

# Conway Primary School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	103202
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	376845
<b>Inspection dates</b>	14–15 June 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Georgina Beasley

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Roger King
<b>Headteacher</b>	Pat Smart (Federation Headteacher)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2010
<b>School address</b>	Conway Road Sparkbrook Birmingham B11 1NS
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<b>Age group</b>	3-11
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## Introduction

Inspection team

Georgina Beasley

Additional Inspector

Richard Boswell

Additional Inspector

Jillian Smith

Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 28 lessons taught by 21 teachers. They held meetings with groups of pupils, staff and representatives of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at school self-evaluation and improvement plans, safeguarding arrangements, monitoring reports, pupils' work and assessment information. Inspectors received and analysed 72 questionnaires from parents and carers, 90 from pupils and 54 from staff.

## Information about the school

The overwhelming majority of pupils who attend this larger-than-average primary school are from minority ethnic backgrounds, mostly Pakistani and Bangladeshi. Nearly all speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is higher than the national average. There is an above average proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs although the proportion at school action plus and with a statement is broadly average. Children start in the Nursery in the September following their third birthday and transfer to the Reception class in the following September. The school meets the government minimum floor standards.

The school is federated with a neighbouring primary school with which it shares a headteacher and governing body. It has Healthy Schools status. A free breakfast club operates onsite every day. It is managed by the school.

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>2</b>

## Key findings

- Conway Primary is a good school. Pupils make consistently good progress from their starting points across the school because teaching is good. The school is not outstanding because achievement and teaching are not yet consistently outstanding. Teachers do not always use assessment information to adjust tasks during lessons when pupils find them too easy or too difficult. Pupils know their learning targets but are not always clear about what they precisely need to do to reach them without the support from teachers. Pupils’ reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects are not always as good as in English and mathematics lessons.
- Achievement is good. Attainment is average across the school this year. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make good progress to reach and sometimes exceed expected levels of attainment.
- Teaching is good. Sometimes it is outstanding. Lessons are matched well to pupils’ interests, abilities and learning needs. Consequently, pupils’ engagement is good. Teachers and teaching assistants support pupils well using questions effectively to guide them through tasks rather than telling them what to do.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Pupils feel safe in school and know what to do if they have a concern. Pupils’ positive attitudes and eagerness to do well make a strong contribution to good learning.
- Leadership and management are good. The excellent leadership from the headteacher motivates the relentless drive for improvement. Pupils, staff, parents and members of the governing body are fully involved in strategic planning. Performance is managed well. Targeted training and support has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching and the school’s leadership. Capacity to improve is outstanding. A comprehensive and accurate evaluation of pupils’ achievement and systematic improvement planning has resulted in rapid and strong improvement across the school’s work.

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

- Develop pupils’ use and application of reading, writing and mathematics skills in all subjects across the curriculum.
- Increase pupils’ independence in improving their own learning.
- Ensure teachers consistently using assessment information during lessons to adapt and reshape tasks that are found to be too easy or too difficult.

## **Main report**

### **Achievement of pupils**

Pupils enjoy learning. They collaborate well on group tasks especially those of a practical nature. For example, Year 6 pupils worked closely together to carry out an investigation into the effects of gravity on the distance travelled by a toy car. Pupils have good communication skills. They work closely together to plan their strategies. They recall and discuss earlier learning to identify the purpose of new tasks and activities. Pupils created a radio advert for Ladypool Road using key steps to consider carefully their audience when using voice projection, humour, rhetorical questions and slogans to attract the attention of the listener. The inspection endorses the view of parents that pupils make good progress and that the school meets their needs well. Good progress and learning in lessons has helped pupils to catch up a legacy of underachievement.

Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception from their below average starting points to reach the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception Year. Children settle quickly into Nursery and soon build their confidence to try new activities. Children in Nursery and Reception are industrious throughout all sessions because activities are relevant and resources plentiful. Many choose to learn outdoors, an environment that reflects fully the indoor classroom. Pupils continue to make good progress throughout the rest of the school because learning in lessons is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils have secure reading skills that help them to blend sounds together to work out unfamiliar words. As their English speaking skills improve, so does pupils' comprehension which prepares them well for learning in Year 3.

Pupils from Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds do better than their peers nationally. Those who speak English as an additional language talk about their learning confidently. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs participate fully in all lessons and make equally good progress as their classmates. Pupils use and application of reading, writing and mathematics skills in other subjects varies across the school.

### **Quality of teaching**

Teaching is good overall and in some lessons it is outstanding. This judgement endorses the view of parents who feel that teaching is good, and pupils who say that they learn a lot in lessons. Pupils' engagement is high because teachers think of varied and interesting ways to present learning. Teachers have high expectations for pupils' achievement. For example, in a Year 6 English lesson for the middle-ability targeted teaching group, the teacher used a level 5 text to introduce learning. Assessments are thorough. Learning journals for children in Nursery and Reception are comprehensive and support teachers' planning for further learning extremely well. Teachers across the school use assessment information consistently well to plan specific learning in targeted teaching groups, including for disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and to structure lessons systematically on pupils'

previous learning. Teachers' and teaching assistants' use of assessment to check pupils' learning during lessons is good and guides subsequent support well. They do not always make tasks easier or more difficult when they note that pupils can already do or are having difficulty completing work.

