



Kate's Hill Community Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 103774
Local Authority Dudley
Inspection number 286750
Inspection dates 24–25 January 2007
Reporting inspector Jacqueline Wordsworth HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Peel Street
School category	Community		Dudley
Age range of pupils	3–11		DY2 7HP
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01384 818700
Number on roll (school)	430	Fax number	01384 818701
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Alison Audsley
		Headteacher	Debbie Haywood
Date of previous school inspection	27 May 2002		

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Kate's Hill Community Primary School is a larger than average primary school whose pupils come from diverse social, economic and ethnic backgrounds. A high proportion of pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils who have learning difficulties and disabilities is above the national average, as is the proportion of pupils eligible free school meals. Overall, children's attainment when they begin school is low in relation to what is expected for their age.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Kate's Hill is a harmonious and inclusive community where everybody matters, especially the pupils, and it provides a satisfactory education. Pupils have a very good awareness of how to stay safe and live healthy lifestyles. They make healthy choices from the school's good provision for school lunches and are keen to show visitors how much they love fruit and vegetables. Special dietary needs of different groups are well catered for.

Relationships and pupils' behaviour are good because of the good care, guidance and support they receive. Pupils learn to display a mutual respect for each other's cultures, faiths and traditions and to make a positive contribution to their school. These well-developed personal qualities enable the pupils to develop a good sense of right and wrong and to think deeply about the plight of others. Consequently pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. This explains the high degree of racial harmony and sense of community in the school, all of which is underpinned by a satisfactory and improving curriculum.

The curriculum provides a sound basis for pupils' steady progress and satisfactory achievement, meeting the needs of most pupils, including those in the Foundation Stage. When they start in the Nursery, pupils' knowledge and skills are weak. Their oral language and communication skills are particularly poor, with many pupils at the very early stages of learning and many at the early stages of speaking English. The effective support provided through the Foundation Stage means they make satisfactory progress. This progress is sustained throughout Years 1 and 2 because of the constant focus on developing the pupils' basic skills in literacy and numeracy. New curriculum developments and improved approaches to the teaching of reading and writing, such as a highly structured reading programme and weekly extended writing sessions, have enabled pupils to achieve satisfactorily in Year 6 from their low starting points.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Records of observation visits made by senior staff and subject leaders show regular checks are made on the quality of teaching. However, feedback recorded does not place sufficient emphasis on how well pupils are learning and how the teaching brings this about. Teachers are not given clear enough guidance to enable them to improve. Therefore the school has insufficient knowledge about the overall strengths and weakness in teaching.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher provides a clear direction and is resolute in her drive to enable all pupils to achieve their potential whatever their starting points. Pupils' progress is individually tracked but insufficient account is taken of the achievement of each year group as a whole. The school is aware that some of the assessments that teachers make are too generous, especially in Foundation Stage.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that lessons are stimulating, with high expectations based on the individual needs of pupils.

- Improve the skills of all leaders and managers in the monitoring of teaching and learning and evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken to raise standards.
- Improve the management systems for accurately tracking the progress and attainment of the pupils and year groups as they move through the school.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Results in English in the end-of-Key Stage 2 national tests in 2006 were exceptionally low when compared to the national picture, with all pupils making inadequate progress. Reasons for this have been identified by the school and constructive changes in provision have arrested further decline. Consequently, pupils are now achieving satisfactorily, given their low starting points, and standards are beginning to rise, although the current pupils in Year 6 are still attaining well-below-average standards. The pupils who have English as an additional language and those who are from British minority ethnic backgrounds make at least satisfactory progress throughout their time in school because of appropriate systems and the curriculum in place to meet their needs. The pupils in Years 3 to 6 make stronger progress in mathematics, where pupils make sound gains and generally meet challenging targets. Pupils from Black Caribbean heritage, especially, make good progress in mathematics and attained well-above-average results in the 2006 national tests. Pupils from Pakistani heritage also make good progress in mathematics given their starting points but still attain exceptionally low standards. Nevertheless, most pupils are still not reaching standards high enough for future access to a broad range of education and later employment opportunities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. They enjoy school and nearly all attend regularly. However, the practice of pupils taking extended holidays in term-time is reducing their chances of attaining more highly. Most are eager to learn and behave well. Occasionally, however, a few older pupils behave immaturely and this affects their learning and that of others. Pupils develop a good awareness of their community, particularly by making improvements through the school council and by being members of the Green Team, keeping the school tidy. The school does much to encourage pupils to adopt healthy lifestyles, and recent initiatives to teach pupils about the need for a better diet have been a huge success. Pupils are adequately prepared for the future by taking responsibility readily and developing their enterprise skills in projects such as selling things at the Christmas fair.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good features. Good lessons are well structured, have a brisk pace and pupils are given ample opportunities to apply and consolidate learning, resulting in pupils making good progress. Nevertheless, too many lessons are mundane and fail to excite the pupils' interest. Here teachers' expectations of what the pupils can attain are not high enough. In particular, work for the higher-attaining pupils is too easy and so pupils lose interest because the pace of learning is too slow. The use of rigorous curricular targets and the teachers' good knowledge of each pupil's strengths and weaknesses have contributed to boosting achievement in writing. Marking is generally good and exceptionally good in writing. Pupils appreciate the helpful comments made by their teachers and are aware of what they need to do to improve, particularly in English, but less so in other subjects. The pupils are aware of their targets and express a determination to achieve them. Teaching assistants and learning mentors are capable, competent and highly valued members of the teaching team. They provide unobtrusive and sensitive support for children who have difficulties with aspects of their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

