



# Stirchley Community School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103264  
**LEA** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 276879  
**Inspection dates** 2 May 2006 to 3 May 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Cox AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Pershore Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Birmingham
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		West Midlands B30 2JL
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4582989
<b>Number on roll</b>	160	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 4586836
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr William Evans
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 September 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Kate Basterfield

<b>Age group</b> 3 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 2 May 2006 - 3 May 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276879
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Stirchley Community School is a smaller than average primary school. The majority of the pupils are from a White British background although a high proportion of pupils are from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. The proportion of pupils that joined the school in the last academic year other than at the normal admission time is higher than normal.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. The inspectors agree with the school's view that it provides a satisfactory education. Although many pupils do not reach the early learning goals, good provision in the Nursery and the Reception class ensures pupils achieve well from low starting points. Standards are broadly average by Year 6, and pupils achieve satisfactorily because teaching is satisfactory. Across the school, however, pupils' writing skills are a weakness because of an inconsistent approach to improving them. In Years 1 to 6, more able pupils are not challenged enough because the assessment data gathered on them is not always used effectively to set tasks that are pitched at the right level.

Pupils are well cared for and safe. Pupils say they enjoy their time in school and develop good personal skills. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Systems for monitoring teaching and learning are adequate but are not always applied rigorously enough to bring about the desired improvement in the progress made by pupils. Standards continue to improve and leaders have shown that they can continue to move the school forward. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards by ensuring that teachers make more effective use of assessment data to set more challenging work, particularly for more able pupils.
- Make more effective and consistent use of the recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' writing.
- Take a more rigorous approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Standards are broadly average by the end of Year 6 and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. The high proportion of pupils who leave or join the school throughout the year plus the widely varying numbers of pupils who have learning difficulties in each year group have led to standards fluctuating over recent years. There was a significant improvement in overall standards in 2004 from a low point in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 and this improvement continued in 2005 although English remains a weakness. Standards improved overall because the school set challenging targets.

Pupils achieve well in the Nursery and in Reception having entered the school with very poor speaking and listening skills and poor language development. In the Nursery and in Reception, the pupils' standards improve but are still below average for their age. Pupils achieve well in areas of personal and physical development because of the good teaching and a good curriculum that meets their needs effectively.

Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Years 1 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6, standards overall are broadly average. Standards are average in mathematics and science but are weak in English. Pupils make good progress in science and mathematics

because teachers set work that pupils find interesting and it is well matched to their needs. The school has correctly identified that writing is a significant weakness throughout the school and has recently set in motion a programme for improvement. These measures are not being applied consistently enough by all teachers to have a full impact. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make similar progress to other pupils as do pupils for whom English is an additional language. More able pupils do not make as much progress as other pupils, because some work is too easy for them.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of pupils is good as a result of effective and consistent whole-school provision. The pupils' attendance is average. This is a significant improvement from the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The school's policy for behaviour makes a good contribution to moral development, and pupils behave well as a result. Occasionally, pupils become restless and are inattentive. This happens when teachers provide tasks that do not challenge pupils. There is a wide range of equipment and activities available at lunchtimes. Pupils use these well and play together with consideration and care, thus making a good contribution to social and cultural development. Pupils say that they enjoy their life in school and this is supported by parents who say it is a happy and safe environment. Pupils talk confidently about ways of staying safe. They make good progress towards adopting healthy lifestyles. The school received the Healthy School standard for the second time in 2005. Pupils' contribution to the community is good. This is seen, for example, in the charity work done by the school and in projects involving elderly people. The school council plays an active part in school life and has been instrumental in developing the playground and buying playground equipment. Pupils develop satisfactory numeracy skills needed for their future economic well-being but pupils' literacy skills are not developed sufficiently.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in the Nursery and Reception are good. Here, teachers are very knowledgeable about the curriculum for young children and provide interesting activities that meet their needs. For example, from playing the 'parachute' game, pupils realised the importance of collaboration and made good progress with their personal and social development.

In Years 1 to 6, when teaching is at its best, lesson planning is thorough and successfully builds on what the pupils have learnt before. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher constantly assessed pupils and set targets for improvement. In these lessons,

the teachers' high expectations are reflected in the challenging work set for pupils, to which they respond very positively. The pupils' behaviour is managed skilfully by staff and this ensures that they listen attentively and concentrate hard.

