



West Heath Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134279
LEA Birmingham
Inspection number 282527
Inspection dates 8 June 2006 to 9 June 2006
Reporting inspector Bogusia Matusiak-varley AI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Rednal Road
School category	Community		Birmingham
Age range of pupils	4 to 11		B38 8HU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4584257
Number on roll	388	Fax number	0121 459 8340
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Rosemary Edwards

Age group 4 to 11	Inspection dates 8 June 2006 - 9 June 2006	Inspection number 282527
-----------------------------	---	------------------------------------

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school was formed in 2004 from an amalgamation of West Heath Infant and Junior schools. It is situated in south Birmingham close to Longbridge, an area of high socio-economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is above the national average, as is the rate of pupils entering and leaving the school throughout the school year. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is well below average with children experiencing particular weaknesses in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. The many barriers to raising standards the school encountered during the amalgamation process have now been resolved.

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 has a satisfactory level of effectiveness with several good features. This accords with the school's own view. It provides satisfactory value for money and has good capacity to improve. Overall, leadership and management, including governance, are satisfactory. The headteacher's leadership and management are outstanding. She has put in place very firm foundations to raise standards. The roles of middle managers are underdeveloped as they do not yet monitor the effectiveness of provision.

The pupils' standards are below national averages in English, mathematics and science but their achievement is satisfactory because of the expert way in which the headteacher and the good senior management team have arrested any underachievement. The school's own data, alongside inspection evidence, shows that standards are rising quickly. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and children make satisfactory progress but they do not attain the expected standards on entry to Year 1.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory with good features but not all lessons are consistently well taught. The learning opportunities offered to pupils are satisfactory but planning for literacy and numeracy across the curriculum is underdeveloped. Information from the good assessment procedures is not yet used consistently in classes, especially in the Foundation Stage, and this slows down the pupils' rates of progress.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, their attitudes to learning and general behaviour, and the care, guidance and support they receive are satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils love coming to school. One pupil commented that if he had to write down what is good about the school he would be here forever. Parents hold positive views of the school. One parent said 'My son has only been in school a short time but, in that time, I have seen a remarkable change in him for the better.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by ensuring good teaching occurs throughout the school and more effective use is made of assessment data and the setting of individual targets.
- Develop the role of middle managers in improving standards through effective monitoring
- Enhance opportunities for pupils to use their skills of literacy and numeracy in other subjects.
- Ensure that in the Foundation Stage information is used from assessment to challenge children who are capable of higher attainment more effectively by planning tasks that are better suited to their needs.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are below average in English, mathematics and science but pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, with examples of pupils progressing well in Year 2, Year 5 and Year 6. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards are average and pupils' achievement is good. Since amalgamation, and as a result of the headteacher's clear focus and the hard work of all the staff, underachievement has been arrested and the pupils are now doing much better. Particularly good progress has been made in raising standards in reading, writing and mathematics through improved teaching and assessment procedures. The school's own data shows that all groups of pupils are making satisfactory progress. In the Foundation Stage, the progress of higher attaining children, whilst satisfactory, is erratic. By the end of the Reception Year, the vast majority of children do not attain the expected standards in all areas of learning, although they make satisfactory progress in relation to their low starting points.

There is still a lot to do to ensure that standards continue to rise. For example, the process of the setting of targets for individual pupils is not as refined as it could be and there is not enough consistently good teaching throughout the school to ensure rapid learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory, with particular strengths in moral and social development. Pupils genuinely love their school, have satisfactory attitudes to learning and most behave appropriately. There have been a high number of exclusions but these have been managed well and pupils have been made aware of the impact of anti-social behaviour on others. The secure classroom routines and consistent application of behaviour management have resulted in a safe learning environment. One pupil said 'There is nothing I could change about this school, it is a great place to be, teachers are always there for us, even when we are naughty.' Attendance rates have improved and are now satisfactory due to the hard work of staff in ensuring that parents fully understand the importance of education. Pupils are growing in confidence because they are treated by staff as unique individuals. They are suitably prepared for their next stage of education and achieve economic well-being by developing workplace skills of teamwork, independence and collaboration. Their running of the school bank is outstanding. They have good understanding of developing healthy lifestyles and take part in numerous sports activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving, with examples of good practice in Years 2, 5 and 6. However, teaching is inconsistent and its quality varies across most year groups. A characteristic of good teaching is the way in which teachers use good quality resources to support pupils' learning, such as the use of writing frames and well chosen texts, as seen in one Year 2 class when pupils were asked to identify components of good story writing.

