



Lodge Farm Junior Mixed and Infant School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 104215
LEA Walsall
Inspection number 277104
Inspection dates 12 July 2006 to 13 July 2006
Reporting inspector Gerald Griffin AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Willenhall School
School category	Community		Sports College Campus
Age range of pupils	3 to 11		Willenhall, West Midlands WV12 4BU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01902 368587
Number on roll	315	Fax number	01902 368587
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr John Kinsey
Date of previous inspection	19 June 2000	Headteacher	Miss Linda Birch

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 11	12 July 2006 - 13 July 2006	277104

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lodge Farm Junior Mixed and Infants is a larger than average primary school. Pupils' standards on entry are below those usually found. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above the national average although few are at the early stages of learning English when they start school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is below the national average while the proportion eligible for free school meals is above it.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Lodge Farm is a satisfactory school. The headteacher provides good leadership with clear direction and purpose, and has ensured improvement since the last inspection. Middle managers give sound support although some are inexperienced and their skills in judging the quality of the work in their areas are underdeveloped. The school's own evaluation of its effectiveness is accurate. The drive to improve standards, well supported by the governing body, provides the capacity to make further improvements. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

Pupils' achievement overall is satisfactory by the time they leave. Standards in English are above average because pupils read a wide range of books and write accurately. Standards in mathematics are a relative weakness because the curriculum does not provide enough opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematics skills to solve problems. Provision in the Foundation Stage is good. Children achieve well and attain average standards when they finish Reception.

Behaviour is good both in lessons and around school. Pupils are very polite and considerate to each other and to adults. They know how to act safely. Their contribution to the community is outstanding, shown by the many ways they support school and each other. They are proud of their school and their feelings were summarised by one Year 6 pupil who said, 'I like this school. It is friendly, the work is fun and teachers help you a lot.' Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are some very exciting lessons in which pupils make excellent progress because the teachers' planning is outstanding. However, in some lessons progress is slow because the work provided by the teacher does not sufficiently interest or stretch pupils.

Parents rightly feel that the school has good care arrangements. The comments of one parent are typical: 'It is a very nice community and teachers are very supportive and approachable.' The school works well with the local high school and support agencies. Vulnerable children are well provided for. The school sets challenging targets for pupils but the tracking of their progress by subject leaders is not always effective.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in mathematics.
- Ensure that the work given to pupils consistently matches their needs.
- Make sure that all middle managers monitor and evaluate the work of the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' progress is satisfactory and they attain average standards at the end of Year 6. The school reached its challenging targets in 2005. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties, make similar progress.

Children make good progress in Nursery and Reception however, where good teaching ensures that standards rise from below average on entry to average by the time they start Year 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. They make particularly good progress in reading in Years 1 and 2, and in English in general in Years 3 to 6, where standards are rising and pupils use a wide range of vocabulary in different styles of writing. Standards in mathematics are average but the progress of a minority of pupils is too slow. While their basic numeracy skills are sound, their ability to apply this knowledge to solve problems is weak.

Those pupils at an early stage of learning English consolidate the good start they make as a result of specialist language support in the early years, and go on to make progress similar to other pupils.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is outstanding. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good gains in their personal development and well-being. Pupils reflect with maturity on issues such as beauty and belief. Pupils respect and value each other and the world around them. They have a well developed moral code that underpins their good behaviour.

Pupils enjoy all aspects of school and attendance is now good. They feel safe and are very safety conscious. They are confident in approaching a member of the school's staff if they have a worry and say their concerns are quickly and effectively dealt with. Pupils are proud of the work of the school council, and describe excitedly how they have helped teachers develop a new marking policy and more lunchtime activities. Pupils outstanding sense of community is seen, for example, when pupils entertain children at the nearby special school, support charities and are playground 'buddies'. Pupils' active involvement in such work, along with their sound development of basic skills, equips them well for later life. Pupils understand very clearly the need to eat healthily and take exercise. They do their best to put this into practice in their choice of lunches, and in their enthusiastic participation in physical education lessons, the 'fit club' and games.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and as a result, pupils make sound progress. In most lessons activities are well matched to pupils' needs and interests, particularly in the stimulating Nursery and Reception environment. Work is challenging and pupils tackle tasks with enthusiasm. Class discussions are very effective. All pupils' contributions are valued and developed by the teacher and, as a result, pupils' answers are confident and thoughtful. This is typical of English lessons. However, in a small

