



Hodge Hill Primary School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134673
Local Authority Birmingham
Inspection number 294145
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector David Rzeznik HMI

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

Type of school	Primary	School address	Twycroff Grove off Bromford Rord Birmingham B36 8LD
School category	Community	Telephone number	0121 464 2189
Age range of pupils	4–11	Fax number	0121 464 8252
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Chair	Vacant Position
Number on roll (school)	541	Headteacher	Martine Woods
Appropriate authority	The governing body		
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group 4–11	Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007	Inspection number 294145
--------------------------	--	------------------------------------

© 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 one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Hodge Hill is a larger than average primary school. It opened in September 2005 following the amalgamation of an infant and junior school on the same site. The headteacher is the former headteacher of the infant school. At the time of the inspection major building work was being carried out to improve the accommodation. The neighbourhood the school serves has become increasingly multi-racial over the past five years and this is reflected in the school's intake. Around 70% of pupils are of Asian origin, mainly from Pakistani backgrounds. One in five pupils is White British and a handful are of Black or mixed heritage. The proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is above average but few are at the early stages of acquiring English. Those that are beginners are mainly in the Reception classes. The number claiming free school meals and the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, are average.

The premises are used for out-of-school care and a private nursery is located within the school grounds. The provision is not managed by the school. It is subject to a separate inspection by the child care inspectorate.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education and is in a sound position to improve further. Children get off to a good start and make good progress in the Reception classes (Foundation Stage) and satisfactory progress between Years 1 and 6. In 2006, standards at the end of Year 2 were below average and pupils made satisfactory progress from their below average attainment on entry. Reading results show that boys and the more able could be doing better. Standards in Year 6 are average, but in English and mathematics they are not as high as they could be. Pupils lack fluency when speaking and writing and their progress in mathematics is just adequate. Senior leaders realise there is much to do to further raise standards by improving the quality and consistency of teaching and leadership and management. The youngest EAL learners are making good progress in their basic skills. This is because teaching is effective and bilingual support is well targeted. However, there is a lack of EAL support in Years 1 to 6 to fully develop pupils' language and communication skills.

Teaching in Reception is good and it is satisfactory between Years 1 and 6. There are examples of good teaching but not enough of it. Pupils' progress is inconsistent and there is much catching up to do in some classes. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and say that they enjoy coming to school. Their attendance markedly improved during the autumn term 2006 as a result of suitable intervention, and is now average. The school provides a good level of care. The work done by the learning mentors is effective, particularly in improving the behaviour and attitudes of those with social and emotional difficulties.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher and governors have provided decisive leadership to ensure the two former schools have been successfully merged into one. There has been regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching by senior staff which has led to them having a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision. Some shortcomings have been robustly followed up, for example, ensuring lesson objectives are shared with pupils. However, others have not been remedied quickly enough and therefore inconsistencies in teaching and learning remain. Currently, there is no teacher who has effective oversight of the whole curriculum to ensure its coherence and progression. The school does not yet have a race equality policy and whilst there are acts of collective worship they are not daily.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills by developing them in all areas of the curriculum.
- Improve the quality and consistency of teaching and extend the provision made for those who are learning EAL.
- Further improve the leadership and management of the curriculum and eliminate weaknesses in teaching to ensure pupils' progress is consistently good.
- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory duties by producing a race equality policy and holding daily acts of collective worship.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Children enter Reception with below average levels of ability in all areas of learning. The effective provision ensures that they make good progress in their basic skills. Those children at the early stages of acquiring English are making good progress in their communication, personal and social skills.

Pupils make satisfactory progress between Years 1 and 6. Their progress in mathematics and writing lags behind that in reading and science. Year 2 results in 2006 indicate that the more able readers and mathematicians could be doing better. In reading and mathematics, boys were about a term behind similar pupils nationally. In writing, they were about a term and a half behind. In mathematics, girls performed about a term behind girls nationally. Year 6 results indicate that boys' and girls' attainment is close to the national picture, although in mathematics girls performed about a term behind similar pupils. Pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities and those with EAL make sound progress as they move through the school.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is satisfactory. Pupils generally behave well and relationships between pupils from different backgrounds are good. They say that 'everyone plays well together' and that 'our school is a friendly place'. Pupils enjoy coming to school, and feel safe and secure. They speak highly of the support provided by the learning mentors, who 'sort out any problems they have'. In the Reception classes, children work independently, but opportunities for pupils to show initiative or to do activities of their own choosing in other years are limited. This is because much of what is learned is too teacher-led.

The school council meets regularly and its work has resulted in improvements to the playground equipment and library stock. Pupils initiate and participate in events to raise funds for charities such as the Pakistani earthquake fund. The Year 6 enterprise work involves the oldest pupils in the planning, organisation and funding of their end-of-year celebration. The initiative helps to develop teamwork and the necessary negotiating skills for adult life.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to barely adequate. Whilst it is satisfactory overall there is not enough of consistently good quality. As a result, the rate of pupils' progress is not as good as it could be.

