

Cape Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103937
Local Authority	Sandwell
Inspection number	355493
Inspection dates	7–8 February 2011
Reporting inspector	Doris Bell

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	548
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ann Thomas
Headteacher	Richard Kentish
Date of previous school inspection	23 June 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They observed 20 lessons, sampled a further four, and saw 16 teachers teach. They also met with parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including teachers' planning, the school development plan, assessment, monitoring and evaluation records, records for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and safeguarding policies. Inspectors also analysed the responses to the 102 questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

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

- The progress of pupils currently in the school, to see if it is good enough and how effectively teaching is bringing about improvement.
- How effective the school leadership is in ensuring staff are clearly focused on raising standards in English and mathematics.
- Attendance and whether the school is doing everything possible to improve it.

Information about the school

This is a very large primary school with a high proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, many of whom are at the early stages of learning to speak English. Most of these pupils are of Pakistani heritage. The number on roll increases almost daily as the school moves from two- to three-form entry. The proportion of pupils who join or leave the school in different age groups is very high. Currently, there are three classes in each year group up to Year 3. There are two classes in each of Years 4, 5 and 6; the school has admitted a large proportion of new arrivals into these classes in the past two years. These new arrivals are a mix of pupils from other schools and pupils newly arrived in this country, including refugees and asylum seekers.

The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is high, and the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The school has Healthy Schools status, and has recently achieved the Artsmark, awards for extended schools work and for information and communication technology (ICT). It has its own breakfast and after-school clubs.

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

This is a satisfactory school. Children join the Nursery with very limited skills for their age, and a very large majority speak little or no English. They make good and sometimes excellent progress in learning to speak English, as do the large proportion of older pupils who join the school in different year groups. By Year 6, pupils who have been with the school from the start speak English fluently, and are beginning to have a good grasp of how the English language works.

Achievement is satisfactory, but attainment remains low. The upward trend in attainment in Year 2 in recent years is beginning to feed into Years 3 and 4, and pupils who remain with the school after Year 2 are producing a higher standard of work than in the past. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. The teaching of basic skills in English is good, and literacy work is marked well. However, opportunities for pupils to write at length, and their ability to solve problems in mathematics, are underdeveloped. Pupils in different classes proudly share and talk about their work and their targets, and about how responding to marking comments helps them to understand what they need to do to improve. Nevertheless, teachers do not always expect enough of pupils during lessons, particularly in Key Stage 2. Questioning is not always used effectively to probe pupils' understanding, and the needs of the most able pupils are not always met in class or in the different ability groups in English and mathematics.

Provision for pupils' personal development is an established strength throughout the school. It arises out of the good care, guidance and support provided, and is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes, their good behaviour and the good relationships they form with staff and with each other. Pupils understand, respect and accept each other's different faiths and cultures. They therefore play and learn in a racially harmonious environment where they feel safe and well cared for. They say that 'teachers care about us', and 'teach us discipline', and 'we have fun as well, as we learn'. Good partnerships with parents and carers, and with external agencies, ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils whose circumstances make them more vulnerable make progress in line with their classmates.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has worked effectively to improve the Early Years Foundation Stage, and provision is now good in that age group. The school's self-evaluation is broadly accurate, although it is overgenerous in some aspects, and planning lacks sharpness because it does not prioritise clearly enough what the school needs to do to make significant progress. Action planning focuses on activities related to improving teaching, rather than the impact the actions will have on learning. Nevertheless, leaders and managers are committed to raising attainment and accelerating achievement. Their actions are beginning to bear fruit, and the school demonstrates satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement.

