

Queen Victoria Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103826
Local Authority	Dudley
Inspection number	355470
Inspection dates	11–12 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Driscoll

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	588
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Everson
Headteacher	Wendy Briscoe
Date of previous school inspection	17 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors who observed 23 lessons taught by 15 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and members of the governing body. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at records of pupils' progress and attendance, the school's development plan, records of checks on teaching, and documents relating to the safeguarding of pupils. They also analysed responses to questionnaires completed by staff, pupils and 81 parents and carers.

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

- Are assessments of pupils' performance robust enough to provide an accurate picture of pupils' achievement and the effectiveness of teaching?
- Has the school successfully closed the gaps in achievement between different groups?
- Are actions to improve attendance proving successful?
- Are the school's leaders making full use of the data available to them when evaluating the school's performance?

Information about the school

This very large primary school serves an urban area. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. Most pupils come from a White British background, with small numbers from several other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.

All pupils took part in a Remembrance Day service during the inspection. A new headteacher joined the school in September 2009. The governing body manages a breakfast club which is open each school-day morning.

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

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. There are strengths in several aspects of pupils' personal development, and none more so than pupils' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Spiritual and cultural development are exceptional. Even the youngest of pupils are able to talk with great sincerity, for example about the meaning of Remembrance Day or what it is like to come from a different cultural background. The reasons for the school's success in these areas lie in the plentiful opportunities provided in the good curriculum for reflection and learning about how others live their lives. Pupils are polite and respectful to visitors. They behave well in lessons and at play, and are quick to take responsibility, both in and out of school. Pupils of all ages have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy and safe, with many taking advantage of the sporting activities available. Attendance is improving, but remains low. The school uses an external agency to manage its attendance data, which delays its analysis and means that staff are unable to immediately identify those pupils whose attendance is starting to cause concern. Furthermore, the school does not start any significant intervention until a pupil's attendance falls to 80%, when poor attitudes to attendance may already be ingrained. The work with other agencies to provide support for those whose circumstances make them vulnerable is particularly effective in ensuring they are kept safe.

Pupils' academic progress is satisfactory. Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They start with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the level expected for their age and start Year 1 with attainment that is broadly average. Progress is then satisfactory as they move through the school, but varies from year to year, and between different groups, according to the quality of teaching they receive. Assessment information is used well to group pupils according to their ability, and to plan tasks that each group will find suitably challenging. However, pupils spend too long on whole class activities at the start of lessons before they are moved on to their group tasks. This slows their progress. When they are working in their groups, their progress is not always assessed frequently enough for teachers to identify those who are struggling or who have finished, in order for them to be given extra help or a new task.

The school has made steady progress since it was last inspected. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate, and the school has satisfactory capacity to continue its improvement. The indications of underachievement in English have been quickly eliminated, because the school's leaders have used data on pupils' progress to effectively target the teaching of writing. This has led to attainment improving to average in Year 6. The data on the progress of different groups are not analysed as well, so variations in their progress still persist. The school's leaders are invariably successful in tackling the priorities identified on the school development plan, but these do not include attendance.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve attendance to at least the national average by January 2012 by:
 - making attendance a priority in the school development plan
 - making better and quicker use of data to identify emerging patterns of poor attendance
 - raising the trigger for intervention by the school to 90%.
- Improve the progress of all pupils in lessons by:
 - reducing the time spent on introductions at the start of lessons
 - assessing individual pupil's progress during lessons and adapting their tasks accordingly.
- Use data effectively to reduce variation in the progress of different groups of pupils and to increase the rate of improvement.
- 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 enjoy coming to school, where they have many friends and get on very well with one another. They respect their teachers and know that any concerns will be taken seriously and swiftly acted upon. The learning observed in lessons was satisfactory. Pupils' worked together very effectively, readily pooling their thoughts and developing ideas with the rest of their group. Pupils enjoyed the topics and concentrated well at the start of lessons. Their interest waned if the introduction went on for too long. Once in their ability groups, their enthusiasm for learning was evident. They worked quickly, and were keen to solve problems or get to the end of their task. Those who finished the task before their friends, waited quietly to be told what they should do next. Behaviour was generally good, but there were often one or two pupils who needed several reminders to stop talking and return to their task.

While there are few differences overall in the progress of groups of pupils, including those from different ethnic backgrounds or who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, there are variations within each year group. So, for example, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress in one year, but then slower in the next. At the same time, those known to be eligible for free school meals make slower progress but then speed up the next year. In the long term their progress evens out but is not consistently good.

The Remembrance Day service was a stunning example of pupils' outstanding spiritual and moral development. You could have heard a pin drop as hundreds of pupils observed the two minute silence, and pupils continued to listen in rapt attention as one of their peers played the last post on the cornet. Afterwards, pupils of all ages explained the importance of remembering the fallen, how the service had affected them and the moral dilemmas posed by wars. Pupils' understanding of other cultures was a key priority for improvement at the last inspection, and is now one of the school's greatest strengths. Pupils not only

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have an exceptional knowledge of other faiths and cultures, but also have a great insight into the differences between them. For example, black pupils explained to their peers that, although all pupils are treated equally in the school, it is still different being a minority, which led to others having a deeper understanding of what it is like to be in another's shoes. Pupils' good role in the community is exemplified by the number of roles that they take on. They run the school farm, elect their representatives, organise clubs for other pupils and meet with representatives of the local community.

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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	1

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?