Teachers manage behaviour well and form good relationships with pupils. They have sound subject knowledge and explain key concepts clearly. Effective questioning is often used to check pupils' understanding and clarify their thinking. Lessons have clear objectives and these are shared so pupils know what they must achieve. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is effective. A good range of interesting and worthwhile activities, well supported by staff, enables children to make good gains in their learning. Where teaching is less effective, expectations are not high enough and tasks are not well enough matched to pupils' differing capabilities. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow and this adversely affects the rate at which pupils learn. Teaching assistants are not always effectively deployed, particularly at the beginning of lessons, and this means time is not used wisely. In general there is insufficient modelling of language to develop pupils' vocabulary and grammatical skills, particularly with EAL learners. In many of the lessons observed, teachers provided too few opportunities for pupils to think and learn for themselves.

Assessment is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage. Information from assessments is not always used to plan lessons so children are consistently challenged.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum provides a suitable framework for pupils' learning and enables them to make sound progress over time. The Foundation Stage curriculum is interesting, relevant and does much to develop children's independence and communication skills.

In the four terms since the school opened there has rightly been a focus on improving the English and mathematics schemes of work, particularly in Years 1 to 6.

Improvements have started to bear fruit with accelerated rates of progress in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 6. However, the curriculum is not fully effective in developing pupils' speaking, writing and numeracy skills in all subjects. Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved, but opportunities to use ICT across the curriculum are often missed. Currently, subjects such as history, geography and design and technology have a low profile. The leadership recognises that the school needs a more coherent and consistent approach to the way in which these subjects are taught and the amount of time devoted to them in each year. Pupils' access to swimming is restricted at present and there is no system to monitor whether they achieve the expected standard. Pupils benefit from a satisfactory range of extra-curricular opportunities. Year 6 pupils have an annual residential experience which helps broaden their horizons.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Pupils are well cared for. Risk assessments are well attended to and good attention is paid to health and safety matters. Appropriate checks are made on adults to confirm their suitability to work with children. The buildings and outside areas are well maintained and provide a safe and secure learning environment.

The support and guidance provided by the learning mentors are good. This means that the self-esteem and confidence of the most vulnerable pupils are boosted. They are successfully helped to manage their own behaviour in a positive way. Academic support is satisfactory. Targets are set for English and mathematics but they relate to three ability groups within the class and not the individual. The older pupils are unclear about the academic level they are working at and what they need to do to improve. This was summed up by a Year 4 pupil who stated 'my teacher said that my writing was good. I would be interested to know what level I am working at and what I could do to make it better.' There is a general lack of support for EAL pupils who are beyond the initial stages of acquiring English.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Much has been done in the first year of the school's life. For example, the reorganisation of roles and responsibilities has led to staff being much more accountable for the standards achieved and the quality of education provided. Revised schemes of work have been developed and this is helping improve the continuity and progression in learning. Effective tracking of pupils' performance has identified that pupils' progress is patchy and there is much catching up to do in some years. The work done in Year 6 during the last academic year paid dividends with markedly increased rates of progress as a result of focused intervention. Four senior staff do not have full-time teaching commitments and it is now timely to review the balance of their work with regard to support, general management and direct teaching in order that they are fully effective, especially with regard to improving teaching.

The school's self-evaluation processes are sound and this enables leaders to have a fair and accurate view of the quality of education provided. The school improvement plan is satisfactory. It clearly identifies the key priorities for the year ahead. However, it does not specify clearly enough how outcomes will be measured. Finances are soundly managed. The school carried forward a substantial surplus from the academic year 2005/06. Money has appropriately been set aside to improve accommodation and resources. Governors have been instrumental in planning the successful amalgamation of the school. They ensure that nearly all statutory requirements are met. Whilst the school does not have a race equality policy, there is appropriate recording, reporting and action taken on the rare occasions when incidents occur.

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.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	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?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
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	NA

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?	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	2
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?	3

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

Hello, I am one of the inspectors that visited your school. I am writing a letter to you to tell you what we found out. Thank you for talking to us and for being so friendly, open and honest. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard to create your new school and I am pleased to tell you that it is providing a satisfactory standard of education.

What we liked most

- The headteachers and governors have successfully merged two schools into one. Everyone has worked hard to make this happen.
- The children in the Reception classes have settled in very well and are making good progress.
- You are well behaved and you say you enjoy coming to school. We were pleased to see that your attendance is much improved. Keep it up as it is important that you come to school regularly.
- You told us that Hodge Hill is a friendly place and the learning mentors sort out any problems you might have.
- You are well cared for and you said you feel safe and secure.
- We enjoyed talking to the school council and were pleased to hear how you had improved the playground equipment and the range of books in the library. Your fund raising is also helping others less fortunate than yourselves.

What must be done to get even better

- We want you to improve your speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills and practise them in all subjects.
- You need to make good progress if you are to succeed. The best way to do this is to ensure you are taught well at all times. We want the school to ensure this happens, and that pupils whose first language is not English are given more support for them to further improve their language skills.
- We have asked the teachers and governors to get even better at checking how well you are taught and how the different subjects of the curriculum fit together.
- We want the school to write down how it encourages people of different backgrounds to get along together and how things are put right if they do not. We also want you to have a time set aside each day to think and reflect about how you and other people live their lives.