



Audley Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 134066
LEA Birmingham

Inspection number 274792
Inspection dates 20 - 21 June 2005
Reporting inspector Mike Capper

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Primary	School address	Audley Road
School category	Community		Stechford
Age range of pupils	3 - 11		Birmingham
			B33 9HY
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	(0121) 4643 139
Number on roll	654	Fax number	(0121) 4649 215
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	David Emery
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Neil Baker

Age group	Published	Reference no.
3 - 11	July 2005	274792

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Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of Audley Primary School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a very large primary school situated in an area of high social deprivation in Birmingham. The number claiming free school meals is well above average, as is the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Although the majority of pupils are white, the number from minority ethnic heritages is increasing, with more beginners in speaking English joining the school during the current school year than in the past. The most common languages spoken by these pupils are Somali and Urdu. Attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below average. The school opened in 2003 following an amalgamation of an infant and junior school that shared the same site, and this is the school's first inspection.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

This is a satisfactory school that provides sound value for money. Inspectors agree with the school's view on its overall effectiveness. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but the quality is not consistent across the school. Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is satisfactory. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, given their low starting points, but good progress in mathematics. Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school because members of staff are particularly good at helping them to feel secure and valued. Pupils from different backgrounds are well integrated socially although the support given to those in the early stages of acquiring English is not always successful in meeting their needs. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have a good understanding of what needs improving and they are moving the school in the right direction. Although they do not yet make enough use of assessment data to help set targets, Year 6 test results are steadily improving and the school has the capacity to improve further.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue to raise standards, especially the literacy skills of younger pupils, and improve the overall effectiveness of teaching.
- Make better use of assessment information to improve pupils' progress.
- Improve provision for pupils in the early stages of learning English.

Achievement and standards

Children start school with very weak basic skills. Although they make good progress in mathematics, their overall progress is satisfactory. The Year 6 test results in mathematics were particularly low in 2004, but the school reacted to this with a successful focus on improving standards in numeracy. Similar initiatives have started to improve writing skills in Years 2 to 6, but these are relatively new and have not yet had a significant impact on raising overall standards. The low level of pupils' literacy skills, especially those of younger pupils, remains an underlying problem that is holding back their progress in all subjects.

The school knows that standards could be higher. They are much lower than usual by the end of the Reception Year, and remain well below average overall in English and science when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. Standards in mathematics in the current Year 6 are below average - a marked improvement on the low standards in that subject when pupils joined the school. In particular, pupils are becoming more skilful at solving problems and explaining what they have done. There are other positive indications of rising

standards. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science in Year 6; test results in these subjects at the end of Year 6 are steadily improving and, overall, are now close to average when compared with similar schools nationally. In the rest of the school, whilst most pupils are now making at least satisfactory progress in lessons, the targets set by teachers for individual pupils are not always challenging enough to compensate for previous gaps in their learning and thus make progress good.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. Those who have English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress overall. The increasing numbers of pupils at the early stages of acquiring English make good progress when they are working in a group with a teaching assistant, but their progress is too slow when they are working unsupported in class.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

The school successfully promotes pupils' personal development and well-being. This means that personal and social skills improve significantly as pupils get older. By Year 6, pupils are confident and eager learners and they take pride in their work and the school. A recent visitor to school rightly identified the school as an '*oasis of calm*' and, throughout the school, pupils generally behave well. They are polite and courteous and work hard in lessons, even when teaching lacks challenge. Relationships are harmonious. Bullying and racism are rare and pupils agree that when they do occur, they are dealt with very quickly.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Pupils learn to consider the needs of others by raising funds for different local charities. An active school council makes a positive contribution to school life and their suggestions have led to improvements in outdoor facilities. Pupils are taught the importance of healthy lifestyles and they learn what they need to do to stay safe. For example, a well considered 'travel plan' is helping to ensure that pupils come to school safely. Pupils choose and sell healthy snacks at playtime and they understand how healthy food and exercise will help them to concentrate and improve their learning. Older pupils have recently worked with a local business to help clean up the local environment by removing graffiti and picking up rubbish, and this has helped pupils to understand their responsibilities as citizens.

Attendance is lower than the national average, but is slowly improving. The school is doing all it can to ensure that absences are quickly followed up and has rightly focused, through the learning mentor, on improving the attendance rates of a small group of pupils who are frequently absent. This has been

successful, and these pupils and their parents are beginning to understand the importance of coming to school.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall there is much good teaching and some is outstanding. However, the quality varies too much. Discussions with senior managers and a scrutiny of their own monitoring of teaching confirm that there is a good understanding of where improvement is needed. Recent initiatives such as moving teachers around into different year groups are beginning to have a good impact on teaching as they allow less experienced teachers to learn from the good practice of the best.