An innovation to the English curriculum with a special focus on pupils' writing is contributing to rising standards. Effective support both in classrooms and for focused groups is enabling pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities to progress at least at the same rate as others. However, withdrawal from some lessons means these pupils miss out on areas of the curriculum such as music and art. Effective provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is enabling pupils to develop good ICT-related skills. However, opportunities to further develop these skills across the curriculum are too limited. Good links with a local secondary school, enabling some of its teachers to work in Kate's Hill, strengthens provision in the visual arts. Pupils derive much benefit and enjoyment from working with visitors to school and participating in interesting visits out of school, for example, a residential visit for Year 5. These additional activities have a positive effect on pupils' achievement.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The care, guidance and support are good and valued highly by pupils and parents. The school makes effective use of the learning mentor, who supports pupils with poor self-esteem very well. This helps pupils understand their feelings better and they grow in confidence. Health and safety procedures are good and are reviewed regularly to ensure pupils' well-being. As a result, the school is a secure and happy place in which pupils enjoy learning. Child protection systems are robust and recently staff have

received effective training. The school has effective systems to track pupils' personal development and pass on valuable information to the pupils' next teacher. There are, however, weaknesses in the systems to show how well different groups of pupils achieve academically.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The leadership of the headteacher is determined but the school's self-evaluation is too generous as it focuses on what the school is doing rather than assessing and analysing the impact on the outcomes for pupils. There is a strong focus on achievement, with high aspirations for the success of all the pupils. This has had a positive impact on raising standards in Key Stage 1, and is beginning to increase the number of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a result of a new and consistent approach to the teaching of reading and writing across the school. Senior staff contribute well to school improvement planning. However, the senior leaders do not focus enough on measuring the effect of any changes they make on pupils' learning and using this information to determine the school's priorities. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Appropriate subject knowledge and suitable monitoring activities mean leaders know broadly where strengths and weaknesses lie in their subjects but they do not always look at the reasons why.

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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?	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	3

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	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	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?	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?	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 very much for being so welcoming and friendly towards us during our recent visit to your school. We very much enjoyed the opportunity to talk with you and your teachers about how well you are doing. We thought you would like to know what we have said about your school. Overall, we decided it was a satisfactory school.

You behave well and you are kind and considerate to each other. In lessons, we think you listen carefully to what your teachers have to tell you and you try hard to do your best. We saw how much you enjoy school by the happy way you come in each day with a smile on your faces. You told us that you feel safe and secure because you know who to go to when you need help. You know the importance of staying healthy and taking regular exercise. We enjoyed seeing your healthy lunchboxes and sharing your delicious and healthy school meals with you.

We know that your teachers look after you well and make sure that you are safe. We are very pleased to see that your writing has improved tremendously since September 2006. You should be proud of this and keep working hard at it.

We have made some suggestions to make your school get even better. Some lessons are better than others and we would like all the lessons to be good. The leaders can help teachers by checking more carefully on what they are doing well. The school should make more regular checks to see that you are learning as much as you can.

There are many things that are good about your school and you together with your teachers can make the school even better. Please keep working hard and doing the best you can. All the inspectors wish you well in the future.