



Gossey Lane Junior Infant and Nursery School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103375
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 276902
Inspection dates 14 November 2005 to 15 November 2005
Reporting inspector Ian Knight RISP

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Gossey Lane
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		West Midlands B33 0DS
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4642909
Number on roll	240	Fax number	0121 464 4801
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Rev. Paul Bracher
Date of previous inspection	7 February 2000	Headteacher	Mrs Emma Brown

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	14 November 2005 - 15 November 2005	276902

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This average-sized primary school serves an area of considerable social disadvantage in the Kitts Green area of Birmingham. Almost all pupils are White British with a few who are Black Caribbean, Black African or of mixed backgrounds. No pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is about average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Good self-evaluation leads the school to judge its effectiveness as satisfactory and inspectors agree. After a period of uncertainty caused by staffing difficulties, the school is now improving rapidly because of the good leadership of the headteacher and her senior team. All staff subscribe to their vision of a school in which all pupils achieve the best they can. This is reflected in the consistent application of policies, for example, by maintaining good behaviour. Children are provided for satisfactorily in the nursery and reception class but, despite satisfactory progress, do not achieve all of the goals for learning. However, activities chosen by children and carried out independently are not always rigorously organised. Whilst achievement in the school is satisfactory, the school identified that too few pupils gain the highest levels in national tests. New approaches to teaching potentially higher-attaining pupils have improved their learning but they have not had time to influence test results. Pupils enjoy school and behave well. Attendance is improving, but, despite the school's best endeavours, remains too low. Teaching is satisfactory, based on a suitable curriculum. The senior team rigorously checks to see what is working well in the school and what needs to be improved but the subject leaders play too little a part in this. The improvements already secured show that the school has a good capacity for further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- continue to implement the targets in the school improvement plan regarding the progress of the most capable and the work of subject leaders
- continue to work with parents to improve pupils' attendance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

When they join the nursery, children's communication and social skills are very limited. They make satisfactory progress in Nursery and Reception but still enter Year 1 with standards that are below average.

Satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils make satisfactory progress over Years 1 to 6 and they reach average standards. The school has identified that few pupils gain the highest levels in national tests because, in the past, pupils with this potential were not always identified or provided for. Steps have been taken to remedy this situation and higher-attaining pupils are beginning to produce higher standards of work.

Their achievement in relation to their potential is now satisfactory but it is too early for their success to show in test results. The school agrees that their progress could be improved even further. The school sets challenging targets for pupils which are largely achieved. It is beginning to measure progress towards them with a view to tackling potential underachievement. Consequently, satisfactory achievement across

the school is improving. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress towards the targets set for them.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils develop their social skills and self-confidence well as they go through the school. They report that they enjoy school for a wide variety of reasons, including finding the work in lessons challenging and satisfying. Although attendance is below average, it has improved recently, and pupils understand the importance of regular attendance. They understand clearly what is acceptable behaviour, and how to treat each other. They have opportunities to develop their self-knowledge through reflection through, for example, assemblies and self-assessment. They are learning to respect different cultures and are prepared for life in a multicultural society. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.

Pupils behave well and show positive attitudes to learning. They have a clear understanding of safe practices. In lessons, they follow procedures very well, moving around the classroom to different tasks in an orderly manner, showing interest and, often, considerable enjoyment. In the playground, they are sensible and respectful towards each other. School records show occasional incidents of roughness and a few racially motivated cases, all of which were dealt with in a way that gave strong moral lessons to the pupils concerned. Most of them understand the importance of healthy living and put this into practice in what they eat and in the activities they pursue. Pupils benefit from many opportunities to learn key skills which prepare them to make a contribution to the community and ensure their own economic well-being. For example, they work in pairs and teams in lessons and take responsibilities for a range of tasks involving the organisation of lessons or the support of their peers through the peer mediator scheme.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Following a period of change during which a new nursery and reception unit was set up, teaching and learning here are satisfactory. Activities for small groups led by an adult are well planned and executed. Adults know children well, keep records of their progress and focus on developing their communication and social skills at the right level. However, activities that children choose for themselves, whilst generally appropriate, are not as carefully organised or assessed to ensure rapid learning.