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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.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise standards in writing and mathematics by:
 - giving pupils opportunities to write at length more often
 - improving pupils' ability to understand and solve mathematical problems.
- Increase the amount of good teaching, particularly in Key Stage 2, by:
 - ensuring that the most able pupils in every group are always provided with more challenging work in order to accelerate their progress
 - ensuring that questioning always probes pupils' understanding and extends their thinking.
- Sharpen school improvement planning by:
 - clarifying the overall priorities related to raising attainment and accelerating progress
 - ensuring that all success criteria are clear, measureable and focused on outcomes for pupils

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

In learning to write in different styles for different purposes, pupils are beginning to manipulate language to suit different audiences. Because key skills are taught well, punctuation, grammar and spelling become increasingly accurate, and handwriting is usually neat and legible. However, pupils do not do enough longer pieces of writing to practise and consolidate these basic literacy skills. They are not always able to sustain a topic throughout a piece of writing, and therefore, at times, leave the reader confused. In mathematics, while pupils make good progress in learning to calculate in different ways, their ability to solve mathematical problems is relatively limited. There is little evidence of mathematical problem solving in their books. The satisfactory progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities ensures that the gap between them and other pupils narrows by Year 6.

Pupils very much enjoy school and they speak highly of it. They say 'This school is great because it is not all work, work, work. You can have fun and you are not alone.' In lessons, they cooperate well with each other and with adults, responding quickly to instructions, ensuring that, in most lessons, little time is wasted. Pupils feel safe and secure in school. They report that bullying is not an issue and say staff are quick to respond to any concerns they may have. They speak confidently about how the school prepares them for the future by teaching them about the risks they face beyond the school gate. They are also aware of the potential dangers associated with the internet. Attendance is satisfactory. The school does everything possible to improve it. However, not all parents and carers cooperate by ensuring their children's regular attendance and punctuality, even when the school shows them how absences affect progress.

Pupils recognise why it is important to eat well and keep physically fit in order to be healthy. Large numbers participate in the good range of clubs that promote healthy

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lifestyles, including, for example, the 'Wake up, shake up' activities. Pupils readily take responsibility. They support the school in a number of ways, notably as school councillors, playground buddies, monitors and eco club members. They are reflective and caring, and they readily raise money for different charities at home and abroad. They successfully develop the skills they need to work cooperatively and independently. This, along with satisfactory progress in developing basic skills, ensures they are adequately prepared for the future.

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	4
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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?

The curriculum promotes pupils' personal development well. It ensures the sequential development of key skills in reading, writing and basic calculation. It also provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to use their ICT skills to support their work in different subjects. However, it does not include enough opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate more advanced writing skills by creating longer pieces of writing, or to solve mathematical problems.

Across the school, teachers know what they expect pupils to learn, and they explain tasks clearly. Consequently, pupils are confident about tackling their work, and strive to meet their teachers' expectations. Some lessons are particularly well taught, especially English. In these lessons, teachers know just when to intervene with well-focused support, and when to stand back and let pupils work things out for themselves. Additionally, pupils'

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learning needs are pinpointed accurately and addressed effectively to accelerate their progress. However, there is not enough good teaching, especially in Key Stage 2. Here, the pace of some lessons is pedestrian because teachers do not always expect enough of the pupils, and the most able pupils sometimes mark time because their work is too easy. Teachers provide good feedback in their marking and pupils are appropriately involved in judging their own progress towards their targets. This supports their learning well. However, assessment information is not always used effectively to ensure that tasks consistently match the needs of pupils of different capabilities, or to adjust learning during lessons to suit pupils' changing needs.

The support for new arrivals is good in all age groups, as are transition arrangements as pupils move from one phase of education to the next. This helps pupils feel safe and confident at every stage. The 'language immersion' approach for pupils who join speaking little or no English enables them to settle quickly and make good progress in learning to speak English. A good range of intervention targets, the impact of which is tracked well, ensure that the least able pupils acquire basic literacy and numeracy skills, and become more independent in their learning. Parents and carers praise the school for the good care, support and guidance the school provides for them and their children, including in the breakfast and after-school clubs, which a small number of pupils attend.

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?

Leaders and managers embed ambition and drive improvement satisfactorily, and all staff share the headteacher's vision to help pupils do better. Senior and middle managers regularly check teaching and learning. Through this they have, for example, improved marking, assessment and target setting procedures, and focused the whole school on ensuring that pupils develop language skills that will enable them to access learning in all subjects. All of this is improving pupils' progress, but not rapidly enough. This is partly because the school's population changes almost daily, but is also because of the lack of clarity in overall school priorities.

