



Sladefield Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103255
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276876
Inspection dates 31 January 2006 to 1 February 2006
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Ikin AI

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

Type of school	Infant	School address	Bamville Road
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	4 to 7		West Midlands B8 2TJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 3270662
Number on roll	360	Fax number	0121 3260540
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr Donald Bates
Date of previous inspection	13 November 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Kay Mercer

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors

Description of the school

Sladefield Infant School is much larger than the average infant school. Seventysix per cent of pupils come from Pakistani backgrounds. A wide range of other Asian, European and African heritages is also represented. Seventy-four per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals is above average. An above-average number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities attend the school. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for just over one term. Two acting assistant headteachers had been appointed pending the appointment of a permanent deputy headteacher. There were three vacancies on the governing body and most governors were new to the post.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school, and the school itself shares this view. It provides well for pupils' personal and academic growth and gives good value for money. The leadership of the headteacher, provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language, links with parents and the provision of extra-curricular activities are all very good. The standards that pupils reach are average. This represents good achievement for pupils in relation to their low starting points on entering the school. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and ensures that the needs of all pupils are met. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are promoted well but there are not enough opportunities for pupils to develop the skills of independent learning. Pupils receive good quality care and guidance and there are good partnerships with agencies outside the school. The school has successfully addressed all the issues from the last inspection and its improvement since then has been good. Provision in the reception classes is good; the children achieve well, and most reach the standards expected for their age. The leadership and the management of the school are good. The school's systems for checking its work are good, although the governors have not yet fully developed their role in this. All staff work as a strongly committed team and the school's capacity for further improvement is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop pupils' skills of independent learning by giving them more opportunities to work things out for themselves.
- Develop the governors' role in monitoring the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils make good progress from their low starting points on entry to the reception class, and standards are average. The school has high expectations of all its pupils and successfully achieves the challenging targets that it sets for itself. Pupils of all abilities and different ethnic backgrounds do equally well. Those who speak English as an additional language make very good progress because of the very good arrangements for them to learn English and to understand what is being said in lessons. Higher-attaining pupils reach the challenging goals that are set for them. Those who have learning difficulties and disabilities reach the targets in their individual educational plans and often catch up with their classmates by the end of Year 2. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Their understanding about living healthily and keeping safe is impressive for their age. Pupils enjoy school and

work hard in lessons. They are very appreciative of the way that teachers help them to learn. When asked they said that they would give the school 'a trillion marks out of ten' for the education it provided. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Behaviour is good and pupils say that on the very rare occasions that bullying occurs it is effectively dealt with. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils work together well and show respect for each other's different values and beliefs. They develop a good understanding of their social responsibilities in school and the wider community. For example, older pupils act as 'buddies' to younger ones and there is good support for charities such as the Asian Earthquake fund. Good provision for basic literacy and numeracy prepares pupils well for their future life. However, there are times in lessons when pupils depend too much on the adults who work with them for things that they should be able to do for themselves. Attendance has improved since the last inspection as a result of the efforts of the school to limit the amount of authorised absence to ten days only, and is now satisfactory. This is making a good contribution to raising standards.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Two lessons seen during the inspection were outstanding. Learning is presented in a wide range of lively and practical ways which capture the interest of all pupils and help them to learn. The good use of pictures and illustrations, as well as the interactive whiteboards, helps pupils to concentrate and to understand what is being said. An example was the use of the 'Snow Queen' film, in an excellent Year 1 literacy lesson, to deepen pupils' understanding of the different parts of stories. These methods are contributing to the good achievement of both boys and girls in writing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are prepared very well for literacy lessons by being taught the English they will need beforehand. The bilingual teacher and teaching assistants also give translations in lessons to support pupils' participation and progress. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are given good support from well-briefed teaching assistants. Higher-attaining pupils work in ability groups for some literacy and numeracy lessons and this contributes well to the above-average standards they reach. However, because pupils are given so much direct adult help, they have too few opportunities to develop the skills of independent learning. There are occasions when they find it hard to work things out for themselves because of this, for example, when solving problems in mathematics. Assessment is good. Pupils' needs are very carefully identified and their progress thoroughly checked. Good target-setting procedures are in place and pupils understand what they need to do to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is well planned to meet the wide range of pupils' abilities, needs and interests and there are good arrangements to ensure that all pupils have access to learning. The carefully structured programmes of work for both English and mathematics make a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make. Speaking and listening skills, including the development of vocabulary, are emphasised in all subjects of the curriculum. The good planning for links between subjects ensures that pupils have opportunities to practise their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in practical and purposeful ways. Pupils' enjoyment and interest in learning are successfully boosted by a very good number of educational visits and visitors. Learning opportunities are also extended through a very good range of well-attended after-school clubs. Links with other schools through two research projects in English and mathematics are making a positive contribution to the curriculum and to pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. There are good arrangements for ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare, with regular safety checks and good child protection procedures in place. Parents and pupils report that children are well supported when they experience personal difficulties. 'Worry boxes' and 'circle time' are used well to enable pupils to raise their own personal concerns. The school works successfully with outside agencies to support pupils who need their help. Induction procedures are good and pupils quickly settle into school. There are also good arrangements to prepare pupils for moving into their new classes at the beginning of each school year. A strength of provision is the very good encouragement for parents to support their children's learning. The 'Inspire Workshops', for example, are particularly appreciated by parents.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher's leadership is very good. She has ensured the continuity of pupils' education during a time change amongst staff and governors, united the staff team, and provided a new sense of direction to the school. She sets a very good example by the quality of her own teaching and uses her expertise very well when monitoring teaching and learning and supporting teachers in their improvement efforts. The acting assistant headteachers and the senior teachers in the leadership team are all fully involved in the management of the school and they lead their curriculum areas well. All members of staff are encouraged to use their skills and expertise for the benefit of the school. For example, a teaching assistant coordinates the workshops for parents. Self-evaluation is good and good use is made of it to identify accurately where improvements are needed. Parents are regularly asked for their views on the school's work. The school listens carefully to these and

takes them into account when planning for improvements. Governors give good support to the school but most are new to the post and they have not yet fully developed their roles in monitoring the school's work. Finances are well managed and resources are effectively deployed to ensure that the school gives good value for money.

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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?	2	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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?	2	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

Dear Children, Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed coming into lessons and assembly and watching you learn and play. We especially enjoyed talking to you and agree with you that you have a good school. What we liked most about your school

- You behave well and get along well together in lessons and when you are playing outside.
- You work hard and always try to do your best.
- Your teachers make lessons interesting and are good at helping you all to learn.
- There are some very good activities after school and you support them well.
- You make good progress and your work is good.
- Your headteacher runs the school very well and all the staff work really hard to make the school even better than it is already.

What we have asked the school to do now

- We want your school to give you the skills you need to think things out for yourselves and to be able to work on your own.
- We have asked the people who are governors in your school to come into school and see for themselves how well you are doing.

Yours sincerely, Jacqueline Ikin Lead inspector
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