Satisfactory teaching continues in Years 1 to 6. Strengths include: • the support offered in lessons for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities • the consistent application of the school's behaviour policy • the work done by teaching assistants in lessons • the identification of clear objectives for learning, shared with pupils, so that they know what they are to learn and how well they are doing.

The best lessons have a brisk pace through, for example, the use of strictly enforced but realistic time limits for tasks. The school has identified that the most capable pupils were not doing as well as they should. A number of initiatives have been taken, including teaching small groups formed on the basis of pupils' past performance. As a result, these pupils now make adequate progress. However, not all lessons include tasks that are sufficiently challenging to really stretch them.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is broad and balanced throughout the school. It focuses on pupils' particular needs, for example, by emphasising the development of their social and literacy skills. A weakness of citizenship education is the lack of a school council, although the school intends to reintroduce it. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities is good. However, the provision for pupils with particular gifts or talents, although satisfactory, is in its early stages of development. The curriculum is planned to ensure that tasks build in difficulty year-on-year, ensuring pupils' progress.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The teachers know the pupils well. Increasingly good use of data on progress enables teachers to treat each pupil as an individual. Support for pupils at risk of underachieving is often good and many pupils reach their targets. However, targets for the most capable pupils have not been sufficiently challenging in the past, which has been a factor in their previously limited progress. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory but they are not reviewed regularly enough. The school takes due care to ensure that physical risks are assessed and pupils kept safe but has inadequate systems for recording how it has responded to any dangers identified. The school is tackling the unsatisfactory attendance vigorously, using a range of strategies to ensure pupils and parents understand the importance of regular attendance. The school's behaviour policy is well understood by teachers and pupils.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher was appointed after a period of uncertainty caused by staffing problems. She rapidly identified some weaknesses and obtained a review from the local authority. Together, the senior team tackled the areas for improvement and promoted a clear vision of a school in which all achieve their potential. Improvements were secured in English and in aspects of provision for the nursery and reception classes. However, other developments, such as improving the progress made by the most capable pupils, stalled because of further unavoidable staff changes. This is reflected in the small numbers of pupils gaining the highest levels in national tests. Improved systems now keep track of how well pupils are doing and set targets for

their progress. Lesson observations confirm that the most capable are now provided for adequately but the school agrees they could do even better.

The school evaluates its own performance well, consulting effectively with parents, pupils and governors. Planning, teaching and pupils' completed work are rigorously monitored by senior leaders. However, subject leaders are not all involved enough in monitoring their own areas and this is a relative weakness in school's procedures for self-evaluation. Priorities for development are set out in order of importance and form the basis of a concise but effective plan for improvement. Governors are knowledgeable and supportive but are not all able to visit the school or take as active a part as they would wish. The improvements already obtained, despite difficulties with staffing, show that the school has a good capacity for further improvement.

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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?	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	3	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?	3	NA
The standards ¹ 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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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

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

Gossey Lane Junior, Infant and Nursery School Gossey Lane Kitts Green Birmingham B33 0DS

16 November 2005

Dear Pupils

Thank you for being so helpful when we visited your school. We really enjoyed talking to you about what you like and do not like and looking at how well you are working. I am writing to tell you what we found out.

Your teachers know you well and are getting better at making sure that the work you do is hard enough. You told us that that the main reason you enjoy coming to school is because you enjoy the work you are asked to do because it is hard, but not too hard. All the adults know just how good they want the school to be. They are working hard to make it like that and we can see how it is getting better.

We know you understand how important it is to come to school regularly – we saw the announcements in assembly and how pleased the class with the best attendance was. But some pupils do not come often enough, so we have asked the school to work hard to encourage them to come regularly so they can learn better. We have also asked the school to carry on making sure that everyone does the very best they can.

We hope you carry on enjoying your lessons as much as you did when we visited and always do your best!

Yours sincerely,

Ian Knight

Lead Inspector