



Green Meadow Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103378
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 286642
Inspection date 26 September 2006
Reporting inspector Martin Cole

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Green Meadow Road
School category	Community		Selly Oak
Age range of pupils	4-11		Birmingham B29 4EE
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0121 4754505
Number on roll (school)	422	Fax number	0121 4768254
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Brian Hardeman
		Headteacher	John Foley
Date of previous school inspection	5 February 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This large primary school serves a residential suburb where, overall, parents' social and economic circumstances are below average and there is a degree of deprivation. The great majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Children start at the school with overall attainment a little below the average, and more clearly below in their use of language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. The school's evaluation of itself before the inspection as 'good' is too modest. Exemplary leadership and management of the school ensure there is excellent teaching and good quality in all other school provisions. This leads to outstanding academic achievement by pupils. The personal development and well-being of the pupils, too, are exceptionally good and reflect the exceptional quality of the care, support and guidance they receive. These are key reasons for the extremely high regard parents have for the school. Parents also applaud what one described as the 'exciting and interesting environment'. Pupils find much interest and enjoyment in learning. They make great strides in developing self-confidence and responsible attitudes that lead to excellent behaviour. Together with pupils' splendid academic progress these valuable personal qualities are preparing pupils well for their future economic well-being. Above-average attendance at school reflects both pupils' enthusiasm and the happy and safe feelings they report. These result from the school's very caring ethos, teachers' excellent relationships with pupils and rigorous procedures for safeguarding pupils' welfare. This first-rate environment for learning is a key reason why pupils achieve extremely well throughout the school. Very good reception class provision initiates the very good progress that continues right through to Year 6. The oldest pupils' overall results in national tests are generally exceptionally high in mathematics and science and above average in English. Older pupils' excellent overall progress leading to the 2005 national tests put the school in the top four per cent nationally and their progress in mathematics was in the top one per cent.

Pupils' impressive progress is also the result of the extremely effective teaching and the good curriculum. The teaching is both very challenging and very supportive. Teachers' high expectations are made very clear to pupils so they know what they must do to make progress. Extremely careful and systematic assessment of pupils' progress is well used to plan teaching that caters for the full range of pupils' abilities and needs. The school has recently raised writing standards through improved teaching. It now recognises that the curriculum could give older pupils still more help to develop the imaginative aspects of their writing through extending opportunities for writing and creativity across the curriculum. A wealth of educational visits and visitors, together with a wide range of activities after lessons, provides excellent enrichment of the curriculum.

The outstanding quality of the school's leadership and management stems from the very clear vision and unwavering determination of its headteacher to provide a high quality education. All staff respond enthusiastically to these high expectations. They energetically support the constant search for improvement, which is based on extremely thorough and constant checks on the school's performance. It is a tribute to the strong leadership and management that the school has maintained its established record of high quality and good standards during the last three years when very many new staff have joined the school. The school clearly has a good capacity for further improvement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve older pupils' progress in writing, giving them more opportunities to practise writing and show creativity across the subjects of the curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The standards achieved by the oldest pupils are well above average and in some instances exceptionally high. The school has a good record of high, and often extremely high, scores in the Year 6 national tests. In mathematics, for example, test scores were exceptionally high between 2002 and 2005 and they were in science, too, in 2004 and 2005. The oldest pupils' overall English results have generally been above average. Previously pupils have scored less well in writing than in reading. However, the 2006 test results show an improvement in writing and a closing of the gap between English and the other main subjects. This shows that a drive by the school to improve the teaching of writing has begun to take effect. The high standards in Year 6 reflect the fact that pupils achieve very well at all stages of their time at the school. By the end of Reception, children's standards are beginning to exceed national expectations for their age and by the end of Year 2, test results for reading, writing and mathematics are above average. Between Years 2 and 6, overall progress is excellent and it was quite exceptional for pupils leaving the school in 2005. Good support helps pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities to make good progress toward individual targets.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school gives pupils very effective guidance and encouragement in developing personal qualities and skills that will make them valuable citizens, well able to prosper in future life. Pupils' spiritual moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils act upon a good understanding of right and wrong and an attitude of full respect for others. This accounts for pupils' excellent behaviour and their co-operative and harmonious relationships with each other. Pupils achieve a very good appreciation of the cultural diversity of the wider world through aspects of the curriculum, celebrations, striking displays, visits to a range of places of worship and the involvement of parents of varied cultural backgrounds. Pupils show they understand very well the need for a healthy lifestyle in largely sensible eating habits at school and by enthusiastically taking advantage of the very good opportunities the school provides for exercise. A good innovation is the class 'Fit for Learning' activity that ensures pupils have at least some exercise on those days when they have no formal physical education lessons. Pupils make a good contribution to their community through, for example, acting as peer mediators, organising charitable fund-raising or helping to plan improvements to school facilities through the school council.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 1

