



Hall Green Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103210
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276871
Inspection dates 8 March 2006 to 9 March 2006
Reporting inspector Paul Edwards AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Petersfield Road
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	3 to 7		West Midlands B28 0AR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4643082
Number on roll	321	Fax number	0121 4643083
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	11 September 2000	Headteacher	Mrs J Lates

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hall Green is a large infant school. Children enter the Nursery on a part-time basis. Children's skills and understanding when they start school are broadly average although speaking and listening skills are weaker. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below average. Two-thirds of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups and just over a quarter are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The school has gained a Healthy Schools award and recognition for the provision of lunchtime activities.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that provides very good value for money. The school underestimates its effectiveness, which it judges to be good, but inspection evidence showed all of the key aspects of its work as outstanding. The Nursery and Reception classes provide the children with an excellent start to their education and significant numbers exceed the levels expected of them by the time they enter Year 1 in most areas of learning. Throughout Years 1 and 2 the pupils continue to make very good progress and achieve standards in reading and mathematics that are well above average and exceptionally high in writing. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are not as strong but the recent implementation of a range of strategies is already making an impact here. High quality teaching is evident in all year groups and pupils are provided with a rich and stimulating curriculum. Because pupils thoroughly enjoy their learning they achieve particularly well. Procedures to monitor the pupils' progress are rigorous and where potential underachievement is identified, the staff react quickly and ensure all groups of pupils achieve as well as they should. Leadership and management by the senior staff are of a high quality. They are constantly looking to see how they can further improve the quality of education and are prepared to take risks in order to do so. The capacity for further improvement is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Continue with the implementation of strategies to improve standards in speaking and listening.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The pupils attain standards that are well above average and they achieve exceptionally well. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes progress at an exceptionally good rate because of the stimulating environment and excellent teaching. Very good progress is maintained throughout Years 1 and 2 and the pupils achieve particularly well in their reading, writing and mathematics. Their speaking and listening skills are not so well developed and the school has introduced a range of strategies including drama and 'talking partners' to try to rectify this. Girls achieve slightly better than the boys but effective strategies are in place to enable boys to do as well as they should. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are supported well, enabling them to achieve in line with their peers. Those at an early stage of learning English are provided with very effective support ensuring they make rapid progress in their acquisition of English. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make very good progress towards their learning goals because of the very good guidance and support they receive. Targets for pupils' performance in national tests are challenging and these are usually met.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. All pupils, whatever their starting point, develop an enthusiasm for school and a love of learning. The very good relationships between adults and children help the pupils to grow in confidence from their first nursery days. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They know what is expected of them and learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Pupils feel very safe in school and have the confidence to go to any adult if they need help. The school council enables pupils to make excellent contributions to the community, for example through fund-raising activities. Pupils understand the importance of eating healthily and the need to take regular exercise. Pupils gain awareness of the world of work very well, for example through a supermarket visit in the Nursery. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. The school's celebration of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and faiths greatly enhances pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and tolerance of others. Attendance is satisfactory. Although the school does all it can to promote good attendance a small minority of families take their children out of school for holidays during term time.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

Teaching and learning are excellent throughout the school. As children say, 'Learning is fun!' In the Nursery high quality practical work underpins all learning with a very strong focus on helping the children to develop the basic skills. Reception teachers build on this early learning very well. They use a very good combination of focused tasks and play activities to help the children to make a flying start in reading, writing and mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, worthwhile practical tasks continue to help the pupils to see the relevance of learning in school. Teachers are very good at matching work to pupils' previous attainment because the school has very thorough systems for checking what pupils already know and can do. This helps all to make excellent progress, including those with learning difficulties and those at early stages of learning English. Teachers demonstrate considerable confidence, have very good subject knowledge and make lessons interesting and exciting through their very effective use of resources such as interactive whiteboards. Teaching assistants work very well with the teachers, providing very effective support for pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum provides outstanding variety so pupils are stimulated and inspired by the work they undertake at school. They learn to think for themselves and are encouraged to use skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other areas. All pupils are helped to feel valued because their varied

cultures are well represented, for example, through visitors such as Indian storytellers or Bhangra dancers, special food days, and the celebration of the many faiths and cultures. Pupils are taught how to stay healthy and safe and parents are involved in identifying the values that are taught. Pupils make visits, for example to the Nature Centre, and there is a very good range of clubs at lunchtime and after school, including sports, dance and art. The outstanding range of lunchtime playground activities, including role-play, music and sports adds to learning in lessons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The care given to pupils is outstanding and adults at the school are dedicated to their safekeeping and learning. As one parent said, problems are dealt with with empathy and understanding. That is typical of the views of other parents. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are rigorous and regularly reviewed and incidents of bullying and racism are monitored and dealt with effectively. The school takes firm and appropriate action to improve attendance.

The school works very well with parents, encouraging them to contribute to children's learning, for example, through homework projects, or the 'Robot Challenge', which encourages fathers in particular to help their children. There are good links with other agencies such as the Health Service. Children are helped to settle into the school very well and they are provided with very effective guidance to help their transition to the junior school. Procedures for tracking the progress of all pupils are outstanding so there is a swift response to any drop in achievement. Pupils are encouraged to assess their own performance and this helps them to know how well they are doing and to meet their challenging targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and she receives high quality support from senior staff. This enables the school to maintain its high standards whilst being innovative as it strives for greater improvements. There is a firm commitment to ensuring that all pupils, no matter what their background or capability, reach their full potential. There are excellent systems in place to ensure that the good improvement that has been made since the last inspection continues and all staff and governors are involved in the process. Governors provide outstanding support and guidance to the school and fulfil their duties very effectively. Parents and pupils are consulted regularly and their views are treated seriously and acted upon. For example, the school council has been involved in the planning of a new creative play area and, as a result of views expressed, an art club was set up and pupils were provided with more opportunities for painting. The school has been very effective in ensuring all groups of pupils achieve as well as they should. The school ensures the best use of resources, for example ensuring that those pupils at an early stage of learning English are very well supported. The increase in the number of support staff for such pupils since the last inspection

has been extremely beneficial. The school reacts very well to the needs of different groups of pupils by tracking their progress very closely. Strong leadership has resulted in the continued high standards seen in the core areas of the curriculum. It has recognised, and begun to address, the problem of the relatively weaker speaking and listening skills, and improvements are already being seen.

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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	16-19
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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?	1	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	1	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	1	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

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	NA
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us when we visited your school. We think that your school is a very friendly and happy place and we particularly liked these things:

You enjoy coming to school and being with your friends

You try hard and do very well in your work

There are lots of exciting activities and so you want to learn new things

You behave exceptionally well and are very friendly and kind to each other

The grown-ups in your school work very hard to keep you safe and healthy.

The people in charge of the school run it very well. They know what to do to make things even better for you. We have asked them to keep helping you to improve your skills in speaking and listening.

We are glad that you are proud of your school; it is a credit to you and the staff who work hard because they want the best for you.

Thank you again for helping us with our work.