

Albert Bradbeer Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131759
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	360318
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2010
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	455
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Wal Suett
Headteacher	Christine O'Malley (Executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	31 October 2007
School address	Turves Green Birmingham B31 4RD
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Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	18–19 October 2010
Inspection number	360318

Registered Childcare provision	Albert Bradbeer Children's Centre and Footsteps Day Care
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	40
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors, who observed 24 lessons taught by 16 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff, parents, carers and governors. They observed the school's work, and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils, and the responses to 114 parental questionnaires and to the staff's and pupils' questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- Is teaching providing sufficient challenge for middle and higher attaining pupils in English in Years 3 to 6?
- Are pupils in Years 1 and 2 making sufficient progress in reading and mathematics?
- Are actions to improve attendance proving successful?
- Are the arrangements for leadership of the school reversing the apparent decline in achievement?

Information about the school

Albert Bradbeer is a very large primary school, where the number on roll has risen significantly since the school was last inspected. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high. The very large majority of pupils come from a White British background, with a very few pupils from a wide range of different minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average, although the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is average.

The school provides childcare through the Albert Bradbeer Children's Centre and Footsteps Day Care facility, as well as 'Berties' which provides before and after school care. Both of these facilities are managed by the governing body.

The previous headteacher was absent from school from May 2008 until leaving the school's employ in September 2010. In September 2008, the governing body appointed an executive headteacher to lead the school in his absence. The executive headteacher is also a headteacher of another primary school and spends approximately 60% of her time at Albert Bradbeer. During the period of the previous headteacher's absence, all of the teachers in Years 3 to 6 and half of those in other year groups left the school.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Albert Bradbeer provides a satisfactory education. The time since the previous inspection has been a difficult one for the school, with issues around leadership and management, staffing, poor attendance and falling achievement. However, the decisive actions taken by the Chair of Governors and the strong leadership provided by the executive headteacher have ensured that the corner has been turned and the school is now improving again. The decline in achievement has been halted across the school, and reversed in Years 3 to 6. Attendance, although still low, is improving strongly and is on target to reach the national average by the end of this academic year. The school now has satisfactory capacity to continue improving. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate. The school's leaders have a clear idea of where the main priorities lie and how to address them. Checks on teaching by the executive headteacher and the deputy headteacher are providing an accurate picture of where further improvements are needed, and the skills of other managers are steadily improving as they become more experienced in their roles.

After a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils now make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. The higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 are given tasks that are suitably challenging, so the proportions reaching the higher levels in English and mathematics have improved to match the national averages. For some middle attaining pupils in English, though, the work is sometimes too easy or too hard, so their progress is slower than that of others. There are also too few books available, from a limited range of genres, to support their reading. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in their reading and writing, but in mathematics the middle attaining pupils often find the work too easy and they do not always reach the levels of which they are capable.

Most other outcomes are satisfactory. However, pupils have a good awareness of how to keep themselves and those around them safe, and are confident that their concerns will be listened to and acted upon by staff. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are very well monitored and supported. The curriculum is effective at teaching pupils how to be healthy. Pupils are very active and a high proportion eats a healthy school meal each day because they enjoy the food on offer. Partly this is because they were consulted on the types of food they would like the canteen to provide. They responded with carefully thought out alternatives, that demonstrated their good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle, and the canteen changed the menu accordingly. A few pupils show a lack of understanding of other cultures and faiths. While this is tackled through subjects of the curriculum, such as religious education, there is limited emphasis on teaching pupils about other faiths and cultures that are represented in Britain today. Opportunities for pupils to engage with others outside the school who are from backgrounds different from their own are in their infancy.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportions reaching Level 4 and above in English in Year 6 to at least the national average by July 2011 by:
 - matching the tasks given to middle attaining pupils more closely to their abilities
 - providing more books that reflect a wider range of genres.
- Raise the proportions of pupils reaching Level 2B and above in mathematics in Year 2 to at least the national average by July 2011 by ensuring that middle attaining pupils are consistently given suitably challenging tasks.
- Improve pupils' understanding and appreciation of other cultures and faiths by:
 - developing the curriculum to reflect more accurately the diversity of faiths and cultures represented in Britain today
 - providing pupils with more opportunities to meet with those from ethnic groups and faiths that are different from their own.
- Raise the levels of pupils' attendance to at least the national average by July 2011 by building on the strategies already introduced.
- Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Pupils from all backgrounds enjoy their education and make satisfactory progress, given their average attainment on joining Year 1, as they move through the school. Pupils leave Year 6 with average attainment and a level of basic skills that leaves them soundly prepared for the next stage in their education. Those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to their peers, as a result of the sound support they receive in lessons. The school has worked hard to improve the progress made by pupils, by ensuring that lower attainers receive the support they need and that higher attainers are challenged to reach their potential. This approach has been successful for the lower and higher attaining pupils, but in some case leaves middle attaining pupils making slower progress than they should. This was clear in the lessons observed. Where pupils were set according to their ability, for example, the highest attainers often revelled in the challenging work they were given, thoroughly enjoying solving problems. Some middle attainers, though, were sometimes confused, and so their confidence fell and they did not learn as well as they could have. Generally, pupils were keen to do their best. They made good strides in their learning when given the opportunity to discuss their own ideas with a partner, and rarely strayed off task.

