



Hall Green Junior School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103209
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 286591
Inspection date 6 March 2007
Reporting inspector Anthony O'Malley HMI

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

Type of school	Junior	School address	Stratford Road
School category	Community		Hall Green
Age range of pupils	7-11		Birmingham B28 9AJ
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4643840
Number on roll (school)	355	Fax number	0121 4644670
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Jo Davies
		Headteacher	Derek Thomas
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools and one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Hall Green is a larger than average junior school. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD) is below average. Almost two thirds of pupils are from minority ethnic groups, and most of these are of Asian heritage. There are no pupils at an early stage of English acquisition, but around half speak English as an additional language (EAL). The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Hall Green Junior is a good school. It gives good value for money and is well placed to improve further. Although the school's own evaluation makes overly positive judgments about the school's effectiveness, it does provide some accurate insights into the quality and impact of its provision.

Pupils achieve well because teaching is good and provides them with the personal and academic skills they need to be successful learners. The school encourages pupils to celebrate the rich cultural heritages of their community, and promotes strong relationships between pupils of all backgrounds. Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy their lessons and the good teaching they receive. Their good behaviour, and the care shown by the staff, helps to keep pupils safe. They learn about healthy lifestyles, but their choice of break time snacks indicates that they do not consistently apply their knowledge. Attendance rates are high.

Standards in English, mathematics and science are all well above average by the time pupils leave the school. They do particularly well in mathematics where standards are exceptionally high. The proportion of pupils who reach the highest level in mathematics is much greater than it is in English. This is because, although pupils make good progress in English overall, progress in writing is a relative weakness. The most able pupils, particularly those with English as an additional language, achieve less well in writing. The school has made a satisfactory start to tackling this problem through changes to the curriculum and through the use of better ways of checking progress. Teachers are marking writing very effectively and pupils know what they must do to improve their work. The progress of individual pupils with specific needs is monitored closely. Pupils with LDD therefore achieve well.

Most parents are highly satisfied with the education the school provides. A written comment from one captures some of the school's strongest features, 'All of my children have gone through this school and have been well taught and well looked after. They have been developed in other areas such as music, drama and good manners.' As this comment suggests, the pupils leave the school well prepared for the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The school achieves its vision of 'educating the whole child' by securing high standards and preparing young people thoroughly for the future. A single issue for improvement is identified each year. The strategies used to bring about the improvement are not sharp enough, however, and this delays the benefits for pupils.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the implementation of the school development plan is efficient and leads quickly to improvements in the pupils' performance.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good. Pupils enter the school with standards above average. By the time they leave Year 6 pupils have met challenging targets and standards are well above average in English and science. In mathematics, standards are exceptionally high. The achievement of the most able pupils is not as strong in English, particularly in writing, as it is in mathematics. For example, a much smaller proportion of pupils with EAL reach the highest level in English than in mathematics and science.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. 'My child is very happy at this school. He cannot wait to get there in the mornings,' said one of the parents. This typifies how much the children enjoy coming to school. Attendance at 96% is above the national average for primary schools. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They enjoy raising money to support charities and are currently sponsoring the training of 'Shadow', a puppy, to become a guide dog. Behaviour and attitudes are good. In classrooms and on the playground pupils are confident, articulate and well-mannered young people who are rightly proud of their school. They recognise the key requirements of a healthy diet, but do not consistently put their knowledge and understanding into practice when choosing a break time snack. Everyone gets along well together in the school and the pupils feel safe and secure. The school council are good ambassadors for the school. They take pride in meeting and greeting fellow pupils as they arrive for school each morning. Workplace skills are well developed, reflecting the good literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills which pupils have by the age of 11.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good. Detailed planning ensures that work is well matched to pupils' needs and all groups are able to make good progress. A particularly strong feature of lessons is 'Think Pair Share', where pupils are encouraged to discuss work with a learning partner. This helps them to understand and gain confidence in explaining their methods or answers. Work is thoughtfully marked so the pupils know how they can improve. There is a focus on editing and redrafting work to help raise standards in writing. In the best lessons the teachers focus is helping pupils understand the craft of writing and this helps them to appreciate the power of the written word. Teaching assistants give highly focused support to pupils with LDD and they progress as well

as other groups. Where teaching is less effective pupils have to listen for too long before starting their activities.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all groups of pupils. As well as promoting the development of basic skills, the curriculum plan ensures that there are strong links between subjects so that pupils enjoy opportunities to be creative through music, art and drama. Many pupils participate in the wide range of clubs and activities. Pupils are rightly proud of the school's achievements in cricket, football and music. The performing arts and educational visits, including to places of worship, are features of the strong cultural component of the curriculum. They undoubtedly contribute to the pupils' good personal development. The opportunity to learn French from Year 3 further broadens the pupils' learning. The school does not, however, consistently track individual progress in foundation subjects to ensure that lessons always build on previous learning.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. This helps the pupils achieve well and is evident in their positive attitudes and good personal development. Academic guidance is good. Pupils have individual targets for reading, writing and mathematics which are reviewed each term.

Arrangements when children come into the school in Year 3, and when transferring to secondary school, are well managed, helping pupils to settle quickly. The school works well with the large majority of parents but a small minority would like their views sought on a more regular basis. The school has effective links with external agencies, for example to support pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils and risk assessments are good.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher and other members of the leadership group are committed to raising standards and achievement. Their vision and drive results in a rich ethos which is summed up in the school's motto, 'learning to be the best'. This high aspiration is a key factor in enabling this successful school to continue to improve. The school prioritises a single issue for improvement each year. However, the slow pace of the development plan means that too much teaching time is lost before pupils gain from the planned actions. Additionally, the monitoring of the plan's implementation is not rigorous enough. Governors carry out their duties conscientiously. They are knowledgeable and supportive, but not afraid to challenge when necessary, in the interests of pupils.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for helping us when we came to visit Hall Green Juniors recently. We were very impressed by your good manners and behaviour. We really enjoyed our day at your school and we know that you will agree with us that it is a good school. These are some of the particular strengths we found.

- You make good progress in English, mathematics and science because teaching and the curriculum are good.
- The work of the school council is making the school a safer and happier place.
- Your attendance is better than in most schools.
- You behave well and get on well with each other and with the adults in the school.
- All of the adults take good care of you so that you feel safe and happy.
- You have some very talented musicians, singers, footballers and cricketers.
- The school is well led and managed and there is a very happy and busy atmosphere.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governors to put things right more quickly when they find an area that needs to be improved. You can help by trying your best, as you always do, particularly with your written work. Finally, we do hope that you will e-mail back to Shadow and wish him luck with his training!