



Worcester, Perdiswell Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 116755
Local Authority Worcestershire
Inspection number 290624
Inspection dates 17–18 January 2007
Reporting inspector Martin Kerly

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Bilford Road
School category	Community		Worcester
Age range of pupils	4–11		WR3 8QA
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01905 453348
Number on roll (school)	398	Fax number	01905 759206
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	R A Kington
		Headteacher	D J Murphy
Date of previous school inspection	7 October 2002		

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The school is considerably larger than average. It serves an area with a wide range of socio-economic characteristics and broadly in line with those found nationally. Relatively few pupils are from disadvantaged backgrounds or eligible for free school meals. No pupils have statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties is close to the national average. Almost all the pupils are White British and speak English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school. It has a significant number of strengths, particularly related to the personal development of pupils. Weaknesses in aspects of monitoring of the school's performance contribute to some inconsistencies in practice and pupils' achievement. Standards have risen since the last inspection and the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing previous weaknesses. Although the school accurately identifies most of the main priorities for further development and is satisfactorily placed to improve further, it does not have a complete picture of its strengths and weaknesses and tends to overestimate its performance in some aspects.

The achievement of pupils is satisfactory and standards are in line with the national average. Achievement improves rapidly in Year 6 and, as a result, the attainment of a large minority of pupils is above the national average by the end of Year 6. Some of the comprehensive data collected by the school on pupils' performance give confusing messages and they are not collated or analysed well enough to identify current standards and the variations in rates of progress. Pupils are exceptionally polite and considerate as they move around the school. Their personal development and well-being are good, particularly their behaviour and attitudes to each other and school. These attributes contribute strongly to their learning. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There are many instances of good practice, but the quality is variable between lessons and classes as some improvements, such as in assessment, have not yet become fully established and pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. The range and quality of curriculum experiences are good. Throughout the school pupils are well cared for, supported and guided. This view is endorsed by almost all parents. One of many similar comments received from parents read, 'The headteacher and staff genuinely care for the welfare of all the children and are always willing to talk through any concerns you have.' The provision and standards in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Here there is some good teaching, but the children's learning experiences are restricted by the lack of high quality resources and equipment.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Recent extensions to the leadership team successfully involve more staff in leadership roles helping give them a better understanding of whole school developments. There is a lack of a systematic approach and a clear focus when monitoring the performance of the school, and an over-reliance on informal ways of reporting findings at all levels. This helps lead to the incomplete picture of performance and some inconsistencies in practice. The school is working with commitment to address the priorities for action, although it does not have sufficiently detailed and formalised action plans to show what it intends to do.

What the school should do to improve further

- Monitor the performance of the school more systematically so that this information can be used to draw up detailed actions for improvement.
- Improve the achievement of pupils by ensuring new initiatives being developed to strengthen teaching and learning are consistently implemented.

- Ensure that performance data are used effectively in planning appropriately challenging work for pupils.
- Improve the range and quality of resources and equipment in the Foundation Stage in order to extend children's learning experiences.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Standards are in line with the national average and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. The attainment of children on arrival in the Foundation Stage is in line with national expectations. Children achieve satisfactorily in their first year, attaining standards in all areas close to national expectations but not always as high as some of the school's data indicate. In Years 1 to 5 pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. Results from national assessments at the end of Year 2 show that standards are usually very close to the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. They rose above this in 2006, but are set to be broadly average again in 2007.

Results in national tests for Year 6 fluctuate from year to year. They rose in 2006 and standards were above average in English, mathematics and science. A range of test results in 2006 at the end of Year 5, for the current Year 6 pupils, showed conflicting evidence of progress. These pupils are now making good progress in Year 6 but are not fully on course to meet their challenging targets because earlier progress in Years 3, 4 and 5 had been too variable, particularly in writing. Pupils with significant learning difficulties achieve well, especially when targeted for specific support in small groups. For example, some of these pupils have made a whole year's progress in reading in just 10 weeks.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils are very sensitive and thoughtful about the consequences of their actions, for example in the exceptional way in which they move calmly around the school. They also take their responsibilities seriously as they do in their work related to the vibrant eco-committee. There are some missed opportunities in assemblies though, to reflect on the beauty and mysteries of life and strengthen further pupils' spiritual development. Many pupils play their part well in contributing to the community, including enthusiastically managing the school's waste paper for recycling. Pupils greatly enjoy all school activities. Punctuality is good and attendance is satisfactory. Pupils talk knowledgably about how to stay safe and issues learnt in the 'stop, think, act, react' programme. They are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles, and keenly participate in various physical activities. Pupils are gaining a good range of study skills needed for their next stage of education and later working life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

