by the pupils. They have good attitudes to their learning, are friendly and lively and enjoy school. They are all fully included in school life and participate with gusto in the many opportunities they are given.

Children make steady progress in their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, and this accelerates as they develop their basic skills as they move through the school. By the time they transfer to secondary schools at the end of Year 6, many pupils are reaching average standards in writing, reading and mathematics and are achieving well. The school recognises some inconsistency in attainment and is taking steps to ensure improvement and less variation. Teaching is well planned and often lively and helps pupils to make good progress. However, although improving, basic skills of grammar, punctuation, handwriting and spelling are not sufficiently secure in all groups. Teachers' marking does not always highlight simple errors of technical or subject specific language. The school also recognises that recent improvements in mathematics have yet to be reinforced by building upon the skills of calculation and problem solving. Although teachers are encouraging more speaking and explanations of learning by pupils, this has not yet resulted in them regularly answering questions with extended answers and interesting vocabulary.

The leadership and staff share a common purpose and ambition to do the very best for their pupils, and the school has a vibrant and welcoming ethos. The governing body makes a sound contribution to the management of the school. Governors realise that, with changes in their personnel, further training is needed in order for them to monitor and evaluate the school's performance with rigour.

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

- Raise the consistency of attainment in writing and mathematics by:
  - making certain that the basic skills of grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting are taught rigorously in all classes and that areas for pupils' improvement are reflected in teacher's marking in all subjects
  - building upon the development of pupils' skills in calculation and problem solving
  - offering more opportunities to pupils to develop their speaking skills and giving extended answers to questions.
- Ensure that members of the governing body play a fully proactive role in the leadership and management of the school by:
  - encouraging them to take every opportunity to participate in governor training courses
  - increasing their involvement in monitoring activities and in evaluating the effectiveness of their policies and practices.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Most pupils enter school in the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills below those expected for their age. Until 2009, pupils' attainment on leaving the school at the end of Year 6 was well below average. However, as a result of actions taken by the school, especially in improving teaching, attainment for the last two years has been almost in line with national averages in writing, reading and mathematics. Evidence from the inspection confirms that this trend is continuing. Pupils achieve well and enjoy their learning. This applies to all groups, particularly boys who in the past have not been provided with sufficiently stimulating and practical learning opportunities. They now find learning more fun, such as in Year 4 when pupils watched a video showing the development of a frog. Pupils then joined in enthusiastically identifying connective words which they could use in their writing. There are also signs that more-able pupils are being challenged effectively, so that more of them are reaching above-average standards. There is still evidence, however, of some inconsistency in attainment year-on-year within specific subjects and the school is taking action so that these occasional blips in attainment are eliminated.

Pupils have a good understanding of what is involved in developing a healthy lifestyle, including their careful choices of healthy foods which is very evident at lunchtimes when nearly all choose to take school meals. They also enjoy frequent opportunities to take part in sporting competitions and clubs. Pupils feel safe in school and behave sensibly and responsibly. This is because the leadership has been determined to improve the past legacy of the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils. Consequently, pupils respect each other and adults, and pupils new to the school rapidly learn what is expected of them. Although they identify rare cases of bullying, pupils feel that adults deal with these quickly and fairly, and that the school is a peaceful multicultural society. The high number of pupils entering and leaving the school has posed attendance problems for some time. However, the attendance trend is improving rapidly and the large majority of pupils have good attendance. This is helping pupils to be prepared satisfactorily for their future education. Pupils are proud to take responsibility in their school, helping to make decisions on classroom rules, selecting playground equipment and being represented on the school's

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health and safety committee. Their interest also extends successfully into the local community where they join in many events and festivals.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and constantly encourage good behaviour, resulting in pupils' very positive attitudes to learning. Assessment information is used effectively to plan tasks for all ability groups, so that all pupils make good progress. Teachers use interactive whiteboards well in order to provide stimulating learning opportunities for pupils. The best teaching moves learning on at good pace and encourages pupils to combine their imagination with their basic skills. This was observed to excellent effect in Year 2 when pupils were writing poems about the life stories of inanimate objects, such as pencils. However, there is some inconsistency in teachers' promotion of skills in handwriting, grammar and punctuation, so that although pupils' writing is often creative they make too many careless mistakes. Teachers question pupils frequently about their learning, but sometimes questions do not encourage thinking or speaking skills sufficiently.

A feature of the provision of a good curriculum is the way in which teachers' planning builds on pupils' prior experiences. There are good partnerships with the local schools' consortium where provision is made for the needs of gifted and talented pupils. The school provides a wide range of extra-curricular activities, visitors, visits and clubs which

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are well attended. Pupils also have opportunities to learn Spanish and play brass instruments with visiting specialist teachers. There is a strong emphasis on personal and emotional development and finding out about life in other communities. This contributes strongly to the good outcomes in pupils' moral, social and cultural education. The school is rightly placing increasing emphasis on pupils' application of their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects.

There is a strong ethos of care and consideration for all pupils and excellent relationships everywhere in the school. The school provides particularly well for pupils from the most vulnerable circumstances. They have extensive one-to-one support and there are a number of small nurture groups which are equally well supported. Teaching assistants and the learning mentor are especially active in many of these interventions. Pupils feel very safe and have great confidence in the adults in the school. Provision for child protection and risk assessment is fully in place. Procedures for tackling attendance issues are very robust. Transition arrangements foster confidence and a strong sense of school community.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher form a strong team with many complementary skills. Together they have built a staff which shares their ambition for a continually improving school providing for the diverse needs of all pupils. Morale is high and a number of successes, notably the raising of attainment and the significant improvement in pupils' behaviour, has encouraged everyone to have great confidence in the future development of the school. Pupils are very well cared for in an inclusive learning environment where they all have every opportunity to progress in their learning and personal development. The leadership is especially proactive in ensuring that the significant numbers of pupils who enter the school in years other than the Early Years Foundation Stage are given every chance to shine.