Outstanding teaching in Year 6 helps pupils to progress very well in their last year in the school. The very high expectations of teachers and the very good pace to learning means that time is rarely wasted and pupils are expected to try hard at all times.

In mathematics, pupils of similar abilities are taught together. This helps them to achieve well because teachers successfully meet the differing needs of pupils. In contrast, in other subjects, teachers' expectations are not always high enough and work is not consistently matched closely to need. Consequently, there are occasions when some pupils learn too slowly.

Teachers are highly skilled in helping pupils to behave well. Potentially challenging pupils are managed successfully so that they can be fully included in lessons. Throughout the school, relationships between adults and pupils are good. This means that pupils enjoy school and are keen to do their best.

Well-trained teaching assistants give good support when they are working with groups of pupils with English as an additional language or those with learning difficulties, and at these times, progress is good. However, some classes have recently admitted a high number of pupils who are beginning to learn English, and although these pupils are well integrated socially, teachers need more training to help them to meet their needs successfully.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum mainly meets the needs and interests of learners, although it does not sufficiently reflect the increasingly diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds of pupils. There is a strong emphasis on personal development

and this is effective, but there are missed opportunities for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills in all subjects across the curriculum. This holds back the pace at which basic skills can improve. The school provides a good range of visits and visitors, and other activities such as a 'mathematics week' also enrich the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 spoke very positively about what they had been taught on a recent visit to an outdoor centre in Oxfordshire and, in particular, about their studies of different habitats. There are a good number of clubs for pupils in Years 5 and 6, including some which are planned specifically to provide additional challenge for pupils who have been identified as being particularly able. These clubs have a good impact on learning, for example by helping to extend pupils' thinking skills.

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well cared for and there are good procedures for health and safety. Consequently, pupils are able to work safely and most are very happy to come to school. All members of staff know the pupils well and social development is very thoroughly monitored and is supported sensitively. The learning mentor plays a key role in providing very good support for pupils who find school difficult and she is always available to resolve problems quickly. Child protection procedures are robust and pupils who are at risk, for whatever reason, are quickly identified and supported. The school works very successfully with outside agencies to help these pupils.

A very well attended breakfast club, at no cost to parents, gives a good start to the day for many pupils and improves attendance and punctuality. There are good procedures for helping pupils who join the school during the academic year. As a result, new arrivals, including those who have limited spoken English, settle quickly and grow in confidence.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

The school judges leadership and management to be good. However the inspection team judges it to be satisfactory because whilst senior staff have been successful in raising standards for the oldest pupils, further work needs to be undertaken to raise standards for younger pupils.

Over the last two years, the amalgamation of the school has been very well managed by the headteacher and governors, so that the school is now successfully working as one community, even though there are still two separate buildings.

The school's self-evaluation realistically and accurately identifies the key areas for improvement. Parents and pupils are suitably involved in the process, and hold the school in high regard. There is a strong commitment to raising standards and a shared sense of purpose. Senior managers have already demonstrated that they can respond successfully to weaknesses and improve attainment by the way that they have addressed concerns about mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Similarly, although it is a recent initiative, a project designed to develop writing is beginning to improve skills, especially for older pupils.

The monitoring of teaching is thorough and is helping to improve learning but there is more to do to iron out inconsistencies. The school collects a wealth of data on pupils' standards and progress, but this is not yet used well enough to set targets, monitor the progress of different groups and identify key priorities for improvement. As a result, the school does not always respond to weaknesses quickly enough.

Grade: 3

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INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</i>	School Overall
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OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	N/A

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	3
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	4
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily.	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise.	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse.	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health.	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements.	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place.	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism.	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them.	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships.	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them.	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills.	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams.	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in Key Stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form.	N/A
Education for all learners aged 14-19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy.	N/A

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Audley Primary School
Audley Road
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22 June 2005

Dear Children

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for being so polite and friendly.

What we liked most about your school:

- We are very pleased that you enjoy school, behave well and work hard in lessons.
- The school council is very well organised and we liked the way that the councillors have helped to improve the playground.
- We are pleased that the school teaches you about the importance of staying safe and healthy.
- There are some good teachers in the school, especially in Year 6.
- We think that your teachers look after you well and make school fun.
- The headteacher, other teachers and governors know what to do to make your school even better.
- Your parents and carers are pleased that you come to this school.

What we have asked your school to do now:

- We have asked the teachers to help you to learn even more quickly, especially in reading and writing for the youngest pupils, and to use all the things that they know about you to make sure that the work that you are given is not too easy or too hard.
- We have asked the school to think about how they can give even more help to children who are learning how to speak English.

We thoroughly enjoyed talking to you about your work and watching you learn, we wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Mr Capper, Mrs Cartlidge and Mrs Moore
The Inspection Team