

Regents Park Community Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103193
Local Authority	Birmingham
Inspection number	376842
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Miranda Perry

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	511
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Powell
Headteacher	Tina Ireland
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2006
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors, who saw 25 lessons and 20 teachers. Meetings were held with representatives of the governing body and groups of pupils and staff. The inspection team observed the school's work, and looked at progress data, assessment information, improvement plans, monitoring reports, safeguarding procedures and pupils' work. Inspectors received and analysed 62 questionnaires from parents and carers, 100 from pupils, and 19 from staff.

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

- What is the school doing to encourage good attendance, and is it working?
- To what degree has the children's progress in Reception improved since the last inspection?
- What contribution do pupils' behaviour and the extent to which they feel safe make to their learning and progress?

Information about the school

The school is above average in size for a primary school. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups and who speak English as an additional language is high. The school has a below average proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The Early Years Foundation Stage consists of two Nursery and three Reception classes. The school has been awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark, Healthy Schools status, ArtsMark Silver, the Leading Parent Partnership Award, the ActiveMark and the Full International Award.

The school is in the process of increasing its capacity from two- to three-form entry and is currently undergoing extensions to the building to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

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?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

Regents Park Community School is an outstanding school. The headteacher's single-minded pursuit of the best outcomes for every child has resulted in pupils making outstanding progress. In an inspiring culture where teachers, parents and carers and the governing body are committed to learning, pupils are enthusiastic, dedicated and ambitious learners. School self-evaluation is based on fastidious analysis of pupils' performance, and its consistent reference to challenging targets has been effective in raising pupils' attainment above national averages. Improvement in the pupils' basic skills has been exceptional because strategies to remove obstacles to achievement in literacy and numeracy have been highly successful. These strengths demonstrate the school's excellent capacity for sustained improvement.

Children get off to an excellent start in the Nursery and Reception. Their learning needs are rapidly identified and teaching is focused particularly well on the gaps in their English language development. Focused support is very effective when children learn individually or in adult-led small group work. By Year 6, pupils work independently and confidently in the classroom, and some develop sophisticated and high-level numeracy and literacy skills. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning, and are excited and enthusiastic about finding out new things. One tellingly said, 'I love being a good learning role model.'

Achievement for all groups of pupils is outstanding, because equality of opportunity is reflected in everything the school does. Pupils from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language do so well because the school structures teaching to capitalise on pupils' bilingual skills, using bilingual learning partners in lessons. It is extremely successful in accurately diagnosing and removing the obstacles to pupils' progress and providing effective individualised support programmes, so that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities keep up with their classmates. Pupils benefit from the first-rate subject knowledge of their teachers and teaching assistants. Just occasionally when pupils work in small groups without adult support, they are not clear about what to do to be successful. As a result, progress is good rather than outstanding at these times.

Outstanding care, guidance, support and a first-rate curriculum fully meet pupils' individual needs, particularly because pupils are involved in devising their own curriculum. Pupils thoroughly enjoy school, and their thoughtful and mature behaviour and strong sense of security make a strong contribution to their successful learning in lessons. They are consequently very proud of their school community,

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and they go out of their way to be respectful and polite. Pupils take the importance of good attendance and punctuality very seriously. As a result, attendance has improved. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires agreed that the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle. Pupils are very reflective about the choices they make and the world around them.

The governing body knows the school well and is determined to challenge weaknesses and contribute to the drive for improvement. It ensures that the school adopts good safeguarding practices, and all pupils who completed a questionnaire or who spoke to inspectors said that they felt extremely safe. However, the governing body is not yet checking regularly enough that all written and recorded procedures and policies reflect the school's outstanding practice.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Monitor pupils' learning more closely when they work independently in groups, to ensure that the task always matches learners' needs.
- Ensure the governing body monitors written policies and procedures more regularly so that they accurately reflect the quality of practice in the school.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**1**

Children enter the Nursery with knowledge, skills and abilities well below national expectations for their age and, due to outstanding progress, leave Year 6 with attainment that is above national averages in English and mathematics. Girls and boys and pupils from all ethnic groups make equally excellent progress. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is tracked constantly, enabling the school to intervene as soon as any pupils' progress falls behind. Pupils have made significant gains in writing because of the successful focus on eliminating gaps in their basic skills. For example, Year 6 pupils have improved the accuracy of the punctuation in their extended writing, because of targeted teaching. Clear lesson objectives and targets that are understood by the pupils result in rapid progress in class, and the introduction of a 'Numeracy Passport' strategy has improved pupils' calculation skills. As attainment improves, the number of higher-ability pupils maximising their potential is increasing.