minority of lessons planning is weak. The work lacks appeal and does not match pupils' learning needs. This means higher attaining pupils lack sufficient challenge while lower attaining pupils struggle with work that is too difficult for them. As a result pupils make too little progress. This is evident in some mathematics lessons.

In all lessons relationships between pupils and staff are very good and this leads to pupils having good attitudes to their work. Teaching assistants understand the needs of pupils well and provide effective support to pupils with learning difficulties so that they can take a full part in lessons. Marking is thorough and regular. Comments clearly show pupils how they can make their work better.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory and is much improved since the previous inspection. The English curriculum provides a good variety of interesting and stimulating work and as a result pupils make good progress. The mathematics curriculum has improved, for example through more opportunities for pupils to practise their mental mathematics skills. However, too few activities are planned for pupils to use their mathematics knowledge to answer complex questions. The curriculum is enriched well by many visits to places of interest. Strong links with the local sports college enhance the teaching of physical education. A satisfactory range of clubs provides further interest and enjoyment to pupils' learning. The support for gifted and talented pupils is good in sport and music, but the programmes of activities in other subjects are still at the planning stage.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care and support are good, whilst guidance is satisfactory. Sensitive support and care is provided for pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, or who are at an early stage of learning English. This enables all pupils to participate fully in lessons and make satisfactory progress. The school cares for vulnerable children well by making good use of external agencies and specialists to promote their welfare when the need arises. The home-school liaison worker attached to the school provides good support for families who are reluctant to come into school. Child protection procedures are secure and health and safety arrangements are robust. Assessment and tracking procedures are satisfactory and improving. Pupils know their challenging targets. The effectiveness of the tracking of pupils' progress towards achieving them is variable. In English this is good and if a pupil's progress falters extra help is quickly provided. In other subjects underachievement is not always spotted early enough, with the result that support is sometimes slow to arrive.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher's good leadership has been instrumental in establishing a happy community with a very positive outlook, where the many previous shortcomings have been resolved. Her drive to improve standards as the school's principal focus is supported by middle managers, although they do not yet all play a big enough part in checking work in their areas.

The school has generally good systems for monitoring and evaluation and as a result, measures are in place to improve standards and achievement, teaching and learning, academic guidance and leadership and management. A well planned programme of professional development for staff supports these actions. While it is too early to see the full impact of these measures, there are signs of improvement and the school has the capacity to develop further.

The school actively seeks the views of pupils and parents and readily responds to their concerns. For example, parents feel that steps taken to improve communication between school and home are successful.

Governors also have a clear picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school through their monitoring visits and their understanding of data. They challenge the school on its performance and are thoroughly committed to raising standards.

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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?	2	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

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?	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	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	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	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?	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?	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	2	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

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

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and being so friendly. You clearly value being in a school in which and you all get on so well and help each other. We enjoyed our conversations with you about your work and the other things that you do at school. We think the school provides you with a satisfactory education.

Here are some of the 'highlights'

You enjoy your learning and work hard for your teachers.

You are very polite and well behaved.

All of the staff care for you very well.

The youngest children get off to a good start in the Nursery and in Reception, and you all do well in English.

You have a good understanding of the importance of eating healthily and taking exercise.

Your headteacher is leading the school well.

What we have asked your school to do now

Help you to make better progress in mathematics.

Make sure teachers plan work that helps everyone achieve well.

Ensure that those teachers with responsibilities for subjects check on the work that you do.

Best wishes for your future and the future of the school.