The teaching is very well planned to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm and to help them make good progress by building on previous learning. Teachers manage pupils extremely well so that lessons are very calm, happy events where time is put to full use to promote learning. Teachers assess pupils' progress extremely well. They use their findings to ensure that tasks, challenges and support suit pupils' abilities and needs. Any pupil whose progress disappoints is quickly recognised and extra help provided, the success of which is then carefully monitored. Teachers reinforce pupils' responsible attitudes by sharing the objectives of the lesson with them and explain the criteria by which their achievement will be judged. They also involve the pupils in assessing themselves and they give them helpful feedback through their marking of work and setting of targets. Pupils understand how they can make progress and improve their standards. A highly consistent approach to teaching across the school reflects the very strong leadership given to the teaching by the senior staff.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The well-designed curriculum successfully encourages enjoyment in learning and promotes good progress. In addition to the required subjects, pupils benefit from introductory work in French, and there are very many lively experiences and activities beyond the classroom and after school. Some good links are made between subjects that mean that pupils extend their skills in a number of areas and the work has greater relevance for pupils. For example, pupils are able to develop their literacy skills while at the same time extending their science knowledge. The school has rightly recognised that by encouraging more creativity and giving pupils more practice in writing across the subjects of the curriculum, it can further improve pupils' progress in writing. There are strong provisions to promote pupils' personal and social development and ensure their safety, health and well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school provides a very safe and caring environment and has meticulous procedures to ensure pupils stay safe and healthy. Very caring relationships and very strong links with parents, who are well informed about their children's progress, back up these procedures. The headteacher sets a shining example of personal interest in and care for pupils, which all staff support thoroughly. The school identifies very carefully, and fully understands, its pupils' needs, both academic and personal, and provides very good guidance and support as required. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in school and through effective links with external agencies.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The school staff fully share and support the headteacher's crystal-clear determination and commitment to providing a good quality of education that meets all pupils' needs. Staff teamwork is extremely strong. The very evident ambition to improve the school is served by watertight systems for ensuring that school aims and plans are turned into effective reality. Hence, as one parent put it, the school 'goes from strength to strength'. There are exemplary processes for keeping a check on the effectiveness of the school's work. Nothing is left to chance. The quality of the teaching is checked very thoroughly and supported with full guidance and abundant training opportunities for staff to help them meet the high expectations set. The views of parents and pupils are well considered in planning school improvement. The governors support the school very well, ensure all statutory requirements are met and see that the budget is used judiciously. The school's very good and attractive accommodation is but one reflection of governors' ambition.

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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?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	1
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?	1

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?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
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

I would like to thank you for your friendly welcome and the help you gave me when I visited your school recently. I really enjoyed meeting and talking to you. It was very good to see how enthusiastically you join in school life and how much you enjoy yourselves. I also noticed your excellent behaviour. You get on very well with the adults and with each other. As some of you told me, your school is a happy and safe place. I saw that all the adults look after you really well. I am sure you also enjoy school because of the many visits that take place and the fun activities you can join in after school. I watched many of you working and trying hard in your lessons. This is helping you make excellent progress and produce some very good work. Of course, you also make good progress because your teachers plan very good lessons, give you lots of help and encouragement and make the work interesting. I have said that I think your school is an excellent school. The adults in charge of the school are doing a really good job. However, I have agreed with the teachers one way that they could help you learn even more. The teachers agree with me that your writing is not as good as your reading and that you need more practice with writing. This could be during lessons in other subjects. The teachers could also try to give you more help to use your imaginations when writing. You may have noticed some of these changes already. I am sure you will play your part in trying to improve your writing skills.