Pupils attain particularly well in lessons when they are working in groups with challenging tasks and high-level support from teachers and teaching assistants. For example, in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils learning English as an additional language were able to acquire the complex vocabulary needed to describe a plant's life cycle, as a result of their teaching assistant's well-focused interventions. Pupils working in groups independently occasionally make slower progress when planning is imprecise.

The pupils take responsibility for their own safety and that of others. A Year 5 pupil said, 'This is where we all learn, my mum and dad, brothers and sisters, what safe

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is.’ Year 6 peer mediators have a sophisticated understanding of what constitutes good behaviour, and their success is part of the reason why pupils get on so well with each other. The school prioritises the development of pupils as citizens in both a local community and a global economy, and gives them many opportunities to explore the lives of people similar and dissimilar to themselves. Pupils develop an emotional intelligence which enables them to consider how the way they think, feel, listen and communicate has an impact on those around them. For example, the school trains the Year 6 peer mediators to appreciate that their own thought processes influence how fair they are to their peers.

The school works with the pupils’ families to prepare them for life beyond the school. Sessions on numeracy support parents and carers in understanding the future their children face. Pupils rise to the challenge of being given additional responsibilities. Every class has an ambassador who takes the responsibility of welcoming any guests and explaining the learning taking place. The school’s inter-class attendance competition has improved pupils’ attendance. The school council has links with a local bank, and the council’s handbooks reflect high expectations of the pupils as team players and effective democratic representatives.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

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

How effective is the provision?

The demanding pace of lessons and teachers’ high expectations keep pupils fully engaged in their learning. Very good use of resources means that pupils are excited to learn and eager to participate. For example, in a Year 3 numeracy lesson, when

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

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told they were visiting the numeracy shop, one pupil said delightedly, ‘I can’t wait to go’. Highly focused questioning enables pupils to develop their ideas independently. When challenged about his sentence construction, a Year 6 pupil was not satisfied until he had a sentence with at least three unusual, exciting words in it. Pupils typically respond very well to clear instructions and lessons which are thoroughly planned to meet their needs, and enable them to catch up quickly if they slip behind. Highly constructive relationships with teachers and teaching assistants mean that pupils strive to achieve the best they can. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, for example, all pupils had their hands up to answer the questions because they wanted to show their teacher how much they knew.

Assessment is used to inform lesson planning so that gaps in learning are addressed. Pupils understand what and why they are learning, and how to do better. They are given many opportunities to reflect on their progress and consider the next steps they need to take in order to improve. By reflecting on the quality of their writing so far, Year 5 pupils creating an advertisement for a visit abroad were able to grasp how emotive language can effectively persuade.

Pupils reap substantial benefits from links with schools locally, nationally and globally. They get to experience learning in a variety of stimulating environments. For example, pupils are currently working on completing their outdoor amphitheatre. A wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities are on offer, and no opportunity for learning is lost. At break after lunch, there is a convivial atmosphere when pupils sit down and play board games with staff and each other.

The school works closely and highly effectively with outside specialists to target support to meet pupils’ specific needs. Using a system of partnership books, the school works with parents and carers to guide pupils smoothly through transition periods, from home visits for all Nursery children and those who join the school after the beginning of the year, to preparation for their next class and secondary school.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The school’s leaders and managers have created an ethos where all staff are passionate about improving pupils’ basic skills, progress and attainment. As a result, staff expectations of themselves as professionals are just as high as their expectations of pupils as learners. Every member of the school community knows

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they are expected to be a role model for best practice. Through their monitoring of teaching and learning, the senior management team are rigorous in their pursuit of excellent provision. The school’s performance management programme ensures that all teachers provide lessons that are at least good, year on year.