The marked improvement in teaching and learning in the last two years has been brought about mainly because of regular and accurate monitoring by leaders. Teachers respond positively to suggestions for the further refining of their teaching skills, although there is an over-concentration on the awarding of specific grades for lesson observations rather than the developmental aspects. Many members of staff have management responsibilities and accept their accountability. This is ensuring that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils in the early stages of learning English, are enabled to make good progress. The governing body shares the values

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evident throughout the school and fulfils all its statutory requirements for the provision of good safeguarding and health and safety arrangements. Governors ensure that all staff are well trained and records are meticulously maintained, and the views of pupils and parents are taken into account. However, the governing body is over-reliant on advice and information from senior leaders in the school. Some governors are very recent recruits and the experienced Chair of the Governing Body is aware that governors need more training in order to fully understand their roles, especially in monitoring and evaluating school improvement.

Parents and carers are encouraged to play a full part in the learning of their children. They appreciate the openness and help of teachers, and the constant availability of senior leaders to discuss any concerns. Partnerships to promote the learning and well-being of pupils are good. These include the local extended schools cluster and the Birmingham Family Learning organisation which is based in the school. Provision for community cohesion has been developing strongly since the appointment of a coordinator, and is now good. Pupils are involved in workshops exploring Fair Trade, childhood poverty, water aid, Build Africa and supporting communities through Oxfam. There are numerous links to the local community and further links with national and international schools in rural Warwickshire and Guadeloupe have been established.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Most children enter the Nursery with skills well below those expected for their age, especially in communication, language and literacy and personal development. A few have little knowledge of English. Satisfactory teaching ensures that children make satisfactory progress in all areas of their learning in both Nursery and Reception. Staff are working diligently to improve children's skills, especially in developing reading and writing skills



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through knowledge of letters and sounds. The school has tried hard to improve the learning environment which is spacious and has improved resources. However, children are too directed by adults in most of their learning and do not have enough opportunities to make their own choices. Their learning is based strongly upon improving basic skills, but sometimes provision fails to encourage children to use their imaginations and generate excitement in their activities. Staff have a good knowledge of the needs of all their children and assessment data are both accurate and used regularly in planning. This enables staff to move children into other groups of learners when progress is accelerated. Children behave well and enjoy their learning, such as when observed identifying and naming simple shapes. They respond well, are respectful of adults and are learning to work cooperatively with each other.

The leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory and ensure that all necessary safeguarding and child protection procedures are firmly in place. The school has recently agreed to involve the local authority in advice and support for the new leader. Parents and carers are pleased with the start their children have to their education, and the very approachable staff does all it can to involve them in their children's learning. Transition arrangements for children moving into the main school are good.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>3</b>
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

Over a third of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. Nearly all were overwhelmingly positive about the school. They feel that their children enjoy school, are safe, that teaching is good, that the school manages behaviour well and that their children make good progress. A typical view of the school made by a parent is, 'My child enjoys school very much, likes the teachers, has a good level of education and I am pleased with her progress.' A small number of parents do not think the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle. The inspectors found no evidence to support this as the school provides pupils with much information and many opportunities to be healthy.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Nelson Junior and Infant 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 72 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 184 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	60	29	40	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	49	33	46	4	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	43	39	54	1	1	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	46	38	53	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	34	47	37	51	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	43	38	53	3	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	53	28	39	5	7	0	0
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)	26	36	39	54	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	24	33	45	63	2	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	42	40	56	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	31	43	38	53	2	3	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	32	44	33	46	2	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	38	53	32	44	1	1	0	0

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 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



10 December 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Nelson Primary School, Birmingham, B1 2PJ**

Thank you for being so welcoming and friendly when we visited your school recently. We all enjoyed our visit and liked hearing about all the things you like doing at school. I really enjoyed seeing you all playing your brass instruments so well. We think you go to a good school and want to let you know what we found out during our visit.

You make good progress throughout the school even though many of you did not start here in the Nursery or Reception classes. We are pleased that you feel safe in school. You are very well cared for and you are confident that there are plenty of adults who will help you if you are upset or worried. Your behaviour is good, you try hard in your learning and are happy helping each other or those not so fortunate. You know how important it is to lead a healthy lifestyle. We were pleasantly surprised at how many of you have school dinners and pleased to see so many of you using the salad trolley. You enjoy taking responsibilities and your school council makes many good suggestions. We think the school has good teachers, teaching assistants and leaders who are helping you to learn as well as you can. This is shown by how much the school has improved in the last two years. We think that, with your help, it can get even better so we have suggested to your headteacher and his staff ways we think will help improvement.

Your standards in writing and mathematics have improved but we think they can get even better if all your teachers, with your help, make sure that you pay attention to correcting spellings, grammar and punctuation. Also, we would like you to spend more time on learning to calculate and solve problems in mathematics. We are asking your teachers to give you more chances to speak in lessons; please can you try to use whole sentences more often when you are answering questions? Finally, we have suggested that the members of the governing body have training to help them play a bigger part in running the school. We know that with your cooperation the school will be even more successful.

Yours sincerely

Rodney Braithwaite

Lead inspector

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