In contrast, teachers sometimes do not always make enough use of the assessment data gathered on pupils. In these cases, work is not well matched to the needs of all pupils, particularly more able pupils. Clear evidence of progress slowing down was seen in the work of these pupils. The school has recently introduced strategies to improve pupils' writing skills but as yet these are not used consistently by all staff. The result of this is that pupils do not make enough progress with their writing.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. In the Nursery and in Reception, all six areas of learning are planned for effectively, with children being given a good range of opportunities to learn independently. In Years 1 to 6, the curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. In general the curriculum matches pupils' needs and abilities, but provision for more able pupils is inconsistent and their progress does not always match that of other pupils. The school has introduced a modern foreign language which is helping to broaden pupils' knowledge of the world and improve their speaking skills. A number of subjects are taught as topics with links to literacy and numeracy, and this is helping to improve standards, particularly in mathematics. The work for the Healthy School standard ensures that pupils are encouraged to be healthy. The personal, social, health and emotional curriculum is strong and contributes well to the pupils' good personal development. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities available to pupils. These include musical activities, French, sports contests and a wide range of lunchtime activities. These are well supported and enjoyed by pupils.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The school provides good care, guidance and support and this is endorsed by all parents. All pupils are well known to staff who provide good personal support where it is needed. Pupils' self-confidence is raised as a result. All pupils, regardless of background, are well supported and the school is careful to ensure that it is fully inclusive. The procedures for child protection, health and safety and first aid are all rigorously applied by all members of staff. There is regular training and updating of staff to maintain this good provision and this helps ensure the good care for all pupils. Pupils with particular difficulties, for example, challenging behaviour, are very well supported by the teaching assistants, with daily contact, additional time given and regular monitoring helping them to take part in all activities. The Healthy School awards help to ensure that pupils are encouraged to be healthy and there is a breakfast club in school which is well supported. Pupils' work and progress are regularly assessed, but the use of the data provided from assessment is inconsistent and does not always enable the staff to make accurate assessments about progress. Children's work and achievements are celebrated during assemblies and in the classroom setting. The displays provide learning

opportunities and prompts as well as enhancing the classroom environment. The school has a good record of identifying and supporting pupils with learning difficulties. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and risk assessments are undertaken for all trips. As a result the school provides a safe working environment.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents speak highly of the school and comment on how happy their children are at school. The school is characterised by an effectively shared vision that is focused on raising standards and supported by a strong caring ethos. It is successful in ensuring that most pupils are treated equally well although more can be done to ensure that the most able pupils achieve their best.

The headteacher provides clear direction and has a good grasp of the strengths and areas that need to be improved and is fully committed to bringing these improvements about. The school has an effective cycle of self-evaluation which enables the school to assess, analyse and set targets for improvement. As a result, good progress has been made in raising standards in mathematics and science for pupils in Year 6 but English standards remain a weakness. Attendance is improving as is the level of pupils' independence, areas of concern noted by the last inspection. A particular success has been the creation of the Foundation Unit which is enabling pupils to get off to a good start at school.

The inconsistencies in the use of assessment show however that there are features of the school's work that are not working as well as they should be. The monitoring of teaching is adequate but it is not focused sharply enough on specific aspects such as how teachers are raising standards for more able pupils.

The school improvement plan is satisfactory and identifies the most important areas for development. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and paints a picture of a school that provides a satisfactory education and is set to improve further.

Governors challenge the headteacher when necessary, give the school satisfactory support and make sure statutory requirements are met. The school has a large budget surplus of which most is already allocated to improving the computer facilities and the creation of the Foundation Unit.

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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	2	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	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

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

As you know, we visited your school recently to find out how well you are doing. Thank you for looking after us and making us feel welcome. Thank you also for talking to us about your school, the work you have done and how well you enjoy coming to school.

What we liked about your school:

you behave well and enjoy coming to school

your school is a healthy and safe place to be and you are cared for well

you support one another well in school and give lots of support to people outside of school

your teachers help you to learn how to live with others, so you will be responsible adults when you grow up.

What we have asked your school to do now:

help some of the more able pupils to reach higher standards by making better use of the information teachers have about you to set work that always makes you do your best

help you to improve your writing

make sure that when the adults in charge of the school introduce new ideas to help you all do even better, they check to make sure they really work well.