

Chuckery Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132076
Local Authority	Walsall
Inspection number	293938
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Peter Clifton

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	456
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Alan McBevitt
Headteacher	N Brook
Date of previous school inspection	20 January 2003
School address	Lincoln Road Walsall WS1 2DZ
Telephone number	01922 449104
Fax number	01922 449124

Age group	3–11
Inspection dates	27–28 June 2007
Inspection number	293938

© Crown copyright 2007

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a larger than average school. Pupils come into the school with few of the skills and abilities expected for their age. There are a high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language, including several at an early stage of learning English. The pupils in the school represent the wide cultural diversity of the local community with just over a half of pupils being of Pakistani background and almost a third White British. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is just above average. The make up of pupils coming into the school is changing, with increasing numbers of children with very limited English language skills joining the school.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards reached and progress made by pupils in Years 3 to 6 especially in writing. As a result, the school's overall effectiveness is inadequate.

Pupils make good progress and achieve well in the Foundation Stage because the provision is good. The good progress continues in Years 1 and 2. However, although standards have recently risen in Year 6, achievement across Years 3 to 6 is unsatisfactory. Consequently, overall achievement is inadequate and standards are below average. Current standards are well below average in writing. Progress in lessons is currently satisfactory but is not yet sufficiently rapid to resolve the legacy of significant underachievement in Years 3 to 6. Nevertheless, recent changes to strengthen teaching and guidance have enabled improvement to take place. Teaching and the curriculum are both satisfactory and care, guidance and support are good. The key reasons that teaching is satisfactory rather than better is because work given to pupils does not consistently match the needs of different pupils sufficiently well. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution in supporting the learning of those pupils whose English is particularly weak, especially in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, most teaching takes account of these specific pupils' needs by developing vocabulary carefully and providing visual information. However, this is not always the case and in a few lessons pupils who are at the early stage of learning English are not making the expected progress.

The school cares well for its pupils and as a result, behaviour by the vast majority of pupils is good and most enjoy school. There are a few pupils who exhibit challenging behaviour but this is skilfully managed by the teachers who promote good relationships. As a result of a successful drive by leaders, attendance has improved significantly over the last year with fewer families taking children on extended leave. Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. The pupils have a good understanding of being fit and active but many do not choose healthy foods to eat in school. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and nearly always get on well with each other. One said 'the teachers are nice and they listen if you have a problem'. Parents support the work of the school well.

The use of targets and some exemplary marking are the main reasons for the improvements in teaching that have been made. Marking clearly identifies next steps for learning and most teachers follow up comments to see if the pupils have taken on the suggestions for improvement.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has developed the skills of subject leaders well and their work is making a difference, such as in mathematics where standards are now improving. However, more work needs to be done to iron out the inconsistencies in teaching through taking more effective steps to confront and remedy weaknesses. Currently, weaknesses identified are not pursued with sufficient rigour. Nonetheless, the impact that the leadership has made on improving attendance, standards in mathematics, behaviour and aspects of teaching, such as marking, demonstrate that there is satisfactory capacity to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards and the level of achievement in Years 3 to 6.
- Improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 by taking more determined steps to remedy weaknesses.
- Improve writing skills by raising expectations about what should be achieved in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Levels of achievement are inadequate and standards are below average. A significant minority of children have few English speaking skills when they first come to school. They get off to a good start because the Foundation Stage provision is well matched to their needs and there is good bilingual support. However, pupils still enter Year 1 with language skills that are well below those expected. In Years 1 and 2, the good foundation work from Nursery and Reception can be seen in the gains pupils make in speaking, reading and writing. In the Year 2 national tests in 2006, standards were below average in reading and mathematics but above average in writing. Current standards are broadly similar with a slight fall in writing standards; however, mathematics standards have improved. A few pupils in Year 2 make outstanding progress with writing.

Year 6 test results show a downward trend since 2002. In 2006, standards were very low and pupils did not make enough progress from their starting points in Year 2. Current standards are better, especially in Year 6, but across much of Key Stage 2 the legacy of underachievement remains, especially in writing. However, pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make generally satisfactory progress.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Most pupils like school and their teachers. They concentrate well, even when the lessons are not exciting. Although attendance has improved markedly, there are still too many pupils who are late for school in the morning.

Pupils are behaving better, and there are much fewer interruptions to lessons because of poor behaviour. Pupils from different ethnic backgrounds get on well with each other. Very occasionally there are incidences where pupils make racist remarks and sometimes incidents of an intimidatory nature, but these are dealt with effectively and most pupils feel safe in school. Pupils have responded well to aspects of the healthy lifestyle message, and really enjoy moving to the music at the 'Wake and Shake' sessions where they are increasingly organising the routines themselves. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and really throw themselves into it. However, there are still many pupils bringing unhealthy snacks to eat at playtimes. The school council is taking on more responsibilities such as helping with staff appointments but there are missed opportunities for pupils to do more, such as running the tuck shop for themselves. Younger pupils are not sufficiently involved in decision making about the school.

