



Osborne Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103363
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 286638
Inspection dates 15–16 November 2006
Reporting inspector Peter Wakeman

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Station Road
School category	Community		Erdington
Age range of pupils	4–11		Birmingham B23 6UB
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4643346
Number on roll (school)	220	Fax number	0121 4645793
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	T Guest
		Headteacher	Susan Coughlin
Date of previous school inspection	8 October 2001		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
4–11	15–16 November 2006	286638

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Osborne Primary School is an urban school situated in Erdington, a suburb of Birmingham. In common with other schools in the area, its numbers are slowly declining. The school is split-site, with the junior classes being accommodated in more modern, open plan classrooms and the infants and Reception classes about 300 metres away in a 19th century building shared with an adult education centre. There are no playing fields. The area has been identified as having a high level of social deprivation. There is a mix of ethnic groups, although most pupils are White British. The percentage of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average. Overall the attainment of children on entry is well below that expected. The school has a recently appointed headteacher.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Osborne Primary School provides a satisfactory standard of education, with some good features. Both boys and girls achieve satisfactorily by the end of Key Stage 2. However, progress, although satisfactory, is inconsistent. More able pupils are not always challenged enough in their work. There is some good progress in Key Stage 2 but pockets of slower progress exist for older pupils in Key Stage 1, where standards have declined. Although standards could be better in reading and writing, the school is working effectively to improve them through.

Teaching is satisfactory, with good features enabling good learning in the Foundation Stage and at the end of Key Stage 2. Expectations are sometimes too low and there are occasions when the pace is too slow and the work not challenging enough. This is particularly relevant for high ability pupils.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher focus their work on the needs of all learners. There is a good drive from the top that is moving the school forward. They have identified what needs to be done to improve the school and their self-evaluation is accurate. Improved strategies are in place to identify and eliminate any underachievement. Middle managers and governors are not involved enough in checking that the school is performing well.

Care, guidance and support provided by the school very successfully develops confidence and self-esteem and raises pupils' often very low expectations of themselves well. There has been a strong and successful focus on behaviour management, resulting in improvements to learning and a settled school.

Pupils enjoy coming to school and, although attendance levels have been well below national figures for a few years, the school is working hard with parents to improve these and has achieved some success.

The positive impact of recent initiatives means that there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory and it has sound capacity for further improvement.

Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in respect of standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and attendance is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days' notice of such a visit.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in both key stages, particularly in reading and writing and for the more able pupils.
- Improve attendance by encouraging parents to join the school in its work to cut the high absence rate.
- Raise teachers' expectations and the pace of lessons to enable pupils to make consistently good progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children start in Reception with standards that are well below those expected for their age, particularly in personal, social and emotional, and language, skills. Most children achieve slightly below their learning goals by the end of the Reception Year because the good teaching enables them to make good progress. Their skills are well below the level expected for their age in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 6. Progress is satisfactory overall but is inconsistent. The good progress made in the Reception and Year 1 classes slows at the end of Key Stage 1, with the result that standards dipped last year. The school has recognised this and has introduced a number of effective strategies such as intensive reading and writing programmes that are accelerating pupils' achievement.

Pupils' performance in national tests was below average in English, mathematics and science in 2005. The provisional results for Year 6 in 2006 show an increased proportion of pupils attaining the higher level, though more could still reach this level. Although progress in English across all year groups is slowed by the pupils' limited skills in language and literacy. The school has set challenging targets for achievement for July 2007.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress because their work is well matched to their needs. Those who are learning English as a new language make good progress because they are supported well. Pupils with particular care needs do well at Osborne because of the tailor-made programmes that ensure they make good progress towards their individual targets. Those capable of reaching higher levels in their tests are not always challenged enough, which slows their progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, but a minority do not attend regularly enough, and so attendance is much lower than average. The school encourages pupils to arrive on time by using a successful system of praise and rewards. Despite these efforts, there is still frequent absence and lateness. Behaviour has improved greatly and is now good. Pupils generally treat each other with respect. Raising the pupils' own self-esteem has contributed successfully to this. All school groups work together harmoniously and incidents of bullying and exclusion have reduced. Pupils agree that the school deals with bullying effectively. As one pupil stated, 'If I'm being bullied I can talk to someone about it.' Children in Reception achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development. They make a happy and settled start to their education.