Pupils play a good part in the school community. In addition to the work on healthy eating, pupils have also drawn up their own anti-bullying charter. Pupils play an active part in assemblies, where they demonstrate their good capacity for reflection on spiritual matters. Their role in the local community is more limited, but satisfactory overall. Pupils take part in charity events and fund raising activities, as well as participating in services in the local church. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. It is usually at least good in lessons, where pupils work well together. Incidents of really poor behaviour are rare, and

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exclusions are few. At playtime, though, not all pupils demonstrate that they understand the impact of their action on others.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ 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?

Pupils' progress is now being assessed more accurately, so that teachers have a clear idea of where to pitch the work for different groups. The subsequent lesson plans are detailed, but the results of the assessments are not always used to match the work accurately to the abilities of individual pupils, especially the middle attainers. Discipline in lessons is good, so any disruption to learning is extremely rare. A quiet reminder is almost always all that is needed to get a pupil back on task, because teachers get on well with pupils and the pupils respect and like their teachers. The pace of lessons is pushed along well by quick and frequent opportunities to discuss problems with a partner, although the pace can sometimes be slowed when pupils spend too long on the carpet at the start of the lesson.

The curriculum encourages enjoyment and engagement by making topics come alive by using trips and linking different subjects together. When studying World War Two, for example, pupils were 'evacuated' on a steam train, providing a truly memorable experience. Pupils also enjoy the many opportunities to perform and take part in sporting activities. The school has increased the number of opportunities for pupils to improve their

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writing in subjects other than English, but the use of computers is largely limited to specific lessons in information and communication technology.

The school introduced new measures to promote attendance in September 2008, including contacting parents on the first day of absence. These have proved successful, and attendance has shown good improvement each year since then, with a rapid fall in persistent absenteeism. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are very well supported by the learning mentors. The school can point to telling examples where its efforts have had a significant impact on such pupils. In particular, the deputy headteacher has been tenacious in ensuring that cases have been kept open when working with partner organisations and potential harm to children has been averted. 'Berties' provides good care and a wide range of activities for pupils of all ages, and the provision is much appreciated by parents and carers.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Although many of the staff are relatively new to the school, the executive headteacher has successfully forged them into a team who share a satisfactory drive for improvement. There is a good awareness of the challenges that face the school, reflected in the school development plan that rightly aims to tackle many areas for improvement at the same time. The many changes in staff have meant that ensuring consistency of approach across the school has not been easy, but the school's monitoring of teaching shows that this is improving and the proportion of good teaching is increasing steadily. Partnerships with other schools have been key to tackling the school's issues with leadership and management. The strong links with a partner school have allowed the appointment of the executive headteacher, while another school has supported the deputy most effectively in his professional development. The children's centre provides a good link with parents and carers, and considerably eases the transition for children joining the Nursery.

