



# Halesowen CofE Primary School

Inspection Report

Better  
education  
and care

**Unique Reference Number** 103847  
**LEA** Dudley  
**Inspection number** 277010  
**Inspection dates** 8 February 2006 to 9 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Frances Gillam AI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Primary	<b>School address</b>	High Street
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Halesowen
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3 to 11		West Midlands B63 3BB
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01384 818 885
<b>Number on roll</b>	177	<b>Fax number</b>	01384 818 885
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Rebecca Horton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	20 March 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr R. Jim Preston

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Halesowen is a smaller than average Church of England primary school. Just over half of the pupils are from a White British background. Almost half the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds, including those of Arabic, Asian and Black African heritage. Some of these pupils are from families who are seeking asylum or have refugee status. A few of this group are at the early stages of speaking English. The number of pupils who enter and leave the school other than at the normal times of starting is high. Children's attainment on entry to the Nursery is well below that expected for 3 year olds. The Nursery has enhanced status and caters for up to six children with specific learning difficulties and disabilities. The school is in one of the areas of greatest social deprivation within the Borough of Dudley and almost half the pupils are entitled to a free school meal. The school is due to close as a result of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council's reorganisation programme and statutory notices have been posted.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Halesowen Primary provides a satisfactory standard of education. This reflects the school's view of its work.

Children's progress is good in the Foundation Stage where an interesting range of experiences develops their personal well-being and early skills of language, literacy and numeracy effectively. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall by Year 6. Pupils' progress is slower in writing in Year 3 compared with the pupils' more rapid progress in Years 5 and 6. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but the work in Year 3 is not always matched well to the pupils' abilities.

Pupils behave well and have good relationships with the adults who work with them. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of lunchtime and after school activities.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has successfully addressed most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection with the exception of developing an effective system to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning to identify where improvements are necessary and support should be given. Standards have risen in the last two years but some inconsistencies in teaching and implementing agreed school practices are slowing pupils' progress by Year 6. The school provides satisfactory value for money and has the capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Introduce more rigorous procedures to ensure that teaching is providing a suitable level of challenge for all pupils in Year 3, particularly in writing.
- Ensure that the headteacher and senior managers check more regularly and robustly the quality of teaching to be assured that agreed practices are always implemented and working successfully, and that support is given where necessary.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. Although attainment is below average overall, by the time children enter Year 1 good teaching has moved them on considerably from the well below average standards on joining Nursery. The main weaknesses are in language and literacy where despite the best efforts of teachers the weak basic skills which children bring with them to the school are not easy to address.

Standards by Year 2 remain below average but have risen this year after a sharp drop in the national tests in 2005. Just under half of the pupils who took the tests in 2005 had learning difficulties and their performance lowered standards. Although making satisfactory progress, pupils, especially the lower attaining and those with learning difficulties, continue to have problems in language and literacy. Pupils' progress by Year 6 overall is satisfactory but there are weaknesses. These weaknesses account for

standards remaining below average overall in the national tests by Year 6. However, there are positives. There has been an upward trend in national test results since 2003 and pupils are now meeting challenging targets. Great strides have been made in mathematics as a result of improvements in pupils' abilities in mental calculations which helped to raise standards in mathematics to average in national tests in 2005. Difficulties in writing persist and standards were well below average in the national tests in English in 2005.

Progress is uneven depending on the quality of teaching. The school's data shows that last year pupils in Years 3 and 4 did not achieve as well as they could in reading and writing and that is also the same in writing for pupils currently in Year 3. Some lost ground is being made up with well-focused teaching currently in Year 4 and accelerated progress in Years 5 and 6 but weaknesses in English remain.

Pupils from minority ethnic groups make satisfactory progress because staff encourage and develop their speaking skills and involve them fully in lessons.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make satisfactory progress. They do particularly well in meeting the targets set for their improvement because of the good support they receive from teaching assistants.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The personal development and well-being of pupils is satisfactory. Punctuality is good but the attendance rate is below average. Despite the school's efforts to improve attendance, a number of families continue to take time off for festivals and holidays during term time.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are highly aware of the effect of their actions on others. They behave well and show respect for each other, including pupils' different faiths. Relationships between pupils of various ethnic groups are good. Pupils make a good contribution to the community, taking part in events and raising funds for those less fortunate than themselves.

Some pupils say their lessons are fun but not all pupils feel this way. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 often show a lively interest in what they are learning but this excitement is not as marked in other year groups. Pupils feel safe at school and are developing healthy lifestyles. They know the need for regular exercise and they make good use of the lunchtime and after school clubs to develop their physical skills further.