The school’s expectations of parents and carers are equally high. In the mornings, parents and carers are welcome into the school to drop off their children and to stay for the start of the day’s activities. This practice results in parents and carers working very closely with the school to support their children’s learning and helping them attain higher levels. After a Year 4 assembly a large majority of parents and carers from diverse backgrounds stayed to socialise with each other and staff, indicating the school’s fundamental commitment to developing a highly cohesive community. Equality of opportunity underpins everything the school does, from the positive promotion of football for both boys and girls to the pursuit of excellent outcomes for each individual pupil. The governing body is responsive to the views of pupils and their parents and carers, and ensures that all safeguarding regulations and duties are satisfied. Site safety is particularly well managed. They do not check with as much rigour that policies and procedures are regularly reviewed in the light of evolving practice.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

Early Years Foundation Stage

There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection. Excellent teaching and leadership and management result in children making outstanding progress. By the end of the Reception year, children exceed average levels in personal, social and emotional development. In their communication and physical development and in their knowledge of letters and the sounds, they make

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particularly rapid progress. Children behave extremely well, clearly enjoy their learning and are equally engaged in both adult-led activities and those they choose themselves. They are eager to start their day, and relish the warm welcome they receive. Lesson planning that is based on highly focused assessment means that children get involved in tasks that inspire and challenge them. For example, in Year 1, children were motivated to write effective group sentences about the character of Simba because they liked the story so much and wanted to share what they had written. Children are given an exciting range of opportunities for imaginative and creative play both indoors and outside; they can, for example, build dens in the 'Forest School', explore the texture of clay, and investigate tyre prints after rolling them in paint.

Children are confident to ask for help and have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Independently, they choose healthy snacks, and wash their hands because they know why this is important. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported extremely well and included in activities so they make the same amount of progress as their peers. Pupils benefit from the expertise of staff, who use a range of strategies to engage them and help them develop English speaking skills quickly. For example, during a small group story session, pupils learning English as an additional language delighted in acting out the farm animals in order to gain a thorough understanding of the narrative.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of parents and carers who returned questionnaires was well below average for a primary school, but those who did respond were extremely pleased with the school. No concerns were raised. The overwhelming majority think that the school keeps their children safe and helps them to lead healthy lifestyles, that teaching is good, and that behaviour is dealt with effectively. Their views were confirmed by inspectors' judgements.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Regents Park Community 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 62 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 511 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	45	73	14	23	2	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	43	69	16	26	2	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	34	55	24	39	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	55	27	44	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	35	56	25	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	36	58	24	39	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	34	55	28	45	0	0	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)	27	44	29	47	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	28	45	33	53	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	30	48	29	47	1	2	2	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	32	34	55	3	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	28	45	30	48	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	41	66	21	34	0	0	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	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

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 2010 to 8 April 2011 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 2010/11 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.



14 November 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Regents Park Community Primary School, Birmingham, B10 0NJ

Thank you for your warm welcome when we visited your school recently. Thank you to all of you who told us so much about your school. All of those who answered our questionnaires and spoke to us said that they enjoy school.

The school is outstanding. The headteacher and all of the staff work very hard to make it an excellent place to learn. We were impressed by your behaviour and good manners and were delighted to be welcomed to lessons by your class ambassadors. You approach your learning with energy and enthusiasm and you are always excited and eager to find out about new things.

You appreciate that the school is preparing you to be leading members of your local and global community and take the responsibility of role modelling to your friends and family extremely seriously. Those of you who take on responsibilities, such as being peer mediators, carry out these roles extremely well. You make outstanding progress in developing your literacy and numeracy skills, and know all about how to look after each other and stay safe.

There are two things we have asked the school to improve.

- The governing body must check that written policies are regularly reviewed as the school develops.
- The teachers should make sure that you can do the tasks that they ask you to do when you work on your own in groups, so that you make the same excellent progress as when teachers and teacher assistants help you.

You can all help by letting your teachers know if tasks are too easy or too hard. Thank you again for your welcome.

Yours sincerely

Miranda Perry
Lead inspector

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