

Wythall, Meadow Green Primary

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116763
Local Authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	290626
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Joan Greenfield

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	314
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Tremlett
Headteacher	Sue Watkins
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2002
School address	Meadow Road Wythall Birmingham B47 6EQ
Telephone number	01564 823495
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Age group	3–11
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This is a larger-than-average primary school. The majority of pupils are White British. A small number of pupils come from a range of other minority ethnic heritages but very few are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average but there is a higher proportion than average of pupils with a statement of special educational need. Children enter the Nursery with the expected skills and experiences for their age. The school has gained a number of awards, including Investor in People, Basic Skills Award, Leading Aspect Award, Activemark Gold, Healthy Schools and Artsmark Silver.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Meadow Green provides its pupils with a good education. In many areas, its work is outstanding. Through its robust checking systems, the school has a very clear understanding of its strengths and relative weaknesses and has taken firm action to tackle areas that can be improved. For example, the reasons for the dip in standards at the end of Year 2 in 2006 have been analysed and prompt action taken. The result is that there has been a considerable jump in the proportion of pupils gaining the expected levels in this year's national tests in reading, writing and mathematics, and at the higher level in reading and mathematics. The good teaching enables all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and the higher attainers, to make good progress throughout the school and achieve well. Standards are well above average overall. The school has a well-deserved reputation for helping all pupils to succeed whatever their individual needs.

The atmosphere within the school is calm and orderly. Pupils respond extremely well to the school's high expectations, and talk enthusiastically about the range of activities provided for them. They really enjoy coming to school and value the help they receive from their teachers. Several pupils commented that 'teachers have a good sense of humour and they try to get us all involved in the class'. Relationships within the school are very positive and pupils receive excellent care, guidance and support. As a result, their personal development and well-being are outstanding, especially their understanding of the need to maintain healthy lifestyles and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. Through the school council they make a good contribution to school life and contribute effectively to the local community. Parents are very supportive of the school, although a small number do not think that the school takes enough account of their views.

The good curriculum supports pupils' development well. Pupils speak very warmly about the way the 'thinking skills' initiative is helping them to develop a wide range of skills, including the ability to work in groups and to respect others' ideas. Children receive a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage and most reach and many exceed the expected goals for learning by the end of Reception. Curriculum planning in Reception does not show as clearly as in the Nursery how all the areas of learning are to be covered, which makes it more difficult to check its overall balance. However, it does not affect children's progress. The school's plans rightly identify the need to streamline planning across the Foundation Stage.

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher, with the first-rate support of her deputy, provides excellent direction to the work of the school and has a clear understanding of what it needs to do to improve further. The consistency with which senior managers and staff with subject or key stage responsibilities monitor pupils' progress and check the quality of provision across the school is a particular strength. The school's own evaluation of its work is accurate, although at times it underestimates its quality. Governors undertake their responsibilities well but do not monitor in a sufficiently structured way the school's progress in addressing its priorities. The good progress made since the last inspection means that the school has considerable capacity to improve even further.

What the school should do to improve further

- Plan the Reception Year curriculum more explicitly against all the areas of learning.
- Ensure that governors monitor in a more structured way the school's progress in addressing its priorities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Standards are well above average and all pupils achieve well. Children enter the Nursery with the expected range of skills and experiences for their age and make good progress in the Foundation Stage. By the end of Reception, nearly all children attain, and many exceed, the expected goals across all areas of learning. This good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. A dip in performance in the 2006 national tests at the end of Year 2 was the result of a small group of pupils with considerable personal and emotional difficulties who entered the school at a later stage than usual. The results for 2007 indicate an improvement, returning to the average and above-average levels of the past few years. The national test results at the end of Year 6 have been at least above average for the past three years and were well above average in 2004 and 2006, with particularly good performance in English. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress as they receive well-targeted support from teachers and support assistants. Pupils benefit from the careful tracking of their progress so that anyone falling behind is quickly identified and given the necessary support.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils really enjoy their time in school and are keen to learn, which is reflected in their good attendance. They speak with pride about their achievements and how they like what the school provides for them. They speak warmly of their teachers and are confident that they can go to them if they require help. Behaviour in lessons is good and although they are boisterous at playtimes this is a product of their natural enthusiasm and energy. Pupils have a keen sense of the importance of adopting healthy lifestyles and large numbers take part in the range of extra-curricular opportunities provided for them. They have a good understanding of the need to keep safe. Pupils say that a few children can be unkind to one another at times but that teachers sort it out quickly when it occurs.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Pupils make valuable contributions to the school and wider community, for example, through the school council, undertaking office duties and acting as 'playground friends' in Year 6, and raising money for charities. Pupils develop good teamwork and other skills through the opportunities to extend their 'thinking skills' across the curriculum. Together with their above-average skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), these opportunities prepare them well for their future lives.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The predominantly good teaching enables pupils to learn effectively and make good progress. Children get a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. In all classes, pupils are interested and involved in their work. They listen well, and readily contribute to discussions and respond to the teachers' questions. Planning is thorough and clear learning objectives provide a strong focus to lessons. Activities and tasks meet the needs of the pupils well and provide them with the required level of challenge. Occasionally, activities go on for a little too long, with the result that the pace of the lesson drops. Teachers make good use of the interactive