The governing body operates satisfactorily. It supports the school well but relies heavily on the headteacher for information and does not hold the school to account well enough for its outcomes. It ensures that safeguarding requirements, including those for child protection, follow recommended good practice, enabling staff and pupils to work in a safe, secure environment. The procedures for ensuring the safety and welfare of pupils whose circumstances make them vulnerable are particularly good.

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The school does much to eliminate discrimination of any sort, but does not fully ensure that the needs of all groups of pupils are met equally well. The school understands its own context, and that of the community it serves, really well. Pupils have a good awareness of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds in the United Kingdom and abroad. This is successfully fostered through its developing links with different types of schools, and visits to different places of worship in this country. It is also developed by celebrating pupils' own backgrounds, and in the developing links with schools in Africa. The school successfully promotes racial harmony within the school and it reaches out to parents and carers, to try to foster the same levels of respect in the wider community.

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	2
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

Effective leadership and management, based on a good understanding of how young children learn, result in children learning and developing well despite their exceptionally low starting points. Good induction procedures ensure they settle quickly into school routines. Comprehensive assessment procedures ensure children's progress is tracked well, and swift action is taken to provide additional support where necessary. Adults are well deployed and generally provide good support for children, focusing particularly on developing early language skills. Children mostly share resources amicably as they learn to share and take turns, and to respect the needs of others. However, they rarely sustain conversations with each other. Staff are skilled at encouraging them to try to do this, providing them with exciting, stimulating activities such as taking objects that make sounds out of a 'feely' bag, describing them and trying to mimic the sounds they make.

Activities are planned well, and there is a good balance between those led by an adult and those children can choose for themselves. This successfully helps children to develop confident in their own abilities. Occasionally, adults miss opportunities to intervene to

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move learning on when pupils are engaged in self-chosen tasks. Overall, children are taught well and stay-and-play sessions forge good links with parents and carers, and encourage them to help their children learn. Much is in place to develop early reading, writing and calculating skills, including, for example, through dance, which the children enjoy. Due to the nature of the building, Reception children do not have ready access to outdoor learning, but the school plans this into their work on a daily basis. Outdoor activities are not always as stimulating as indoor activities, and do not always present the children with the same good level of challenge.

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

The response to the inspection questionnaires was lower than in most schools. Most parents and carers who did respond, and all of those to whom inspectors spoke during the inspection, hold the school in high regard. They say that the school works effectively with them to foster their children's learning, that staff are 'very approachable', and their children are happy at school. This mirrors inspection findings. A small number of individual questionnaire responses raised concerns about pupils' progress. Inspectors found progress to be satisfactory overall.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Cape 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 102 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 548 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	56	42	41	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	57	56	41	40	3	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	54	53	43	42	5	5	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	49	48	44	43	7	7	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	61	60	39	38	2	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	47	46	48	47	4	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	53	45	44	1	1	1	1
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)	48	47	42	41	5	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	51	50	44	43	6	6	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	46	48	47	2	2	2	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	43	49	48	4	4	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	53	52	46	45	1	1	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	55	54	45	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



9 February 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Cape Primary School, Smethwick B66 4SH

Thank you for welcoming us so warmly to your school, and for showing us your work and talking to us about it. You told us that you enjoy school. We could see that from the way you all work together, care for and help each other. You behave well and try to do your best in lessons. It is clear that you really want to do well, because you listen to your teachers, read what they tell you that you need to do to improve your work, and then do your corrections. Keep this up and you will get better and better.

We found that yours is a satisfactory school. This is because, although the adults at your school care for you very much and want you to do well, there are some things they all need to do to help you make faster progress. We have therefore asked your school to:

- give you opportunities to write at length more often, and help you to understand better how to solve mathematical problems
- ensure your teachers give each one of you hard enough work to do in lessons, and encourage you to answer questions fully, so that they can build on what you already know
- ensure that those who lead and manage the school prioritise what needs to be done to help you make faster progress, and set out clearly how they will measure that this is happening.

We hope you will enjoy learning for the rest of your lives as much as you do now, and wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Doris Bell

Lead inspector

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