The school council is at an early stage of development. Pupils like the greater opportunity there is to be heard and to voice their opinions. Activities such as running the tuck shop and organising bring and buy sales help pupils to gain an understanding of the world of work and suitably prepare them for future life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and are good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils develop good working relationships with staff and lessons progress smoothly. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities usually benefit from work being set at the right level and their learning is often good in small group situations. Most teachers take sufficient account of what pupils already know and where there are gaps in their knowledge to plan lessons that meet the pupils' needs. However this is not consistent in all lessons. For example, in Year 3, the less able, pupils with learning difficulties, and some whose first language is not English struggle to complete written work because their writing skills are nowhere near the standard that they are expected to work at. In contrast, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are challenged to do their best by well selected tasks. This was seen in a lesson in mental calculations where the teacher paced the lesson well to give the less able pupils time to think. In addition, the teacher successfully posed more complex questions for the more able pupils to extend their thinking further.

Within each class, teachers are responding well to the whole school focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills. Questions often encourage pupils to elaborate and expand on their answers and this is particularly good in the Foundation Stage where many children have difficulty in expressing what they mean. However, there are inconsistencies in the way other whole school practices are working. Teachers are aware that marking should provide pupils with information about how they can improve their work but some teachers are not doing this sufficiently well. In some classes, not enough is done to remind pupils of their targets, for example, in writing, that help them focus on the most important areas to improve their work.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 3

The curriculum meets requirements and includes all the subjects it should for pupils in Years 1 to 6 and the Foundation Stage. The curriculum now provides activities that build more securely on what pupils have learned before and is ensuring at least satisfactory progress in most classes. Reorganisation of the curriculum for Years 3, 4 and 5 is impacting on teaching and learning but more positively in Years 4 and 5. It is not as yet effective in Year 3 because planning is not always adapted to take account of the pupils' different needs. Provision for pupils' health education is good. Pupils are taught how to stay safe but are not made fully aware of the dangers of the misuse of drugs. The focus on a healthy lifestyle ensures that pupils know the benefits of exercise and the need for a balanced diet. There is good enrichment of the curriculum through clubs, visits out of school and visitors to school. These contribute well to pupils' sporting, artistic and musical achievements.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support for pupils are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for because staff have a good awareness of their emotional and social needs and pupils feel safe and free from harm. Despite not being used to their maximum benefit in some classes, the school has set targets for all pupils and many are beginning to benefit from that. Where targets are not used well enough in guiding and supporting pupils, they sometimes repeat errors because they are not encouraged to think carefully enough about the main things they should be concentrating on to improve their work.

Procedures for child protection are well established and are fully understood by staff. Risk assessments are carried out regularly to ensure that pupils are kept safe.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Over the past 18 months, the senior management team has developed a secure understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The school has the capacity to improve. The accurate analysis of test results and the tracking of pupils' progress now provide a clearer focus for raising standards. Standards are rising by Year 6, particularly in mathematics, and senior managers use assessment information well to focus additional support for pupils. However, the school's analysis also identifies that pupils in some year groups are not progressing as well as in other years. This is particularly so in Year 3. Leadership and management have been less successful in pinpointing the exact reasons for this and taking positive action to address weaknesses in teaching and eliminate inconsistencies in practice. The evaluation of teaching has not been regular or rigorous enough and too much has fallen on the headteacher. Measures have been taken to rectify that and things are about to change as other senior managers have now been trained to evaluate teaching and learning. The school is therefore now well placed to ensure that teachers receive better support and guidance in order to raise standards further, but that potential has yet to be realised.

Governors are supportive of the school. They are well informed about national test results but have not had the school's own analysis for each year group to help them raise questions to challenge whether pupils are doing well enough in all classes.

Parents have confidence in the school and feel that they are listened to. The school has responded to parents' requests for the reorganisation of consultation meetings and to improvements to the security of the school site. Pupils are developing a greater say in what happens in the school. As a result, new playground equipment is available at lunchtimes.

There are good links with the staff from the service to support pupils from minority ethnic groups. Staff from the school and the support services work well together for the benefit of these pupils.

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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>	3	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	3	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>	3	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**

Thank you very much for making Mr Moody and myself so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting with you, your teachers and the governors.

We would like to tell you what we thought about your school

- Children in the Nursery and Reception class do well with their work. They are learning to be sensible and well behaved.
- You behave well; you know how important it is to be kind to others.
- There are lots of interesting things for you to do at lunchtimes and after school and these help you to keep fit and healthy.
- We agree with you that your teachers treat you kindly. Staff make sure you are happy and kept safe and well.
- We think that pupils in Year 3 can do better, especially in writing.
- We have asked your headteacher to check how well you and your teachers are doing so that he can help you to do your very best.