whiteboards to support their teaching. Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and other vulnerable pupils. The more able pupils are given additional challenges in lessons, with the older pupils, for example, having lesson with a specialist mathematician.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Pupils receive a broad and well-balanced curriculum that meets their needs well. A good focus is placed on developing literacy and numeracy skills and the curriculum in Years 3 and 4 is enhanced by the introduction of French. The curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that pupils in Years 3 to 6, who are taught in mixed-age classes for much of the week, cover the programmes of study. The school is currently reviewing the organisation of the science curriculum to raise standards further.

Children in the Foundation Stage develop their skills in all areas of learning through a balance of activities that are led by the teacher and those that they initiate themselves. The planning of these activities in the Nursery is specifically linked to the areas of learning but it is not done as clearly in Reception, making it more difficult to check that every area of learning is covered adequately.

Pupils' personal development is enriched by a wide range of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities, as well as by the personal and social education programme and the 'thinking skills' initiative. Discussions with pupils demonstrate how much they value these opportunities and the benefits they get from them.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Relationships between staff and their pupils are excellent and help to ensure that pupils receive high quality care, guidance and support. Ensuring that pupils are able to do their best in all areas of their academic and personal life lies at the heart of the school's ethos. The school includes and welcomes all, especially vulnerable pupils, who are given carefully focused support to enable them to succeed in a school setting. The school prepares pupils extremely well for when they move to the next stage of their education. Child protection arrangements, including safeguarding procedures and regular health and safety checks, ensure a safe and secure environment for everyone.

Arrangements to monitor pupils' progress are robust and undertaken regularly and systematically at all levels throughout the school. Pupils are set challenging targets and those in danger of falling behind are identified and supported very quickly.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

The headteacher has a high profile, leads by example and provides clear direction to the work of the school. She receives excellent support from her deputy. Key stage and subject leaders check the work in their areas of responsibility regularly, reviewing pupils' progress as well as the quality of planning and teaching. These activities, together with the monitoring undertaken by the headteacher and her deputy, ensure that the school has a very clear understanding of

its strengths and areas for improvement. As a result, its priorities are carefully focused and swift action taken to secure improvement.

Governors play an active role in the school and undertake their responsibilities well. They have a good understanding of where the school is at but do not monitor the school's progress in addressing its identified priorities in a structured way. The school has made very good progress since its last inspection. The excellent quality of its systems for self-evaluation and the regular checking of its progress indicate that the school has considerable capacity to improve even further.

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Annex A

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 quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	2
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?	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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
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	1
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?	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.

Annex A

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	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

21 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Meadow Green Primary School, Wythall B47 6EQ

Thank you for welcoming me to your school when I visited it recently. I enjoyed talking to many of you about the work that you do and finding out what you think about the school. You told me many of the good things about the school and how much you enjoyed being there. This letter is to tell you some of the things I found out.

- You go to a good school and staff are working hard to make it even better.
- The standard of your work is better than in most schools and you achieve well.
- You work hard and make good progress in lessons.
- The teachers give you challenging work to do and help make learning fun.
- You behave well and you are friendly and polite to one another and to adults.
- You enjoy school very much and many of you take part in the large number of sporting and other activities that the school provides for you. You know how important it is to keep healthy.
- Staff take good care of you and make sure you are safe so that you get the most out of being in the school.
- Your headteacher and other staff know how well you are doing and how to help you do even better.

We have asked the school to do two things to make the school even better.

- Plan the activities that children in the Reception Year do during the week more clearly against all the areas for learning.
- Make sure the governors check the work of the school in a more structured way to see how well it is doing.

You can help the school be even better by always working hard and doing your very best.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Joan Greenfield Lead Inspector