Teachers use interesting, real-life contexts that enthuse pupils. Pupils were excited about having their poems published, for example, and writing to the Prime Minister with their views on computer games. The objectives for each lesson are made clear so that all pupils know what they are to be doing. Explanations are unambiguous so that all know how to go about their work. Individual white boards are used well to assist pupils in quickly noting down an answer, but are rarely used to check the understanding of the whole class. The adults in a classroom often work with a single group who invariably make good progress. However, other groups may have finished or strayed off task and this is not always spotted by the teacher.

Significant improvements have been made to the curriculum, especially in involving the pupils in choosing topics and tasks. This has made the curriculum more relevant to them

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as individuals. Topics are now planned to make better use of the links between them, especially in promoting pupils' literacy and computer skills. However, the new initiatives have not yet been in place long enough to have a full impact on pupils' progress, although the benefit is already apparent in their improved writing. Pupils' personal development is supported well through the curriculum, with many opportunities for them to think about moral questions and reflect on spiritual issues, before discussing the results with their partner and sharing their thoughts with the whole class.

The school works closely with the neighbouring children's centre and secondary schools to ensure that the move from one phase of education to another is as smooth as possible. The breakfast club is proving popular both with pupils and their parents and carers. Together with incentives, such as prizes, it is helping to improve attendance and punctuality in particular. Punctuality to school in the mornings is now good, but other actions to promote attendance are not having the same positive impact.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

Morale among staff is high and they share the school's leaders' satisfactory drive for improvement. Checks on teaching paint a clear picture of where strengths and areas for improvement lie, so that staff know how to improve their lessons. Subsequent checks do not always ensure that the improvements have been put into place. The data on pupils' progress in the different year groups and subjects are analysed well to provide an accurate picture of overall achievement. This has not yet been developed to the point where the progress of groups is tracked carefully enough to provide pointers to the school's leaders as to where they need to target their checks on teaching. So, although there has been highly effective work on tackling discrimination, especially racist behaviour, variations between groups remain and equality is satisfactory. Members of the governing body pay close attention to ensuring the school's finances are well managed, but rely heavily on the headteacher for other information which limits the level of challenge they can provide. The governing body also pays close attention to safeguarding. All requirements are met and the school has very well trained staff, helped by the fact that the headteacher is herself a trainer for the highest level of competency. There are good lines of communication between the school and parents and carers. They are kept well-informed about their children's progress, and are helped to support their child's learning at home, especially through the scheme that allows them to use notebook computers.

The improvements in provision for community cohesion have gone hand in hand with those in pupils' cultural development. The school's leaders have carried out a thorough

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analysis of pupils' needs and met most of them very well, especially through the partnerships forged with other primary schools. The school has already initiated a link with a school in Kenya in order to boost its international impact.

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	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills, knowledge and understanding that are below the levels expected for their age. They make good progress, so that by the time they start Year 1 their attainment is at least average in all areas of learning. The staff work very well as a team across the two years, with staff moving between groups and children of different ages working together as appropriate to their stage of development. Good assessment procedures ensure that any additional needs that are slowing an individual child's progress are quickly identified so that effective support can be swiftly provided. Progress in creative development is not as good as other aspects, and has rightly been identified by the manager as a key area for improvement. Plans have been drawn up, and are already proving effective by providing more opportunities for drama and music. A good balance is maintained between activities led by the teachers and those initiated by the children themselves, although the outdoor area is not always used as well as the indoors to promote children's learning. This aspect has also been identified as an area for improvement, as the leaders and managers push towards outstanding provision.

Children are provided with a good level of care, in a safe and welcoming environment. The role of the key worker is very well developed, especially in providing a link with parents and carers so that a productive partnership is forged, helping parents and carers to support their child's learning at home.

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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

Relatively few parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. There were few comments, and no particular pattern to those made. The results were very positive and generally similar to the views of the inspectors. Inspectors found that pupils were soundly prepared for the future, when account is taken of their attendance.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Queen Victoria Primary 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 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 588 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	54	67	24	30	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	53	65	27	33	1	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	41	51	32	40	6	7	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	51	34	42	5	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	39	48	39	48	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	35	43	40	49	2	2	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	48	40	49	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)	43	53	31	38	4	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	48	36	44	3	4	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	36	44	34	42	3	4	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	33	41	37	46	2	2	4	5
The school is led and managed effectively	36	44	37	46	2	2	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	58	31	38	3	4	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.



15 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Queen Victoria Primary School, Sedgley, DY3 1JB

Many thanks for your welcome and all the help that you gave us when we visited your school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and manners, and especially by how much you know about other cultures. Your behaviour during the Remembrance Day service was exemplary, and showed off your outstanding ability to think deeply about important issues. Some of you do not come to school as often as you should. We have asked your school's leaders to keep a close eye on your attendance and take action as soon as they see that it is giving cause for concern. You can help too, by always coming to school whenever you are able.

We found that you are getting a satisfactory education. You told us that you particularly like the part that you play in deciding on topics. We agree. The changes made to the different subjects mean that you are learning more quickly, and especially about what life is like for people from cultures that are different from your own. Your teachers make sure that you are given work that is just right for you. Sometimes, some of you find it a bit too hard or finish quickly. We have asked them to check on your progress in lessons more often, so that they can give you any extra help you need or provide you with extra work to do. You usually concentrate hard and work well in lessons, but sometimes your concentration can wander if the introduction goes on for too long. We have asked your teachers to shorten the introduction, and you can help by always concentrating as hard as you can.

Your school is steadily improving. The school's leaders know how well you are doing, and what needs to change in order that you can make better progress. You now make better progress in your writing. We have suggested that they use the information that they have on the progress of different groups in the school to make sure that you all make consistently good progress and that the school can improve even more quickly.

Yours sincerely

David Driscoll

Lead inspector

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