The governing body have not flinched from taking very difficult decisions, but the process has taken much of their time. However, they have ensured that safeguarding requirements are met. One area where they have had significant success is ensuring access for the disabled. The school has an excellent disability access plan that has had a real impact on improving life at school for those with a disability. There are few gaps in the performance of different groups and the school is working to close these and eliminate discrimination. The school's leaders have carried out a detailed audit of provision for community cohesion. Provision to address issues relating to socio-economic factors is good. Links have been made with another school serving a completely different

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community to that of Albert Bradbeer and visits have been exchanged with pupils from Year 6. The school has plans in place to extend such opportunities to pupils in other years.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Boys and girls both make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The children's centre complies with the requirements for registration. It provides children up to the age of three with a good start to their education, in a safe environment. The different rooms are used effectively to provide a range of different stimuli that are well matched to children's development. Each has a focus on a different age range, so that children make good progress in acquiring new skills. Teachers make good use of pictures to stimulate talking, and then build on this to help children develop their manual dexterity when drawing. There are lots of tactile toys in the baby room, and the whole facility is bright and colourful. Good leadership and management have ensured that the areas identified for improvement at the previous inspection of the children's centre have been fully addressed and there has been considerable improvement in provision overall. In particular, the concerns regarding health and safety have been rectified, although fire drills are relatively infrequent.

Children start Nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below the level expected for their age, but these are improved at a good rate so that they start Year 1 with broadly average attainment. Staff from each setting work closely together as a team, so transition from one to another runs smoothly and children quickly settle in their new classes. They are provided with a wide range of interesting activities that combine learning different skills particularly well. For example, decorated conkers are used to aid learning about nature, stimulate creativity and help with early writing. The outdoor area is not as well resourced as the classrooms, especially for the Nursery children, so the range of

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activities is more limited. Staff assess children's progress carefully, and use the resulting information well to build on what children already know, understand and can do. The Early Years Foundation Stage is currently led by a temporary manager, who has shown good leadership and an extensive knowledge of the requirements of each setting, including the children's centre.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Views of parents and carers

There was a below average response to the questionnaire. The responses to almost all questions were very positive. Some parents and carers were concerned about behaviour. The inspection team spoke to pupils and analysed the reports of incidents in the school. They found that name-calling at playtime is sometimes an issue; the school is working to make pupils more aware of the consequences of their behaviour. A few parents and carers were also concerned about safeguarding. The governing body has taken strong steps to act on concerns and the school's procedures are now secure.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Albert Bradbeer Primary 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 114 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 455 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	69	61	43	38	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	54	47	57	50	2	2	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	51	45	58	51	5	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	54	47	58	51	1	1	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	51	45	61	54	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	43	60	53	5	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	51	45	60	53	2	2	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)	36	32	68	60	6	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	44	39	65	57	3	3	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	37	56	49	13	11	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	36	32	64	56	8	7	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	49	43	59	52	6	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	49	54	47	3	3	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



20 October 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Albert Bradbeer Primary, Birmingham, B31 4RD

On behalf of the inspection team, many thanks for all the help that you gave us when we visited your school. You told us how much you like all the trips and extra activities, especially the sport. We were impressed by how fit and healthy you are, and how you have helped the school to become a healthier place by helping to design the new menus.

We found that you are getting a satisfactory education. Most of you make satisfactory progress in your lessons, although some of you sometimes find the work too easy in mathematics in Years 1 and 2. Others of you in Years 3 to 6 are sometimes confused in English, because the work is too hard, or do not learn as quickly as others because the tasks are a bit too easy for you. So, we have asked your teachers to use their knowledge of how well you are doing to give you work that you can do, makes you think and makes you work hard. We have also asked them to buy more books, so that your reading improves more quickly. Although the oldest pupils meet children from different schools, some of you need to know more about the different backgrounds that children in England come from. So we have asked the school to teach you more about this and give you more opportunities to meet other children who come from backgrounds different to those that you know about. You told us that you feel safe in school, and that teachers always listen when you have a problem.

Your school is now getting better again after a couple of years when it had a few problems. Your new headteacher has made sure that all the staff are working together for your benefit. You are now making better progress, and more of you are coming to school whenever possible. Well done! There is still a bit to go to reach the attendance levels of pupils in most schools, so keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll
Lead inspector

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