



# Boldmere Junior School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 103341  
**LEA** Birmingham  
**Inspection number** 276897  
**Inspection dates** 27 February 2006 to 28 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Paul Sadler AI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	Cofield Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Sutton Coldfield
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	7 to 11		West Midlands B73 5SD
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4643656
<b>Number on roll</b>	342	<b>Fax number</b>	0121 6059355
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr D J Sansom
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 September 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Diane Thomas-Wood

<b>Age group</b> 7 to 11	<b>Inspection dates</b> 27 February 2006 - 28 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 276897
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Boldmere is an average-sized junior school. It is situated in a residential part of Sutton Coldfield. It shares a large site with an infants' school, from which most pupils transfer at the age of seven, and provides out-of-school care for children from both schools. The proportion of pupils receiving free school meals and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are below average.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. Pupils leave the school with above-average standards and their achievement is satisfactory. They do not achieve highly enough in writing and in mathematical problem solving, although in the latter, improvement is well underway. Pupils' personal development and the care, guidance and support they receive are good. As a result, pupils are happy, self-confident and mature, and they take full advantage of what the school offers. This includes a wide range of activities, including clubs, sporting and other physical activities, trips and visitors. The 'Busybodies' club provides very good care for pupils before and after school. Information and communication technology (ICT), a weakness at the last inspection, is now good. Attendance, pupils' behaviour and the emphasis placed on health, safety and enjoyment of school are other strengths. Teaching is satisfactory. Although the teachers track the pupils' progress well, they do not yet use information they acquire to best effect when planning future work. The curriculum is broad but does not link subjects together in a way that promotes rapid learning.

The leadership's judgement that the school's effectiveness is good is too generous. Although they know the strengths and weaknesses, senior managers do not analyse sufficiently the school's performance in the national context. Neither the monitoring of the teaching nor the level of debate by staff and governors about the pupils' standards and the quality of provision is rigorous enough.

The school provides satisfactory value for money. The matters raised in the last inspection have been dealt with effectively and the school has the capacity to make further improvements.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Raise the achievement of more able pupils, especially through enhanced teaching of advanced writing skills in writing.
- Increase the range of approaches to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching in order to improve its quality.
- Strengthen the analysis of strengths and relative weaknesses through an improved understanding of the school's performance and by raising the quality of debate and challenge among staff and governors.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

From their above-average standards when they first join the school, the pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain above-average standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave at the end of Year 6.

Standards in national tests have regularly been above the national average, though there has been some year-on-year variation. In 2005, results fell in mathematics and writing, and the targets the school had set itself were not achieved. The action taken to improve standards in these areas is proving successful in mathematics and pupils

are making good progress, for example, in solving mathematical problems. As a result, targets set for 2006 should be achieved. Pupils can write extensively, using a range of styles, but for more able pupils there is insufficient emphasis on teaching more advanced writing skills. Some pupils are held back by weaknesses in spelling and handwriting and more work is needed to ensure targets are achieved. Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills and can talk at length, with maturity and confidence, on a wide range of topics.

Pupils achieve well in a number of other subjects, such as ICT, where they can construct sophisticated presentations. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. There is little variation in the achievement of boys and girls, a result of effective action taken by the school to address differences that occurred in the past.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development is good. There are effective procedures to promote pupils' health, safety and well-being. Most pupils eat the school's healthy lunches. Many attend the wide range of extension activities, including the good, out-of-school 'Busybodies' club, designed to promote pupils' social and physical development and to increase their confidence and self-esteem. The school council is not yet an effective channel for representing pupils' views on major school issues. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and relate well to staff, visitors and each other. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other cultures and faiths are promoted well through assembly themes, music, art, history and literature and through visitors to the school, such as African artists. Pupils' attendance is good and most arrive prepared and ready to learn. Older pupils undertake responsibilities, including prefect duties and mentoring of younger pupils. Most pupils participate in fundraising activities for local and national charities. There are strong links with the local community which the school uses well to enhance both the pupils' social and educational experiences.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and some of it is good. Almost all lessons have good features, including clear instruction, good opportunities for speaking and listening, good relationships between pupils and teachers, and effective management of behaviour. Work is planned for pupils' differing abilities but in some cases does not fully meet the needs either of the more able or the least able. Plenary sessions are not always used well to clarify pupils' misconceptions and assess the learning of individual pupils.

In the best lessons, teachers use a wide range of strategies to interest and motivate the pupils and provide challenging tasks for the most able. For example, in a Year 4

mathematics lesson pupils made good progress on work on division because the topic was presented in a way that enabled all pupils to apply their knowledge of multiplication and division to solving written problems. Mathematics is mostly taught to groups of pupils of similar ability, which is leading to more rapid progress. The standard of presentation of pupils' work varies from pupil to pupil but this is not always commented upon by teachers when they mark the work. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully and are beginning to use the information to match the work to meet individual needs, though they do not always use it consistently and productively to plan the next work.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is broad and includes all national curriculum subjects and religious education. However in some classes a disproportionate amount of time is allocated to English and mathematics, without making clear the links to other subjects. There have been significant improvements to the provision for ICT since the last inspection and teachers are now using this well to support children's learning. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, such as dance, choir and sport, which contribute well to pupils' personal, social and physical development. Teachers, parents and outside coaches all contribute well to the school's programme of activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Pupils generally settle into the school quickly because they are given good support and guidance. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and say their children are happy there. Some would like more information about their children's progress. There are effective procedures for risk assessment to ensure that pupils are safe. The procedures for child protection are clear and are understood by staff. Pupils know who to talk to if they have a problem or are worried. A programme of personal, social and health education helps to prepare pupils for the later responsibilities of adult life. Academic support is satisfactory. The school works closely with parents and professionals to ensure that the special educational needs of its pupils are met.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Senior managers, staff and governors share a vision of enabling each pupil to achieve his or her potential. The successful realisation of this is shown in the pupils' self-confidence and maturity. The views of parents and pupils are increasingly sought and acted upon.

The leadership is managing a legacy of staffing issues effectively, for example, the impact on the pupils' standards and the quality of their learning of long-term staff illness and changes of staff. The leadership knows the school's strengths and is tackling

the relative weaknesses with increasing rigour but still has some way to go because the criteria for what makes an effective school are not yet fully understood by all senior managers and governors. Until recently, this has hampered professional debate and challenge. Teaching is monitored and strengths and development points are identified, but teaching quality has not been evaluated thoroughly enough to make sure it is as good as can be.

There has been significant improvement in the areas identified in the last inspection, including pupils' achievement in ICT and the quality of financial planning and monitoring. In the light of this, and of the changing culture to one of increasing professional challenge, the school has the capacity to improve further.

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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?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	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	2	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	2	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	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	2	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**

The inspectors who visited your school very much enjoyed talking and listening to you and seeing your work. We want to thank you for spending the time to do this. This letter is to tell you what we thought of your school and how it can be even better.

We think your school is satisfactory. The best things about the school are:

- The school helps you to become mature and confident young people.
- You are well cared for.
- You are taught to lead healthy and active lives.
- You are taught well to use ICT safely, to help you learn.
- Most children come to school regularly and on time.
- The school provides a lot of good clubs, trips and activities, including the Busybodies club.
- Those of you who find school work hard are given good help.

We think the school could improve even more if:

- Those of you who find work quite easy were taught more advanced things, especially in writing.
- The teachers found out more about how they could improve their teaching.
- More was found out about the best things that other schools do, so these things could be done in the school.