The pupils are beginning to understand the need for a healthy and safe lifestyle. Pupils' weak reading and writing skills affect the building of basic skills vital for their future life. Pupils have a satisfactory awareness of their own community and the school

council promotes their views successfully. An initiative such as the improvement to the playground is an example of their influence on the school. The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are good. Across the rest of the school, they are satisfactory. Teachers use a range of methods such as maths games, practical activities and the electronic whiteboards to engage pupils' interest successfully. This encourages pupils to enjoy their learning and to settle to work well. Discussion and quick-fire question and answer sessions are used effectively to improve pupils' speaking, listening and thinking skills. Teaching assistants and other adults give good support to pupils with learning difficulties and physical disabilities, enabling them to work to the best of their capabilities.

In some instances, especially in Year 2, the pace of learning is too slow and teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can do. Teachers' planning sometimes lacks detail about what the different groups within the class will learn and, as a result, the level of challenge for all pupils, especially for the more able pupils, is not high enough. The school has introduced new assessment systems in order to improve the match of work to ability, though it is too early for them to have had full impact. Marking usually identifies the things that pupils have done well, but does not always give enough guidance on how to improve the work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that is broad and balanced, and generally meets the needs of all pupils. Recent planning has incorporated more opportunities for greater creativity, although this has not yet extended to all subjects. The creative arts afternoon is particularly effective, enabling pupils to participate in a range of activities beyond the National Curriculum. Alternative curricular activities for pupils with particular gifts and talents are not planned consistently. The programme of visits to museums, environmental centres and other local places of interest is well planned and enriches pupils' education. Specialist knowledge is provided on aspects of the curriculum, making pupils aware of the dangers of drugs, smoking and alcohol abuse. Personal, social, health and citizenship education helps to ensure pupils understand the importance of staying safe and being healthy, and prepares them soundly to make effective contributions to the community.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

The school has good procedures for safeguarding pupils. The learning mentor provides good links between pupils, parents and the school. There are strong links with outside agencies which enable all pupils to have access to good quality care and advice. The well supported breakfast club is one example of the good level of care found within the school. Pupils with difficulties and disabilities are well supported with their learning. There are many pupils who experience considerable pressures outside school that affect their learning. The school values all of them and leaders have ensured racial harmony is very marked. Academic guidance is satisfactory because, although there are assessment and tracking systems in place, these are still too recent to fully improve achievement. The school is just starting to track the progress of the different cultural groups within the school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The recently appointed headteacher has already had a profoundly positive effect on the school. Together with the deputy, she has been successful in building an effective partnership with staff, pupils and parents. Their vision for the school's continuing improvement shows a determination to raise the standards of pupils' academic and personal development. However, it is too soon to have made a full impact on pupils' progress and middle managers and governors have yet to be sufficiently involved in checking that the work of the school is good enough.

There are satisfactory systems to monitor pupils' progress and the quality of teaching and learning. In most cases, this has resulted in the necessary improvement, though there has not yet been a systematic and rigorous evaluation of the recent initiatives aimed at improving standards in writing.

The school's judgements of how well it is doing are accurate. The effective implementation of most current plans demonstrates that school leaders have the capacity to make appropriate improvements in the future.

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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

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

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?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
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 making us feel so welcome and telling us about your school. We can see that you all enjoy coming to school and that you have many friends. We enjoyed looking at your books and chatting to some of you about your school.

What we liked most about Osborne Primary School

- You are given a sound education.
- Your new headteacher has made a good start and knows what needs to be done to make the school better.
- You make satisfactory progress and reach average standards.
- Most of you are taught soundly and you work hard.
- Your behaviour is good and you get on well together.
- You enjoy the out of school activities and visits that the school provides.
- Your teachers and helpers look after you carefully.

What we have asked your headteacher and staff to do

- Help you improve your work by letting you know what you have to do to make your reading and writing better.
- Work with your parents to ensure you attend school as much as possible.
- Make sure that your work is always hard enough and that you work quickly.

We hope you continue to enjoy your lessons.