The school has had many problems recruiting staff, for example, pupils in Year 6 have had many changes of teachers, a contributory factor to their low standards. However, the headteacher's very effective monitoring of teaching and learning and the deputy headteacher's implementation of good assessment procedures have arrested any underachievement. Though they have been given clear guidelines on what they need to do to improve their teaching, as yet, not all staff use information from assessment to get the very best out of their pupils and this slows down rates of learning, especially in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall but higher attaining children are not always sufficiently challenged. Sometimes, teachers' planning for independent choice activities does not identify the learning that is expected so the pupils do not always make the progress they should

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides satisfactory opportunities for learning. It is suitably planned using national guidance and is well enriched with visits, visitors and creative experiences. These contribute to pupils' enjoyment and achievement in learning. For example, pupils in Year 3 eagerly dressed up as Romans so that they could gain a better understanding of life in Roman times.

Parents are fully consulted on all aspects of the sex education policy and the school has a good personal, social and health education programme. This is supported by The Life Education Caravan, where they gain a deeper insight on the effect of toxins on the body. There is, nevertheless, some more work to be done in ensuring that opportunities for literacy, numeracy and ICT are better planned for across subjects.

The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory and covers all the necessary areas of learning but information from assessment is not sufficiently well used to ensure that the experiences offered meet the needs of all children, especially those capable of higher attainment.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory, with some strengths in the pastoral care and guidance given to pupils. There is still some work to be done in strengthening procedures for improving the setting of individual targets and in academic guidance so that all pupils know what to do in order to improve. Staff are all suitably trained in child protection procedures and careful risk assessments are undertaken. The school is committed to, and succeeds in, providing a safe and secure environment. Phase induction is well managed and links with outside agencies to support pupils in need are good. A particular strength is the high emphasis placed on promoting healthy lifestyles. The school is working towards achieving the Healthy Schools Standard and parents are delighted with the emphasis placed upon sport and healthy eating.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior managers monitor and evaluate standards expertly and have been instrumental in raising standards. However, monitoring and evaluation by middle managers are weak because they do not have the necessary skills. The headteacher has outstanding leadership skills and has won the hearts and minds of the whole school community. Together with her deputy, assistant headteacher and phase leaders, she has managed the amalgamation process very well and has created a most welcoming climate for learning. Governance of the school is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. Governors are fully aware of the school's strengths and hold the staff accountable for the pupils' progress. School self-evaluation is thorough and accurate. Priorities are identified and regularly evaluated in relation to the impact they are having on standards, such as the recent introduction of the use of assessment in teachers' planning. The school has the capacity to improve further.

Through rigorous implementation of performance management monitoring, any weaknesses in the teaching and learning are remedied. As a result, teaching and learning are improving. The headteacher has been most successful in creating a hard-working team of teachers dedicated to their craft.

Parents are fully supportive of the school's leadership and management because they feel that their children are being given good opportunities to learn and make progress.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	4	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	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	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	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

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

It was lovely to see you all so happy when we visited your school. You certainly have a lot to be proud of. The displays of your work are wonderful, especially your plates done in the style of Clarice Cliff. We are glad that you like school and that you think that behaviour has improved. The school council has made some wise choices in choosing colours of carpets for your classrooms. We agree with you that your headteacher and teachers look after you appropriately and that they value each and every one of you. We are particularly pleased with the way you run your school bank and the respect you show when you lay wreaths to remember soldiers who fought for this country during the war. Well done.

We have asked your teachers to help you get even higher standards by using information from your test results to move you on in your learning. We have also asked them to give you more opportunities to practise what you have learnt in English and mathematics in other subjects. We have asked your headteacher to ensure that staff with responsibilities for subjects get better at looking at how quickly you learn. For the youngest ones of you who find learning easy, we have asked your teachers to plan activities that stretch you even more.

We wish you every success in the future.