There are some good features of teaching and learning throughout the school, such as the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, with a good learning atmosphere in almost all lessons. Teachers and teaching assistants frequently make good use of pupils' social and collaborative skills and this promotes good learning, for example when assessing each other's limericks in pairs. There are other instances of good practice, including new approaches to help pupils assess their own writing, but the application of new ideas varies considerably from class to class. Inconsistencies restrict learning to satisfactory in many lessons. In some lessons, including those when older pupils are divided into ability sets for English and mathematics, work is not sufficiently tailored to the needs of different groups within the lesson; in others teachers' questioning does not deliberately target specific pupils. In the Foundation Stage children have a limited range of learning experiences, particularly out of doors.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is broad and balanced and made interesting for the pupils. The school has several nationally recognised awards reflecting its good curriculum. These include the Healthy Schools, Green Flag and Activemark awards and the FA Charter mark. Other strengths include physical education and personal, social, health and emotional education, which contribute to the pupils' good personal development and appreciation of physical fitness. In addition to the limitations in equipment within the Foundation Stage for imaginative play, the school has identified the need to upgrade some of its computer equipment to maintain pupils' current good opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. Pupils really enjoy the numerous enrichment activities outside of the classroom, such as rehearsals for the spoof 'Rebecca Riding Hood' production, which took place during the inspection.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' care and welfare are among the school's highest priorities. Pupils feel safe and report being confident about how the school would react if, for example, someone felt they were being bullied. Pupils with significant academic and personal difficulties and problems are identified early and supported very well, enabling them to play a full part in school life. Younger pupils are cared for by Year 6 pupils in the playground. The school rigorously implements a robust range of statutory procedures designed to safeguard pupils. Most pupils are aware of their short-term learning targets, many of which are carefully selected and clear, providing good support for pupils' academic guidance. For example one told inspectors, 'My numeracy target is to be able to draw, measure and recognise different sized angles.'

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The headteacher's commitment to promoting the personal development and well-being of all the pupils has successfully led to the caring family-style ethos within this large school as well as rising academic standards. The arrangements for pupils with learning needs are very well managed and this leads to the good progress made by many of these pupils. Members of the expanded and restructured leadership team and subject coordinators are becoming more involved in leading developments and informally monitoring the performance of the school. This is strengthening the overall leadership and management.

Despite the increasing monitoring being carried out there is a lack of systematic and carefully focused checks, including on the quality of teaching and learning. Monitoring has had some success, for example in introducing new approaches to teaching writing, but has not identified in sufficient detail exactly what needs to improve so leaders can plan exactly the right action to bring about improvements across the whole school. Consequently a number of good initiatives are taken up by teachers but not consistently applied in all classes. The systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils and whole year groups are satisfactory, but some data appear to be confusing or misleading when passed on to the next teacher making it more difficult for them to plan their pupils' work.

Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are supportive of the school. However, within their relatively short meetings they are not sufficiently informed about the most important aspects of the school's performance.

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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	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	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	2

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?	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?	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 when we recently visited your school. We enjoyed talking with you and seeing some of your work. Yours is a satisfactory school. We are pleased to say there are a number of things that are good about it but there are also some things which need to get better. Here are some of the most important things that are good:

- You behave well in lessons and exceptionally well as you move around your large building.
- You are very thoughtful about your responsibilities, especially looking after one another and the environment.
- You make satisfactory progress in most years and good progress in Year 6.
- Your teachers plan many interesting things for you to do in lessons and lots of fun activities outside the classroom which you enjoy.
- The headteacher and all the staff work hard to make sure you are safe and well cared for.
- Those of you who find school life more difficult are supported very well.

We have asked the headteacher, staff and governors to work together on these things:

- Be more careful about how they check up on how good the school is and what needs to be done to make it even better.
- Help you to make more progress in lessons by ensuring teachers share and agree their good ideas when introducing new ways of teaching and learning.
- Make sure that all the information collected about your progress is useful and used well to help plan what needs to be done next.
- Provide some new equipment in the Foundation Stage to offer more activities for the children.

I hope you continue to enjoy your time at Perdiswell Primary School.