A strength in the school is the way in which pupils are increasingly learning to work together in lessons. Progress in mathematics and English is now sufficient to meet their future needs; however, the legacy of underachievement has resulted in too many pupils being insufficiently prepared for the next stage of learning.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Good teaching through the Nursery and Reception gives children a purposeful start because planned activities are adapted to meet their particular needs, with good support in English and the children's first language.

Throughout the school, relationships are positive and pupils usually cooperate well with each other. There are frequent, good opportunities for the pupils to discuss with each other what they understand so that they can explain their thinking. Many pupils are eager to respond to the questions posed by the teacher.

Weaknesses in teaching are mainly confined to Years 3 to 6. Although different work is often set for pupils with different needs, this is not done consistently enough. In a few lessons, teachers are too slow in giving information and this results in some pupils losing interest. On a few occasions, explanations assume an understanding of vocabulary which the pupils do not have. When setting writing tasks, teachers are not sufficiently explicit about what is expected from different pupils.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception is good and encourages talk and independence. Children have many good opportunities to play together and work on their own.

Recent improvements in the curriculum ensure that pupils' basic skills are now being satisfactorily developed. However, the curriculum does not reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of its pupils sufficiently well. Information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the previous inspection. However, there are too few computers in classrooms and, as a result; pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use ICT skills across the other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well provided for in a well structured and sensitive way.

There is a good range of enriching activities such as after-school clubs, residential visits and dramatic performances which adds greatly to the pupils' enjoyment of their time at school.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils feel secure because of the good relationships they have with their teachers. They are well supported, because they know that they can go to a teacher with a worry and that they will be listened to. The school uses the expertise of outside agencies well and works effectively with them to support pupils' personal development. A good example is the work done to raise levels of attendance.

The greater emphasis on the tracking of pupils' progress, much improved marking and good use of learning targets means that pupils are now making satisfactory progress. In Year 1 for example, the pupils' target was to use full stops. The next piece of work showed this happening and the teacher followed this up with a comment showing she had noticed the improvement.

Where teachers and teaching assistants have bilingual skills, support and guidance for pupils learning English as an additional language is good. Teaching assistants work sensitively with these pupils. Support for pupils who have emotional and behavioural problems is good, and instances of exclusion have been reduced in the last year.

Health and safety procedures including child protection are robust and meet requirements. Pupils rightly say that the toilets are 'smelly' and are unpleasant to use.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The school leadership group is beginning to have a positive impact on standards and progress. For example, improvements have been made in data analysis, attendance and the pupils' behaviour. However, current standards remain too low in Years 3 to 6 as a result of inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. Although leaders have identified accurately the overall strengths and weaknesses of the school, including the effectiveness of the teaching, further work is required to address specific weaknesses. Subject leadership in English, mathematics and science is strong and as a result of their initiatives improvements are starting to occur. Clear plans are in place to guide the school towards improvement.

The governing body is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It is committed to the school and is proud of the care that pupils receive. The governors are well informed and offer support and appropriate challenge to leaders.

Teachers are provided with extensive information about the progress that their pupils are making. The school has been well supported externally in this area.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall
--	-----------------------

Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	4
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	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
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?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	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?	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.

Annex A

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?	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

28 June 2007

Dear Pupils

Chuckery Primary School, Walsall, WS1 2DZ

Thank you for our very warm welcome to your school. We enjoyed talking to you in lessons and during your playtimes and were very impressed with how friendly you were. You gave us a lot of valuable information and this was a great help to us. We think your school looks after you well and is now giving you a satisfactory education. However, we think that you should make better progress and achieve higher standards by the time you leave.

What we most liked about your school

- You get off to a good start in Nursery and Reception.
- You are making good progress in Years 1 and 2.
- The school ensures that you are safe.
- You have positive attitudes to learning and you behave well.
- The after school clubs and visits to different places help you to learn and develop your skills well.
- You have a good understanding about how to stay fit and healthy.

We found that improvements are needed and have asked your headteacher and others to:

- Help you to improve the standards that you reach and the progress that you make.
- Improve teaching in Years 3 to 6 to make sure that you do as well as possible all of the time.
- Ensure that leaders help teachers as much as possible to get better.
- Be clearer about what you should achieve with writing in lessons so that you make as much progress as possible.

We hope your school continues to improve.

Yours faithfully

Peter Clifton Lead inspector