Teachers follow an agreed structure for all lessons. Lesson objectives focus clearly on what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers set out clearly the skills pupils will use and the steps they need to take to complete tasks. The steps give pupils clear guidance on how to check their work independently. Teachers' marking also gives clear guidance to pupils about how to improve and move learning forward. 'Thanks Miss. I did not get it. Now I get it,' was one pupil's comment. The quality of subsequent 'gap tasks' set for pupils to complete at the start of following lessons vary and are not always sufficiently individualised. Teachers ensure that pupils know their levels, how many points progress they have made and the level to which they are aiming, but pupils cannot always explain what they precisely need to do to reach their next target.

Teachers develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Pupils have numerous opportunities to learn in pairs and groups, to assess their own and each others' work and to complete activities that encourage them to consider others' feelings such as acting out and describing how characters feel in a story and the reasons why. Teachers still tend to plan and direct most activities for pupils to complete and restrict their ability to develop independent learning skills.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Pupils have high aspirations for their futures. Their determination to do well is reflected in good and sometimes outstanding behaviour in lessons. 'We are going to be the best Year 6 for 16 years,' pupils told inspectors. Learning mentors run the morning breakfast club ensuring those pupils who attend get off to a positive start to the day. They support individual pupils with particular learning needs well in lessons to help them concentrate and stay on task. Conduct around the school is good. Pupils are respectful and polite to each other, staff and visitors. Pupils have a strong voice in the school's ongoing development. The playground is small and so pupils like having separate playtimes because 'it gives us more space to play'. They recognise that most of the space is taken up by football at playtimes and so discussions in school council meetings focus on how to 'zone the playground' and extend activities to meet pupils' wider interests.

The inspection endorses the view of the overwhelming majority of pupils and parents who returned a questionnaire and who said that behaviour is good and pupils feel safe. Pupils are clear about what to do in an emergency because of the numerous and regular fire practices they have. Pupils are encouraged to think about how to keep themselves safe through requests such as, 'please do a risk assessment on your chair' and questions like, 'why do we hold onto the banister with one hand?' Incidents of bullying and racist comments are rare and when they do occur they are dealt with speedily and effectively. One pupil commented that a few years ago she did not feel safe but that now that behaviour has improved and the bullying stopped she looks forward to coming to school. This reflects the significant improvement in

pupils’ behaviour and attitudes to school over the last two years.

Attendance is improving and is broadly average. The attendance of pupils in Key Stage 2 is above average. The large majority of pupils arrive on time, ready to start learning.

### Leadership and management

Excellent leadership from the federation headteacher has gained a strong commitment from staff, pupils, governors and parents to pursue extremely high expectations for pupils’ achievement and personal development. The school has made comprehensive and systematic improvements and strategies have been concerted and highly successful. The federation governing body is clear about its role and focuses strongly on meeting the needs of the community in order to ensure the school sustains its own identity within the federation of two schools. Through regularly held and systematic meetings, it monitors outcomes closely and makes decisions based on firm evidence of the school’s performance. The school no longer has a deficit budget due to their careful management and good strategic planning. Phase and assistant phase leaders lead learning and teaching well, placing a strong focus on holding themselves and teachers to account for every pupil’s learning and progress in all subjects in their year groups and phases.

The promotion of equal opportunities and the procedures for the prevention of discrimination are good. Staff hold regular progress meetings and take immediate action when individual pupil’s progress is seen to slip. Subsequent interventions are effective to get pupils quickly back on track. The school tracks the progress of individuals closely but also looks at how well different groups are performing to see if any adjustments are required to the curriculum or teaching. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and arrangements are monitored rigorously by staff and the governing body. The close working partnerships with health, social care and educational specialists give families, whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, well-coordinated support.

A varied range of clubs, special days, events and topics enrich the school’s good curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils’ learning and good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Weekly faith assemblies build on pupils’ knowledge and understanding of their own beliefs as well as those of others. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in Friday prayers every week. They are fully involved in planning celebrations such as the recent Royal Jubilee and in raising money for charities close to the school’s heart such as research into liver disease.

## 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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.



## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**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.**



18 June 2012

Dear Pupils

### **Inspection of Conway Primary School, Birmingham, B11 1NS**

I am writing to let you know the outcome of your school's recent inspection and the reasons for our decision. Thank you for making us so welcome, for being so polite and for telling us so much about your school. You told us that your school has improved a lot and we agree with you.

Conway Primary is a good school. You learn well and make good progress in lessons because you work hard and teaching is good. We were impressed with how well you helped assess each others' work and made suggestions for how to make improvements. You told us that you feel safe for most of the time and that behaviour is good. We agree with you. It was good to see that there is little bullying and racist incidents but also that you are confident to tell someone if you have a concern. You are increasingly involved in deciding what your school needs to improve next. We wish you well with your plans for the playground.

We have asked your school to improve three things. We have asked your teachers:

- to make sure that your reading, writing and mathematics skills are to the same good standard in all subjects as they are in English and mathematics lessons
- to give you more opportunity to plan and improve your work independently
- to check more regularly during lessons whether tasks are too easy or too difficult and then to make changes if they find this to be the case.

You can help by making sure that you always do your best work in all subjects, telling your teachers when you find the work too easy or too difficult, and planning and thinking for yourselves how you can improve your learning.

We hope you continue to enjoy school as much as you do now.

Yours sincerely

Georgina Beasley  
Lead inspector

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